

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Justice; Minister for Labour; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade; Minister responsible for Mines

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister of Languages

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister of Human Resources; Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

George Hickers
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker; Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Hon. David Joanasi
(South Baffin)

Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Board

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister Responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Officers

Clerk
Stephen Innuksuk

Deputy Clerk
Nancy Tupik

Clerk's Assistant Law Clerk Sergeant-at-Arms Hansard Production
Kooyoo Nooshoota Michael Chandler Eemeelayou Arnaquq Uqausirmit Uqausirmut Inc.

*926 Sivumugiaq Street,
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 3H0
Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266
Website: www.assembly.nu.ca*

Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1
Minister's Statements	1
Members' Statements	5
Returns to Oral Questions	7
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery	10
Oral Questions.....	13
Tabling of Documents	38
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	39
Report of the Committee of the Whole	98
Third Reading of Bills.....	98
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery	101
Assent to Bills	101
Orders of the Day	104

A.

Daily References

Tuesday, March 11, 2025..... 1

B.

Ministers' Statements

572 – 6(2): Made-in-Nunavut Curriculum Implementation (Gross)..... 1
573 – 6(2): Polar Bear Studies in Foxe Basin (Joanasie) 2
574 – 6(2): Funding for Targeted Labour Market Programs (Nakashuk)..... 3
575 – 6(2): Non-Insured Health Benefits (Main) 4
576 – 6(2): ArcticNet Conference (Nakashuk)..... 5

C.

Members' Statements

777 – 6 (2): Birthday Greetings (Quqqiaq) 6
778 – 6(2): Baker Lake Emergency Services (Simailak) 6
779 – 6(2): Dog Team Race in April and Anniversary (Quassa)..... 6
780 – 6(2): Naujaat Dance Competition (Malliki) 6

D.

Returns to Oral Questions

1167 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan (Joanasie)..... 7
1157 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity (Main) 8
1165 – 6(2): Search and Rescue – Equipment (Joanasie)..... 9
1139 – 6(2): National Sex Offenders (Akeeagok, D) 9
1145 – 6(2): Contaminated Sites (Joanasie) 9

E.

Oral Questions

1197 – 6(2): Debt Caps (Brewster).....	13
1198 – 6(2): Mental Health Worker in Igloolik (Kaernerker)	15
1199 – 6(2): General Rate Application (Nutarak)	17
1200 – 6(2): Office Space Needs in Communities (Quqqiaq).....	19
1201 – 6(2): Committee on Internal Trade (Sammurtok).....	21
1202 – 6(2): Airline Sector (Malliki).....	23
1203 – 6(2): General Rate Application (Lightstone).....	24
1204 – 6(2): Critical Minerals (Simailak)	27
1205 – 6(2): Community Coroners in Igloolik (Quassa).....	29
1206 – 6(2): Inuit Self-Government (Savikataaq).....	31
1207 – 6(2): Firearms Safety (Killiktee)	33
1208 – 6(2): Supporting Our Inuinnaqtun Language Specialists (Anavilok).....	34
1209 – 6(2): Debt Caps (Hickes).....	36

F.

Tabling of Documents

385 – 6(2): 2022-2023 Public Service Annual Report (Gross)	38
386 – 6(2): List of Outstanding Tabling Requirements (Akoak).....	39
387 – 6(2): Correspondence from the Minister of Education: Follow-up from the Committee of the Whole’s Consideration of the Department of Education’s 2025-2026 Main Estimates (Hickes)	39

G.

Bills

Bill 71 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025 – Consideration in Committee	40
Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-26 – Consideration in Committee	58
Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Consideration in Committee	65
Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Consideration in Committee.....	72
Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Consideration in Committee	74
Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Consideration in Committee	76
Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Consideration in Committee	83
Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Consideration in Committee	94
Bill 71 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025 – Third Reading	98
Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Third Reading	98
Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Third Reading	99
Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Third Reading.....	99
Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Third Reading.....	99
Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Third Reading	100
Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Third Reading.....	100
Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Third Reading	100
Bill 43 -- An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Assent to Bill	101
Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Assent to Bill.....	101
Bill 63 – An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act – Assent to Bill.....	101
Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Assent to Bill.....	101

Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Assent to Bill	102
Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Assent to Bill.....	102
Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Assent to Bill	102
Bill 70 -- Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 – Assent to Bill	102
Bill 71 -- Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025 – Assent to Bill	102
Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Assent to Bill	102

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaernerck, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 10:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak): Good morning. Before we proceed, Ms. Killiktee, could you open the meeting with a prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker's Statement

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, Inuit. We have many people here. It's great. Visitors, Members, and those listening on the radio and TV, welcome. (interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Item 2: Minister's Statements

Minister's Statement 572 – 6(2): Made-in-Nunavut Curriculum Implementation

Hon. Pamela Gross: Wow. Good morning, everybody. It's such a pleasure to be here with a really nice, full room of people here in the House with us this morning, Mr. Speaker. And good morning to all the Nunavummiut across the territory who are tuning in to our session today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that, starting in the 2025-2026 school year, the Department of Education will begin implementing Nunavut's new kindergarten to Grade 6 curriculum, beginning with kindergarten and Grade 1 across the territory.

This is an important milestone in supporting the vision of our elementary education system, which is embedded in the Inuit Qaujimajatunqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum.

Due to limited capacity, developing, designing, and implementing a curriculum and its supporting resources was not easy. Work on the K to 6 curriculum started in 2018, and we ensured key Inuit Elders, educators, language specialists, and knowledge keepers contributed to its development to make it centred on Inuit language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, the content developed in the made-in-Nunavut curriculum will help ensure that what students learn in schools is reflective of and applicable to the lived experiences and realities of Nunavummiut and responsive to students, families, and communities.

Mr. Speaker, the department is getting ready to embrace this change. Thus, from March 17 to 21 and March 24 to 28, respectively, the grade 1 and kindergarten teachers in the territory will be coming to Iqaluit to be introduced to the Nunavut curriculum and the documents that will support its implementation. Among these documents, the supporting educator handbooks will provide teachers with curriculum-informed teaching methods, appropriate resources, materials and assessment tools, thematic weekly plans and hands-on teaching strategies.

We fully recognize that this is a multi-year project to roll out the new curriculum and train educators, however, the Department of Education is eager for it to be introduced in our schools.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Minister's Statement 573 – 6(2): Polar Bear Studies in Foxe Basin

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome to visitors and my constituent Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update members and the public on the initial phase of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation reassessment. In collaboration with the Government of Quebec and local hunters and trappers organizations, an aerial abundance survey was conducted from August 7 to September 30, 2024, covering almost 40,000 kilometres.

This subpopulation is one of the largest in Nunavut, and a priority for affected communities in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk regions. I would like to thank the Hunters and Trappers Organizations of Kimmirut, Naujaat, Coral Harbour, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Kinngait, Sanirajak, and Igloodik who provided critical information on the survey design during consultations.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut manages 60 per cent of the world's polar bear population, which is indeed a lot of responsibility. My department continues to collaborate with co-management partners and external funding parties, to secure the required funding for applicable programs that enhance our studies and provide more information to Nunavummiut to and our co-management partners, assisting them in making better informed decisions.

Mr. Speaker, my department is dedicated to the inclusion of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit in polar bear research and management decisions, and to that end acknowledge the role that knowledgeable hunters and elders provide at different tables, including hunters and trappers organizations, regional wildlife organizations, all the way through to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. I thank them all, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning my colleagues and Nunavummiut and these here visiting the House. It's great to see you all here.

Minister's Statement 574 – 6(2): Funding for Targeted Labour Market Programs

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning my colleagues and Nunavummiut and those here visiting the House. It's great to see you all here.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the continued delivery of our Targeted Labour Market Programs that provide funding to eligible employers, institutions, and training providers to deliver education and training in Nunavut. The goal is to equip Nunavummiut with transferable skills and credentials that are nationally recognized and in demand in the territory and the country.

Mr. Speaker, 17 eligible programs were approved in the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The department will be issuing a call for proposals for funding Targeted Labour Market Programs for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in March. Priority will be given to programs delivered in Inuktitut and located in communities other than Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance of offering programs that empower Nunavummiut with skills, opportunities, and resources to thrive and contribute positively to their communities. Programs such as these foster personal development, build confidence, and cultivate leadership.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Minister's Statement 575 – 6(2): Non-Insured Health Benefits

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

Mr. Speaker, Non-Insured Health Benefits, a federal government program delivered through Indigenous Services Canada, is intended to help reduce healthcare barriers and improve access to care for Indigenous Canadians, including Nunavut Inuit.

As we are all aware, the Department of Health has administered significant parts of the Non-Insured Health Benefits program to eligible Nunavut Inuit on behalf of the Government of Canada since 1999. While the Government of Nunavut and Indigenous Services Canada have made significant strides in recent years to meet the fiscal responsibilities of Non-Insured Health Benefits within the territory, regrettably, the Government of Canada has not yet provided Health with a financially sustainable and fully reimbursable Non-Insured Health Benefits contribution agreement for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. This contributes to a continuing unsustainable and uncertain deficit situation within our territorial health system.

(interpretation ends) Since the last Non-Insured Health Benefits agreement was signed in March 2024, the Government of Nunavut has developed a joint scope of work with Indigenous Services Canada and is working to identify options to transform the delivery and programs of Non-Insured Health Benefits that recognizes the unique challenges faced with remote health care service provision. While this and other significant work has been done in good faith, recent correspondence and actions with respect to the administration of boarding homes from Indigenous Services Canada does not give confidence that the Government of Canada is working collaboratively to support Inuit patients who rely on this program. It is a concerning signal that Indigenous Services Canada is unilaterally focused on a mandate to make Non-Insured Health Benefits a federal and territorial shared responsibility. It is this notion of shared responsibility for Non-Insured Health Benefits that Health has pushed back against in the seven years that we have been working on systemic reforms to Non-Insured Health Benefits programming to best meet the needs of Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, decisions made without input from the Government of Nunavut and Inuit stakeholders creates a risk to all core health care services, not just those covered by Non-Insured Health Benefits. Without adequate financial support to administer this federal program, the expectation of Indigenous Services Canada is that Health would then become responsible for absorbing the shortcomings in funding, this at the expense of programs that provide basic and essential health care services at the community level.

The direction taken by Indigenous Services Canada could erode the ability to provide basic health services at home and put the delivery of services to Nunavut residents at risk.

Having been consistent in our stated requirements since the onset of our discussions, Health again calls upon the federal government to provide a fully reimbursable Non-Insured Health Benefits contribution agreement prior to the end of this fiscal year. We are hoping for an agreement that is acceptable to all stakeholders to come forward without further delay. Without a commitment to move forward in a manner that properly supports Nunavut and Nunavut Inuit, Health is prepared to transition the administration of Non-Insured Health Benefits back to Indigenous Services Canada in a way that minimizes disruptions to Nunavut residents.

Matna, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 576 – 6(2): ArcticNet Conference

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you for recognizing me again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, last year, in December, there were 11 students in the Environmental Technology program, and they had two instructors, and they participated in the 2024 ArcticNet Conference in Ottawa. The conference brings together international participants involved in Arctic research.

The conference had a special focus this year on international collaboration and to address the challenges and opportunities related to climate and socio-economic change in the Arctic. The students learned about the research occurring across Nunavut and internationally, and they said it was important to have Inuit visible at conferences like this. The students also learned about the importance of engaging and collaborating with both Inuit and scientific perspectives as part of the research process.

May the lessons learned at this conference carry the students forward in their academic and professional endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 777 – 6 (2): Birthday Greetings

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on this last date of the Sixth Legislative Assembly winter sitting. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is travel day, March 12, and we're heading back to our families. For tomorrow I want to wish my dear wife a happy birthday. I love you, dear wife and thank you for everything. Thank you for our beautiful family. I'll see you in two days' time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 778 – 6(2): Baker Lake Emergency Services (Simailak)

Mr. Simailak: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my colleagues and all the visitors. Please feel welcome.

Mr. Speaker, the day before yesterday, on Sunday morning, one of the hamlet municipal garages burnt down, unfortunately, and the fire fighters in Baker Lake, I would like to say thank you to them, all the water truck drivers and the police. Everybody in Baker Lake helped, and it's great that nobody got hurt. Some people in Baker Lake were delivering coffee, tea, and bannok to the fire fighters because they fought the fire all night and all day and they all worked together. I thank the people of Baker Lake. I love you. Thank you.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Member's Statement 779 – 6(2): Dog Team Race in April and Anniversary

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, everyone. First of all, on April 22, there will be a dog team race arriving in Igloodik, and so I'm telling my colleagues here, especially the Minister of Environment, to go and watch.

But I would like to say happy birthday to my friend who made me happy and cry, wipe my eyes when I cry, and she has seen me progress very well and also not so well. The person has hugged me and has helped make me strong. When you have your husband by you through the good times in life and through the bad times, it is a great gift. And so Simon Kupaq (ph) Quassa, we've been married now for 42 years. It is our anniversary and I thank him. Thank you.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Member's Statement 780 – 6(2): Naujaat Dance Competition

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning and it's great to see a crowd here. I would like to remind the people of Naujaat that on April 11 there will be a Charlie memorial square dance competition and the nearby communities in the Keewatin and Kitikmeot and also Amittuqmiut, I would like to welcome them. I hear there may be some people from those communities coming in to compete. It was great the last time we held that and Naujaat people will get to experience it again.

In April there's a bunch of activities like hockey tournaments and volleyball tournaments, but come to the Charlie memorial square dance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Oral Question 1167 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have return to oral question asked by MLA Hickee for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, number 1167 – 6(2) asked on March 5 and it's regarding the Draft Land Use Plan. The question was:

“I noted with interest the joint statement that was issued yesterday by Canada's Energy and Mines Ministers regarding critical minerals. Mr. Speaker, the minister was one of Nunavut's two signatories to the joint statement, so I now will be able to explain it clearly.

“The joint statement indicated:

“‘We will take decisive action, including the acceleration of resource development, through more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes.’

“Can the minister indicate the extent to which this commitment will impact the current review of the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.”

Do I need to start over? Okay.

The Interpreter: My apologies.

Hon. David Joanasie: The importance of having efficient, timely permitting and regulatory processes has been identified for the Government of Canada for several years, as has the.

Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy, published in 2022, which allocated approximately \$40 million to “support northern regulatory processes in reviewing and permitting critical mineral projects.”

This commitment does not have a direct bearing on the current review of the Draft (Recommended) Nunavut Land Use Plan, but could result in other processes or identify gaps or inefficiencies in the regulatory process at-large and take steps to address them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

Oral Question 1157 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like will to provide a response to a question I received on March 4, 2025 from MLA Hickes regarding new aging with dignity indicators under the shared health priorities.

These indicators were established by the Canadian Institute for Health Information and federal, provincial and territorial governments to measure progress, and address common challenges and gaps in care.

Currently, there are six public Aging with Dignity indicators, and they include metrics like falls in the last 30 days in long-term care, residents actively engaged in their daily life and care activities, and supply of personal support workers.

Many of the indicators align with the new national long-term care standards, when it comes to safety and quality improvement in long-term care and experiences and outcomes affecting long-term clients and families. All new long-term care facilities built in Nunavut, including the new Rankin Inlet long-term care centre, will meet the national long-term care standards.

Although the six indicators will not result in immediate changes to operational decisions, such as decisions associated with who will be offered rooms or beds, more broadly the new national long-term care standards drive decisions associated with the new long-term care facilities.

Data collection for these indicators is a challenge across Canada. The Department of Health continues to engage in discussions with the Canadian Institute for Health Information on the indicators, including the existing gaps in data collection that make it challenging for Nunavut to report on some of these indicators. Currently, the Canadian Institute for Health Information is gathering data on only two of the six indicators.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Oral Question 1165 – 6(2): Search and Rescue – Equipment

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to oral question 1165 – 6(2) asked by Member for Aggu on March 5, 2025 concerning search and rescue equipment. Mr. Speaker, this return is quite detailed. I have filed it with the clerk for transcribing into Hansard for the public record, and for distribution to all members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Oral Question 1139 – 6(2): National Sex Offenders

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to return to oral number 1139 – 6(2) asked by Adam Lightstone, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Iqaluit-Manirajak.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I provided to MLA Lightstone on National Sex Offenders. According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, as of March 6, 2025, there were 428 sex offenders registered in Nunavut, of whom 78 were non-compliant with their reporting requirements; and there were 22 High Risk Offenders, four of whom were non-compliant with their reporting requirements.

Non-compliance with reporting does not necessarily indicate that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is unable to locate the offender, or that the offender is intentionally avoiding their reporting obligations. In almost all cases, the offender's registration has simply expired, and they are willing to fulfill their reporting requirements once reminded or notified by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

However, if an offender is actively attempting to evade reporting, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will investigate the circumstances and may pursue charges if warranted.

According to data from the Nunavut courts, since 1999, thirteen offenders have been charged under section 490.031 of the *Criminal Code of Canada* for failing to comply with requirements under the *Sex Offender Information Registration Act*, of whom five were convicted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Oral Question 1145 – 6(2): Contaminated Sites

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Return to Oral Question, number 1145-6(2) asked by the Member for Uqqummiut on March 5, 2025 on contaminated sites.

Mr. Speaker, my response is quite lengthy but I have given the document to the speaker so that it will be deemed as read. Thank you.

Speaker: Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Pamela Gross: Quana, Mr. Speaker, and good morning everybody. It's with great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, that I want to recognize all of the students, the teachers and administrators from across Nunavut, along with our Department of Education staff, who could be with us here in the House this morning.

Each of you form a significant role in advancing our Made-in-Nunavut curriculum. Due to time, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to name everybody, but I would like to ask that our cameraman take a pan of everybody here in the room with us so people across our territory can see who's here with us this morning. All the wonderful smiling faces and the sea of green that are here. If everybody can stand up, please.

>>Applause

To each of you I say thank you for your contribution to our new curriculum. Your role is inevitably one that is very important to the future of its success. Welcome to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: And welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I rise today to recognize an individual from Igloolik, who chaired a meeting for Nunavut youth, Qajaaq Ittinuar, Kayalaaq Leishman-Brocklebank, Ivalu Leishman-Brocklebank, Kevin Niatok, Glen Brocklebank, Ana Leishman, and Nadia Sammurtok. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Chairman: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize three people here in the House this morning. First one is a former constituent, a former Baker Lake hockey player, Baker Lake Grey Wolf hockey player. He's a pretty good skater, pretty fast. He could keep up with the white ghost. He's a Baker Lake hockey player. He's pretty fast. Mr. Gary Kennedy, please stand up.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Simailak: My sister-in-law, Janice. My brother's wife Janice Simailak.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Simailak: And a very young wonderful lady, Harriet Amitnaaq, part of the Youth Ambassador program.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize my cousin. My late father and her father were brothers. Please rise. I would like to welcome her, Maggie Kuniliusie, please rise. Welcome. And I would like Sikuli Arnaquq to rise. He is my niece's son. On Saturday he told me, "I need haircut. I am going to legislation where you work."

>> *Laughter*

Ms. Killiktee: He respects that. He respects the House. (interpretation) Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to acknowledge one of my constituents, Sherry Parks. She was a nurse and now she's working for the

Department of Education. I'm very proud of her. She's a great seamstress and she's very supportive of our community. I am very proud of her and I too would like to recognize her. Let's recognize her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I know my daughter Hope really wanted to be here but she's not feeling well. But some of her classmates are here, so I want to recognize them. They are Lennie Kalluk, Hope's best friend.

>> *Applause*

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Although Sikulla was recognized, Sikulla Arnakuk, and Rosie Shaimayuq.

>> *Applause*

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): And the teacher too. He is known as Hughy Blackburn.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation ends) And Nanuk School's famous soup, Maggie Kooniloosie.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) Maggie Kooniloosie, who makes the soup in Nanuk School.

As well he has been in the choir for the Anglican church and he's been a supporter and helper I would like to acknowledge this individual and she's a member of the choir. I'm very proud of her, and thank you, Atchina Price.

>> *Applause*

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): And her daughter, Jackie, who's no stranger. And her husband Paul Irgaut. I acknowledge him as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for acknowledging me. I would like to recognize individuals who are here who I work with, Jackie Price for Nunavut Arctic College, and her family are here. Welcome. As well Atchina Price, the mother. I welcome her. And also an individual from Pangnirtung, Mary Kilabuk, welcome. And also the individuals had already left who were my constituent. They were here but they already left. And Mary Atuangat.

I would like to welcome each and every one of the visitors in the gallery. It's very pleasing to see people here at the gallery, and I acknowledge the people who work hard on educational materials. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker for acknowledging me. Good morning to my colleagues. It's very good and it's very good to see visitors to our House, especially the people coming in from another community. I'm sure that you're feeling the reception of the Iqaluit residents, because they are usually receptive.

There are quite a few people here in the gallery, but I too would like to recognize NTI vice president, Mr. Paul Irngaut. We were in Ottawa just recently with him.

I also wanted to state that I was in Ottawa with him to sign the Nunavut agreement devolution, and the vice president of NTI has worked tirelessly and worked very hard towards this. I also welcome your family. And I'm very pleased to see them as well in my constituent riding, Jackie Price from Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, and also deputy who's right behind me. I would like to welcome them to the gallery.

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 1197 – 6(2): Debt Caps

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome to your House, everyone. There are so many of my friends in the House that I couldn't possibly name everybody in a short period of time, and I'll make it up to you some day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I was debating with myself and going back and forth as to whom I would address my line of questioning to today, as the issues relate to statements made by both the Minister of Finance and the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation during yesterday's sitting of the House. Mr. Speaker, I ultimately settled on the Minister

of Finance as I believe he outranks the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I was happily surprised at the Minister's announcement today about the recent federal decision to prove the 40 per cent increase in Nunavut's borrowing limit from \$750 million to a little over \$1 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I did a little digging and discovered that the increase was approved by way of a federal Order-in-Council dated February 25 of this year, the day after the minister delivered his budget address in this House.

For the record, was the amount of the increase less than what the minister originally requested, more than what he requested, or exactly what he requested? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the line of questioning and good morning to everybody in the room.

Mr. Speaker, it's where we wanted the request to be. We got what we asked for, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on that, Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I was also surprised to hear the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation tell the House yesterday that he has requested a federal takeover of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's historical debt to alleviate financial strain.

Mr. Speaker, information published by the Minister of Finance as part of his Budget Address indicates that the Government of Nunavut uses most of its borrowing room to guarantee loans and credit facilities extended to the Qulliq Energy Corporation and other entities.

Can the Minister of Finance confirm the extent to which his department has been involved in a request to have the federal government take over the Qulliq Energy Corporation's historical debt, and can he clarify what specific amount of debt is being considered as part of these discussions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation were those of the Qulliq Energy Corporation. As far as I understand, the Department of Finance has not gotten into any discussions about that at this point, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here is my last question for the minister. In the event that the federal government says no to the Qulliq Energy Corporation's request, can the Minister of Finance clarify whether or not he is prepared to use some of his additional borrowing room to help alleviate the Qulliq Energy Corporation's financial strain? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the borrowing limit has loan guarantees for the Qulliq Energy Corporation to this point. But at this time we haven't had the discussion – we being the Department of Finance and Qulliq have not had any discussions in terms of whether they will be coming to Department of Finance to further increase their guarantees.

I don't want to get into a could have, would have, should have discussion, but at this point we haven't come to that discussion and if we do, we will deal with it at that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1198 – 6(2): Mental Health Worker in Igloolik (Kaernerck)

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to the people of Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health regarding mental health.

Mr. Speaker, I brought this up earlier because it's of a concern to the people of Amittuq. After the minister's statement about mental health issues and he indicated that when people are under stress they think about suicide, and that's recognized, and it's of importance to have mental health workers. And while we're here dealing with the issues of Nunavut, I would like to ask the minister if there are mental health workers in both Igloolik and Sanirajak and also service providers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the member for his question. He's talking about a recent event, and I do send my condolences to the people who have been affected.

In Sanirajak we have two mental health workers (interpretation ends) In terms of Sanirajak we currently have one mental health professional in the community and one paraprofessional. Igloolik currently does not have any indeterminate professional or paraprofessional staff. However, in most cases when there is a gap in coverage, there will be a mental health professional providing coverage either on a casual basis or virtually. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the minister. I will focus on Igloolik. In my constituency they also have those types of problems. How come there's no mental health workers in Igloolik, and service providers you indicated that they provide visual services. Why do they not have mental health workers? Is it because they don't have accommodation? They don't have an office space? What's the reason why there's no mental health workers in Igloolik? Because they are under stress also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for his question. We work on providing those types of services on an ongoing basis.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker. In terms of the paraprofessional function in Igloolik, currently the biggest barrier is a lack of office space. We have been actively searching for office space for our paraprofessional positions to be situated in. We have staff who are I believe in a dialogue with the hamlet of Igloolik as to some potential office space.

When it comes to the professional positions, it's a great question. There's a number of barriers or issues that are affecting our staffing and retention. I'll highlight some of the biggest issues. Staff housing. Access to staff housing is a big barrier. We have dozens and dozens of nursing positions that we can not currently put to competition because we don't have a staff housing unit assigned to them across Nunavut.

Burnout and workplace conditions is another big factor in terms of retaining mental health professionals. That's where the critical staffing measures has been so helpful, in terms of providing additional incentives to staff.

And a third one I'll mention is the conditions of the job and the need to have a secure workplace. That's where the Department of Health has been investing in security

services, because we know if we have a secure facility it's better to work in and it's also better for patients. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response.

Lack of office space is an ongoing concern in the Amittuq area, and I do thank the people of Amittuq for their patience with the services that are provided in Nunavut. Igloolik also has to be considered. I would like to invite the minister to come visit Igloolik to look at the conditions and the lack of office space, and also to have a secure, safe environment at the workplace. I would like to invite the minister and see if he can accept my invitation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the member for his invitation. Yes, we can look at when would be the best possible time.

I would like to thank the mental health workers very much, because they have a huge, stressful job, and they go to work on a daily basis. I would like to thank them all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Oral Question 1199 – 6(2): General Rate Application

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and they concern its general rate application.

As the minister will recall, the corporation issued an announcement on December 18, 2024 indicating that it has submitted a general rate application to the minister. The announcement indicated that the corporation was “requesting change to electricity rate effective April 1, 2025.”

Mr. Speaker, it is now mid-March. Can the minister indicate if the proposed rate changes will come into effect within the next few weeks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for that question. (interpretation ends) Currently, Mr. Speaker, the review of the general rate application is still ongoing with the Utility Rates Review body, and we are expecting to receive the report from the URRC by April 30. It is something that we look forward to hearing from them.

Mr. Speaker, at the centre of this general rate application is that Qulliq Energy Corporation needs to cover its operating expenses. We are self-funding. We don't go up for annual appropriations, and so we rely on our customers across Nunavut to fund our operations. That's the reason behind this application. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Speaker, it is not entirely clear to me what process is used to approve the Qulliq Energy Corporation's proposed general rate increase before they are submitted to the minister and the utility rate review process. Can the Minister clarify if the proposed general rate application was formally approved by the corporation's board of directors before it was submitted. 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 board of directors of Qulliq Energy Corporation plays an important role. They act as a foundational level of oversight and governance for the corporation. They are able to go into more detail on issues of concern, as a board. They are quite high functioning. They have committees that are functioning.

In terms of the GRA process, I do believe that it was approved by the board. We had hired external consultants to support us through this process, and I believe the board did approve this application before it was submitted. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for the response. Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about the impact that the proposed rate increase will have on the residents of Pond Inlet, especially elders who own their own homes.

Mr. Speaker the Qulliq Energy Corporation's announcement indicated that "these rates adjustments are essential for upgrading and replacing aging power infrastructure to meet the territory's growing energy needs."

Mr. Speaker, during yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister announced that he has formally "requested a federal takeover of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's historical debt to alleviate financial strain."

My question for the minister is this: In the event that the federal government agrees to the minister's request, what impact will this have on the corporation's revenue requirements and its current general rates application? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. It's a great scenario to think about, in terms of that debt issue.

We've been getting hammered the last couple years with inflation in multiple parts of our operation. We look at fuel, we look at parts and supplies, we look at service contracts, and also the cost of carrying our debt has also been increasing. So if there was a takeover or some support regarding that debt load, what it would do is it would reduce our carrying costs; it would reduce the amount of money we are having to pay or interest every year. So it would help us to reduce our operating expenses.

In terms of the current general rate application, that process is in mid-stream, and in terms of potential impacts we would deal with those should they come.

We are at the outset of a dialogue or a conversation with our federal partners in terms of the need for infrastructure supports, and the debt issue is one that we have raised with them. So we look forward to continuing that, continue advocating on behalf of Nunavummiut who deserve affordable, reliable energy. The Qulliq Energy Corporation will continue looking for support to delivery that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1200 – 6(2): Office Space Needs in Communities

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the important issue of office space in Nunavut communities.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to give the minister the opportunity to answer a few last questions under his current portfolio before the departmental reorganization is finalized.

Mr. Speaker, the need for adequate office space in Nunavut communities has been identified as a concern by many members of the Legislative Assembly in recent years. Mr. Speaker as the minister will recall, his department has issued a number of requests for proposals in recent years for office space in communities, including Kugaaruk.

Mr. Speaker, we need adequate office space so that government liaison officers, income support workers, and other front-line staff can deliver essential services to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate when his department last undertook a survey of office space availability in the communities of Kugaaruk and Taloyoak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I will just say that our Department of Community and Government Services does that on an ongoing basis. We regularly check in with the communities. There's a number of office spaces that we lease and some are Government of Nunavut-owned, but we try to look at how much growth our public service. We try to do it on a regular basis for all communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I noted in the preamble to my first question, the minister's department has issued a number of requests for proposals in recent years for office space in communities including Kugaaruk. Mr. Speaker, can he indicate when his department will issue a similar request for proposals for office space in the community of Taloyoak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department works with all of the departments in trying to acquire additional office space when it's required, and with that, with our current leases, if they are up for renewal we do try to see if there's an opportunity to acquire more.

Mr. Speaker, I can't say specifically for Taloyoak when we'll be doing a request for proposal, but I can get back to the member with a few more details on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the government should always be looking for ways to work collaboratively with our hamlets. Mr. Speaker, can the minister commit to working with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities to ensure that the subject of office space is put on the agenda for the organization's next annual general meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department works very closely with Nunavut Association of Municipalities, and if it is a shared priority, we will put that on the agenda for the next meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1201 – 6(2): Committee on Internal Trade

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Trade, and they concern the recent announcement that he and other provincial and territorial ministers issued late last month.

The announcement indicated that “progress was made” on a number of issues, including “enhancing the commitments under the Canadian free trade agreement by conducting a rapid review of all party-specific exemptions and concluding the financial service negotiations.”

Can the Minister indicate how this work will specifically benefit the Nunavut economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Trade, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the internal trade discussion that is we are having, there's a number of benefits that will come to Nunavut as our work progresses. There's a lot of work that we're doing. One of the examples is allowing professionals to move around Canada, whether you're a teacher, a nurse, or a doctor, or an engineer, if you're from Canada you should be able to move freely within jurisdictions. Those are the work that we tasked ourselves to do, amongst a number of things that my colleague just mentioned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month's announcement also indicated that “willing jurisdictions” will “explore a direct-to-consumers sales system for alcohol.”

Can the Minister clarify what this means, and can he indicate if the government is willing to allow Nunavummiut to directly order alcohol from producers and retailers in other jurisdictions without first going through the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Trade, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on that, in the press release that came out, it was for the willing jurisdictions. As a number of us expressed that alcohol sales is not necessarily as easy as going to the store in some of our jurisdictions.

For Nunavut, we have three categories of where it is no alcohol allowed in some communities, some are restricted, and some are non-restricted. With those categories, it would be difficult for us to be a willing jurisdiction to open up that direct alcohol sales through from other provinces. That's one that I took a stand in terms of that we will not be the willing jurisdiction to support something like that.

Other provinces will be able to do that. As you know, wines in BC can't necessarily be sold in Ontario, and vice versa, and that's what that was attempting to do, is where jurisdictions have readily and free alcohol sales in their stores, is to promote that Canadian wide, and that's what we would do.

I also stressed that if we were going to do it, then we're going to have to do it with our finance department of Nunavut liquor licensing, because that's who would control where the sales would be. But for direct, we did not support that from Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The announcement also indicated that work will be undertaken to further facilitate labour mobility. Can the minister clarify the extent to which this work will impact the ability for the Government of Nunavut to establish minimum Inuit labour content requirements as part of its capital projects procurement process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Trade, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that's one that we really need to balance, in terms of labour mobility. As Canada, we want to be able to move all our trades around, whatever profession they are, and break down the barriers that each of us jurisdictions have, in terms of how one can enter to each of our jurisdictions. If those trade barriers are not there it, from my perspective that is a good

opportunity for any Inuk for any professional that wants to work anywhere in the country be given that opportunity, too. Our preference is that they stay home and that they work here, but we want every Inuk to have an opportunity to make their determination of what profession they want to choose and where they choose to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1202 – 6(2): Airline Sector

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give the minister of opportunity to answer a few last questions under his current portfolio before the departmental reorganization is finalized.

Mr. Speaker it has now been a little over two weeks since the bombshell announcement was made about the acquisition of Canadian North by the parent company of Calm Air. As my colleague representing Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet recently reminded the House, the Kivalliq MLAs rely on Calm Air for travel to go on neighbouring communities, and Canadian North for travelling to Iqaluit for sittings the Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister confirm what discussions he had with the new owners and management of the current airlines when the announcement was made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had the honour with my colleague that's taking over the transportation portfolio of having a meeting with the president of Canadian North, along with the president of Exchange Income Corporation, to raise some of the areas that are something that Nunavummiut to be sure that they understand what we need.

First and foremost was that we needed assurance that the contract that the government has is honoured, and that was secured. And the discussion in terms of how this is going to take place.

What they told me is that they have to go to two federal regulatory bodies. The first one would be the Competition Bureau and the second one would be Transport Canada regulations to seal the deal with Canadian North.

The timelines with that varies, depending on the elections and a lot of unknowns right now. But it's one that they're going to pursue through that. Wanted to ensure that our flights are going to continue, both in Kitikmeot and Qikiqtaaluk with no interruptions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that answer. As the minister will recall, the federal government issued an announcement in April 2023 concerning modifications to terms and conditions that have been put in place by Ottawa. Following the merger of First Air and Canadian North back in the year 2019, at that time concerns were expressed that these changes would increase costs for consumers and decrease service to communities. Can the minister confirm if these terms and conditions will continue to apply to Canadian North under its new ownership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Canadian North a while ago requested those terms and conditions be lifted, and the Minister of Transport honoured that. Those terms of conditions don't exist at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So what the minister said about the elections (interpretation ends) Can the minister explain what the next steps are with respect to regulatory approval of acquisitions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In talking with both the presidents, they are getting their paperwork together for the Competition Bureau and Transport Canada, the two regulatory bodies that will need to look into the acquisition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1203 – 6(2): General Rate Application

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are also for the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation regarding the general rate application. Mr. Speaker, upon reviewing the general rate application, QEC had identified a 21.5 million

dollar shortfall, in which it was seeking to increase base energy rates by 9.4 per cent and double the monthly service charges.

Mr. Speaker, upon further review in the document, it does talk about the net metering program, which was initiated in 2018, and also indicated that there are currently 21 net metering customer connections.

For my first question, can the minister indicate how many of these net metering accounts are home owners, and more specifically, how many of these home owners are Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of that net metering program, it is open to residential customers, and two municipal accounts per community. There is a limit in terms of the renewable energy systems in terms of their size. The maximum capacity is 15 kilowatts.

Currently we have 22 systems that have been approved and installed in 13 municipalities. Sorry, I'm talking about the municipal side first. 22 systems have been approved and installed in 13 communities. There are nine residential properties that are currently through the program, and we have eight applications in the planning stage. I don't have a breakdown in terms of Inuit and non-Inuit clients. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I encourage the minister to collect that information on the number of Inuit participating in the metering program.

I had the opportunity to attend a net metering information session with a number of residents that were net metering customers, and there were very few Inuit in the room, leading me to believe there's very few Inuit participating in this net metering program.

One interesting topic that has been raised twice so far today was that the minister had submitted a formal request to the feds to take over historical debt from the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Looking at the corporation's annual report, the most recent interest expense paid by the corporation was \$13 million, which is a significant amount, of the \$21 million shortfall.

If the federal government accepts this formal request to take over the historical debt, how much debt does that represent and how much interest expense would that save on the impact on the upcoming GRA? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of the amount of money that we would save, it really depends on how much of the debt could be assumed or taken over. It is something that, as the member has correctly pointed out, is causing us to have to expend additional funds to maintain that debt. For a number of years those costs were quite low, but with the rise in interest rates recently it has become quite a concern.

Qulliq Energy Corporation is looking for ways to reduce that, looking for ways to reduce that interest charge. We recognize that it's something that's driving our costs. We operate in a really high cost jurisdiction, in terms of we have clients in Baker Lake right now who are without power, and that means trying to get their power back on as soon as possible. We look at the cost of charter aircraft. We try to minimize the use of charters, because we recognize they are a high-cost item, but at the end of the day, customers need their power on, especially during the winter months.

I just use that as an example where we're unique. Our staff can't just hop in a truck and drive to Baker Lake like they could in a southern jurisdiction.

So we are unique. We're providing power in one of the most challenges environments in the world, but at the same time we want to do it in a fiscally responsible manner.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's annual report indicates that it currently has \$218 million in debt, which is leading to this \$13 million in interest expense. It's unclear how much of that could potentially be taken over by the federal government and how much was requested, and what kind of impact it would have on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's cost savings.

But another factor is \$60 million of that debt is held by the Government of Nunavut, and another \$150 million is on loan from the bank. And there's a considerable difference between the variable interest rates that the Qulliq Energy Corporation pays to the banks, and the lower deposit rate that the corporation pays for the funds borrowed from the Government of Nunavut.

The next question I would like to ask is how much room, I guess, does Qulliq Energy Corporation have in requesting to borrow funds from the Government of Nunavut as opposed to these very costly bank loans?

And again, Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that every year we're seeing higher capital carry-overs and these funds are locked in the bank sitting there. So there is quite a bit of room for funds to be used.

I would like ask how much could the Qulliq Energy Corporation borrow from the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of how much additional debt we could take on, there is an upper ceiling there in terms of the debt-to-equity ratio, three to one, that we need to be within according to our legislation.

In terms of the relationship with Department of Finance and the Government of Nunavut, it's an important one. It's a very fundamental one. Ultimately whether the Department of Finance, the Government of Nunavut would allow us to take on more debt, ultimately that's a question for the Financial Management Board and Executive Council.

We recognize the Government of Nunavut is an important partner. However, Qulliq Energy Corporation being self-funding, we also recognize that we can do things to reduce our own costs while making sure that we are providing reliable, affordable energy to Nunavummiut. So we're not only looking outside of Qulliq Energy Corporation for help; we're also making sure we have our own house in order in terms of covering the cost of our operations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members, I ask everyone who wants to ask questions today, on our last day, be short in your preamble to questions and answers. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Oral Question 1204 – 6(2): Critical Minerals

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for Mines. Mr. Speaker, today is the last day of our winter sitting. As you will recall, I asked questions on the first day of our winter sitting about the issue of critical minerals, so I'm pleased to be able to start and finish on the same topic.

I want to dig into the details of the joint statement that was issued a week ago today by Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial energy and mines ministers. As the minister will recall, he was one of two members of our cabinet who signed the joint statement on Nunavut's behalf.

The joint statement indicated that federal, provincial, and territorial mines will "take decisive action to ensure Canadian companies remain competitive and succeed in the global market, including the acceleration of resource development through more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes."

Mr. Speaker, that is music to my ears. As the minister is aware, I have raised many concerns about the length of time that it takes new projects to get approved. Can the minister provide more detail today about what specific actions will be taken to achieve more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that statement was for all of Canada, and we wanted to make sure that if there are nation-building projects such as Grays Bay, we should try and make sure that they are streamlined regulatory processes.

As trades minister there's a lot of different regulatory bodies that need to get in, so for critical projects that's one of the ways that was discussed. From my perspective, Nunavut does have a robust regulatory process, and just a couple days ago our premier just signed off on the Nunavut implementation contract that's going to help resource a lot of our institutions of public government, and hopefully that will help with the streamlining of those screenings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Arviat South asked important questions during yesterday's sitting regarding the recent announcement from the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik. This announcement called on the federal government to use "available legislative tools" to expedite a number of infrastructure projects in Nunavut. I fully agree with that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is this. Can he clarify what amendments to territorial legislation may be required to achieve more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes in respect to mining projects, including projects relating to critical minerals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is no legislation requirements at this time. The discussions and what the statement is saying that with our regulatory bodies we need to ensure that we work to help speed up some of the projects, especially where it is nation-building, where it requires multi-jurisdictions is that we make sure that those come in line, because the investments that we need are huge in nature, and will be a big megaproject that will be needed. So what we need from our side is can they be resourced adequately in order to make sure that that can go through without too much interruption. That's one of the areas that we're looking and focussing on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister for your response. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, last week's joint statement by federal, provincial, and territorial governments included a long list of projects that will be receiving federal support under a number of initiatives, including the Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund.

Mr. Speaker I was disappointed that not a single Nunavut project was included in this list. Can the minister indicate how many critical mineral mining projects in Nunavut could be in a position to begin production within the next five to ten years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number at the exploration stage, but I don't have that readily available in terms of the number, because as you know, it requires the exploration to get done, and that. The ones that are known, I don't have that list readily available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1205 – 6(2): Community Coroners in Igloolik

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of community coroners in Igloolik. Mr. Speaker, the last time I raised this issue in the House, the minister committed to releasing a public service announcement calling for community coroners.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our community coroners for their dedication to their very challenging but very important role.

Can the minister provide an update on how many community coroners were appointed in this response to the public service announcement, and if any are located in Igloolik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our department did that public call, and it closed March 31. We received about 20 applications. We are going through those, and yes, I can confirm there is an applicant from Igloolik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the department's 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to "promote careers in the Department of Justice to Nunavummiut."

Mr. Speaker, the business plan also indicates that the department held a justice career fair, and also held information sessions. Can the minister confirm if a representative from the Office of the Chief Coroner attended the career fair. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm at this time whether the coroner's office was involved in the career fair, but during career fair for the Department of Justice we've we have all the pamphlets that are available for each of our critical services that we provide in the career fair. I'll confirm whether the coroner's information was also there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, (interpretation ends) Minister. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our community coroners for their difficult but extremely important role.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to support every reasonable effort to recruit and retain community coroners for each of our communities, including Igloolik. Can the minister clarify what the training process is for newly appointed community coroners. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker as we are reviewing 20 applicants right now at the same time, our coroner is updating and getting the training package put together for the hope soon to be newly appointed coroners and be provided training as they enter into becoming coroners. And that goes with our existing coroners that are in place, too.

I would like to also do a shout out that if there are any interests for coroner, even though the public call was closed, if you are still interested, please provide your name to our coroner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1206 – 6(2): Inuit Self-Government

Mr. Savikataaq: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Arviat, I send my greetings and also good morning even though it's a blizzard, so stay home.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the premier will recall from his previous role that he moved a motion at Nunavut Tunngavik's 2018 annual general meeting concerning Inuit self-government. At its 2021 annual general meeting, Nunavut Tunngavik adopted a motion to seek a negotiation mandate with the Government of Canada to begin self-government discussions. Obviously the Government of Nunavut would have to be involved in such discussions.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: What is the premier's current position on moving away from a public government model in Nunavut to an Inuit self-government model. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for his question. Currently Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has not identified a mandate, and therefore we don't have a position. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think there should be a position, because currently under the Nunavut agreement under article 4 we are under a public government.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the premier tabled Nunavut Tunngavik's report on policing in Nunavut. One of the recommendations in the report is "establish a process for the transition of policing functions away from the Government of Nunavut and the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police under a self-governance model under Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.”

Mr. Speaker, if I read this correctly, it means that Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated wants to take on the responsibility of providing armed police service in our communities. What is the premier’s position on this recommendation and will he be pursuing it with the discussions with the new prime minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for his question. As outlined, I did table the report. It is a Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated report. We have yet to discuss this, what’s outlined in the report, and I look forward working very closely with my ministers as we start exploring what is contained in the report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we hear of and we see lots of memorandum of understandings that have been signed between this government and Inuit orgs. There’s some on capital projects, agreement in other things. There was some on providing power plants to communities.

It seems like we are working or moving towards Inuit self-government in that the way things are rolling out it’s almost like Inuit self-government through the back door, with all the MOUs that are in place now.

So Mr. Speaker, I ask the premier: Is this the premier’s way of getting Inuit self-government, as he made the motion to look into it, as NTI board member? Is this the way of getting Inuit self-government into this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question.

I truly value the partnership we have with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. We have shared interests and shared priorities that we continue to work on for the betterment of Nunavummiut, in particular Inuit as it relates to Nunavut Tunngavik, and we will continue to work with them.

To the member's question, no, there's no motive outside of wanting to see improvements in the continuation of what the Nunavut dream was and for us through partnership continue in that right direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1207 – 6(2): Firearms Safety

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of firearm safety in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, on November 24, 2022 the department issued a public service announcement regarding the lands of Qukiutiliritsiarniq Nunavummi, a firearms safety campaign. The public service announcement indicated that several firearms safety initiatives would be undertaken by the Department of Justice, including holding a position and acquisitions licence course in Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, the minister later indicated that the course held in Pangnirtung assisted 47 community members obtain their firearms licence, and that was a very wonderful news to hear.

Can the minister indicate if his department is actively considering delivering firearms safety courses in other Nunavut communities, including Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Minister.

Mr. Speaker, during the Legislative Assembly sitting of November 6, 2023, the minister indicated that “in August 2023 the Community Justice Division and the Nunavut chief firearms officer have partnered to offer Train the Trainer instructor courses. So far two courses have been offered.”

As a minister of the Legislative Assembly representing the constituents of Uqqummiut, I will continue to be a strong advocate for firearms safety in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, and Nunavut as well. Can the minister indicate if his department is planning on

delivering more of these Train the Trainer courses in the smaller communities; if so, which communities are being considered at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is the plan, to do more, to try and get all the communities. I don't have the list of which communities there are, but I do want to update that we do have we hosted one on the firearms training in Clyde River in October 2024. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would also like to thank the minister.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the department's current business plan indicates that one of his priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year is to "collaborate with key stakeholders to develop firearms safety awareness."

Can the minister provide a substantive update today on this specific action in his department, and other identified key stakeholders have undertaken to achieve this priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the territory-wide one is that for working with Justice Canada, there is going to be for the Nunavut region a triparty table that would include represents from Justice Canada, Public Service Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Crown and Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Government of Nunavut and other partner organizations that will be identified at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1208 – 6(2): Supporting Our Inuinnaqtun Language Specialists

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good morning to Kugluktukmuit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, I have been a strong advocate for initiatives to promote the teaching of Inuinnaqtun to our youth. I would like to follow up on my previous question

to the minister with respect to an appropriate pay scale for language specialists in our schools.

The minister indicated that the pay scale could be reviewed through the collective bargaining process. Can the minister clarify which collective agreement the Department of Education language specialists fall under. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The language specialists fall under the Nunavut Teachers Association. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that. Mr. Speaker, the collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union expired in September 2024 and the collective agreement with the Nunavut Teachers Association expires on June 30, 2025. This seems like the right time to negotiate a higher rate of pay for our language specialists. Can the minister confirm that the pay scale for language specialists has been brought forward by her department as one of the topics under consideration during the collective agreement negotiations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. We are currently negotiating at the moment, and we don't negotiate in public. However, I do know that they are negotiating starting the Nunavut Teacher Association negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the details of the collective agreement negotiations cannot be discussed in this place. However, if we want educators to have our schools, we need to provide them with good support.

It is my understanding that for some professions the government offers such incentives as signing bonuses or other benefits. Will the minister commit to exploring all options to recruit and employ Inuinnaqtun language specialists for our schools, especially in those communities where the language is at risk of dying out. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Yes, we are very aware of the importance of Inuinnaqtun teachers and Inuktitut teachers in our schools, and wearing both Department of Education and Department of Human Resources ministerial hats, I have asked that this topic be discussed between both departments and that we work to see what we can do. But as I said, we are in negotiating times right now, and I can't discuss on the floor, but we are aware of the importance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1209 – 6(2): Debt Caps

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to Minister Main in his role as the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation. I thought he would be looking at me, but.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to jump on the bandwagon of some of the things that have been discussed earlier. Mr. Speaker, in a recent minister's statement, the minister stated that "any additional federal support go towards our long list of infrastructure needs", and "we have also requested a federal takeover of Qulliq Energy Corporation's historical debt to alleviate financial strain."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify if he's looking to the federal government to wipe out that debt, or to service the debt; and which federal agency or department has the mandate and authority to do either. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I appreciate the line of questioning. We are flexible in terms of working with our federal partners. There's a number of different federal agencies that could have a role in assisting Qulliq Energy Corporation. Looking at the Arctic Energy Fund, I note that was set up through Infrastructure Canada. We do need additional assistance when it comes to our debt. It could be either or, in terms of servicing the debt or taking over the debt.

When we were created as a corporation, the assets that we inherited, as the member knows, the assets that we inherited were not the greatest, and we're still struggling to replace some of them. Look at the power plant in Kugluktuk. Many communities across Nunavut, Chesterfield Inlet, Kugaaruk, the list goes on, where we want to control our

costs, we want to deliver affordable energy, but we also need reliable, modern infrastructure to do so.

That's where we see a role for federal assistance and we're going to keep advocating for that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickeys.

Mr. Hickeys: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as mentioned and as the minister is aware, Qulliq Energy Corporation has lines of credit secured by the Government of Nunavut's borrowing limit. In fact, as mentioned moments ago, the last Assembly took over some of Qulliq Energy Corporation's debt to help reduce those borrowing costs to ratepayers, and provide some revenue to the Government of Nunavut's coffers instead of commercial banks in profits.

If I heard correctly, in an earlier dialogue the Minister of Finance stated that there has not been any discussions with him or his officials on expanding the servicing of additional debts incurred by Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I was a little bit surprised to hear that, as the minister stated he had spoken to federal authorities before looking in house first, given Nunavut the revenue instead of commercial banks or other entities. Why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We are open to working with anyone, including our partners at Department of Finance. Ultimately it is the authority of Financial Management Board whether there could be additional debt taken over through the government. If that's something that would reduce the cost to our ratepayers, that's something we would be very interested in.

Mr. Speaker, the list of infrastructure projects that we need to work on goes on and on. The major project permit application we filed recently looking at here in Iqaluit, one generator set we're looking at. They are not cheap. They are massive engines, and they cost millions of dollars. That's what we need help with, in terms of expanding, improving our capital assets, as well as making sure that on the back end, on the financial end that we are making sure to operate as efficiently as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickeys.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the minister's response in that. I think we have to look at all opportunities to take a look at, as we're doing currently, with the Department of Finance taking on some of that debt.

Earlier the minister had mentioned the legislative limit of the debt service ratio and unfortunately I don't have the corporation's annual report right in front of me. What is the current debt servicing ratio that Qulliq Energy Corporation is currently holding? Thank you.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of the exact number as of today, I don't have that in front of me, but what I can say is that we are approaching the limit in terms of how much additional debt we can take on. We're looking at the capital projects in Igloolik, Gjoa Haven, and Cambridge Bay with new power plant contracts being signed and we went to move forward with more. We have a process that's currently open for Kugluktuk's power plant project, and so we are reaching the upper limit of how much debt we can carry, which is precisely why we are looking for ways to work with partners in terms of that debt load.

We want Nunavummiut to have the best, most reliable power, and of course affordable, and that's where the role of partners, whether it's within the Government of Nunavut or federally, come in. We're going to keep looking for those resources on behalf of Nunavummiut. I thank the member. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members, be aware time allotted for question period is now over. Congratulations; you got everybody in.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Returns to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Petitions. Item 11, Responses to Petitions. Item 12, Reports to Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Gross.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document: 385 – 6(2): 2022-2023 Public Service Annual Report

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the 2022-2023 Public Service Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tabled Document: 386 – 6(2): List of Outstanding Tabling Requirements

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. I have one document to table today, which is a list of outstanding statutory tabling requirements. Thank you. Tabling of Documents, Mr. Hickes.

Tabled Document: 387 – 6(2): Correspondence from the Minister of Education: Follow-up from the Committee of the Whole’s Consideration of the Department of Education’s 2025-2026 Main Estimates

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have one document to table today in my capacity as chairperson of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Speaker, the document is a copy of correspondence from the Minister of Education in response to questions that were asked during the consideration of the department’s 2025-2026 main estimates, during the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole during the current winter 2025 sitting of the Legislative Assembly. I encourage all members to review the document with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of Motions. Item 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Item 17, First Reading of Bills. Item 18, Second Reading of Bills. Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Bill 43, Bill 50, Bill 64, Bill 67, Bill 68, Bill 69, Bill 71, and Bill 72, with Mr. Hickes in the chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 44 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out. Before we go to Committee of the Whole we’ll take a lunch break and come back at 1:30. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned at 12:02 and Committee commenced at 13:32

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

Chairman (Mr. George Hickes): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 71 and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On our final sitting day of winter sitting, we wish to review all remaining bills on the Orders of the Day: Bill 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 71 and 72. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree we first deal with Bill 71?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have half a dozen, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. You're only allowed to have two at a time. Does the committee agree to allow the minister's witnesses to appear with him?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

**Bill 71 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2,
2024-2025 – Consideration in Committee**

Minister Kusugak, proceed with your opening comments after you introduce your officials. Thank you.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, sitting with me at the moment is two my right Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left Ms. Megan Hunt, Deputy Minister of Health.

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, I appear before you today to present Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025*.

Through this bill, the Government of Nunavut is seeking to increase its overall appropriation by \$100.29 million for three departments and one agency – Health, Family Services, Community and Government Services, and the Nunavut Arctic College.

The Department of Health is requesting \$69.35 million for program delivery in 2024-25. Funding is needed in two areas:

- \$22.5 million for Health's request will be used for agency nursing contracts, paramedic services contracts, physician contracts, security services and compensation and benefits for Health's staff.
- \$46.9 million will be used to address overspending in the Health Services delivery branch including out-of-territory hospital and physicians' services, out-of-territory mental health and addictions treatment, long-term elders care, purchased services, and other health related programs.

The Department of Family Services is seeking \$26.43 million to address budget shortfalls in various programs including corporate management, family wellness, income support, career development, and poverty reduction.

The Department of Community and Government Services requires \$2.7 million in additional appropriations to address increases in costs due to increases in insurance premiums, maintenance service contracts, and utilities. These costs are uncontrollable.

The Nunavut Arctic College is seeking \$1.8 million to support the College's access to bandwidth and increase its strategic oversight and operational staffing.

Mr. Chairman, although costs of operations have continued to rise nationwide, Government of Nunavut departments are making considerable efforts internally in re-profiling their existing funds to address their needs. This is the second 2024-2025 operations and maintenance supplementary funding request that we have presented for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments, but just a reminder to those who happen to be listening or watching, that we have gone through these supplementary appropriations through the standing committee hearings, and we have lot of our agenda, but I hope for meaningful discussions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I'll ask committee members to please turn to page 4 in your documents, Supplementary Appropriation, Operations and Maintenance No. 2, 2024-2025: Health Operations and Maintenance. Total health care service delivery not previously authorized, \$69,353,000. Questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I know this topic was discussed quite a bit both during Committee of the Whole as well as upstairs in our committee review of this bill. With regards to the reliance on transient employees, it's understanding in certain situations, but it's not quite as necessary in other situations, especially whether it comes to security services. I know we discussed this in great detail already, I just want to ask one question and try and get a commitment to move in this direction.

As was already identified, there's some communities that do require I guess more trained security personnel, and other communities that do not necessarily need former police officers to provide the security service. And it was previously noted the Department of Justice does have correctional officer training that provides for de-escalation and safety tactics. As was also noted, Health has hired some casual security officers locally in communities in a few instances, and I highly encourage that. I would again like to ask that the Department of Health collaborate with the Department of Justice to try and train more local Inuit to be utilized as security officers in health centres, as well as any other departments that also require security services to ensure the safety of the workplace.

I just want to put forward that request and try and get a commitment on there. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, security is one topic that has been discussed more and more amongst my colleagues in many different departments. We have security issues before us in some health centres across Nunavut, but also there's some security happening in some airports and other facilities. The discussion is around exactly that recommendation. I appreciate that recommendation, and it's one that we will take forward between the departments to ensure that we have made-in-Nunavut security wherever possible, and that we should be training up local people within the communities to do that. So we take your recommendation and we will go forward with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that question, Mr. Lightstone. It has been brought up a couple times in this House on the need for legislation coordinating the services and the criteria of security guards in the territory. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and your staff, welcome. My question concerns nursing. I often raise here in the House how when we got elected there were two nursing positions indeterminate and the other being on contract, and I initially heard at the outset that indeterminate benefits are too small, so you have more who have requested to be on contract basis that was mentioned.

With respect to nursing in communities, albeit there may be few, when nurses are in a community for a long time they get to know the members of the community and they know what services Inuit must be given, and the community knows the nurses. So with respect to the benefits, how can that be more in par with contract nursing, or is it pretty much at the same level? That's my question, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regards to nursing and nurses that have been in the communities for a long time, get to know the community well and what health problems they may have and what proper services may be provided. Health is working in every how long term nurses can be retained by the health department and how we may reduce contract nursing under Health. This is something that has been worked on and looking at the long term nurses within health is something we worked hard on.

So to your concern, it's also a concern of the Department of Health, and particularly those who have been in communities for a much longer period of time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister. With nursing, when you have the pros and cons of long term nursing, sometimes it may become problematic as well having been in a community for a long, they may also know who's who in the community. And those are also areas that need some improvements, and in particular in areas of benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree. When you want nursing in the community it's very difficult. In the past nursing was not a problem in Canada or elsewhere in the world. Today we compete to get nurses in Canada and make it a little more difficult, wanting to ensure that you have proper nursing available. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki, taima. Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome, Minister and your officials. I'm curious about the Kivalliq long-term care contract budget. Main and revised estimates stated that it was 4.5 million yet the overspending is \$9.5 million. Is that the full value of the contract? And why are we paying so much when our elders are not in that facility yet? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that is because of the contractual commitment with the contractor. Maybe I could have my deputy Ms. Hunt respond in more detail, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: Thank you to the member for the question. Part of the contract provides for the time for the operators to establish and secure housing to recruit and hire all of the necessary staff to train those staff members, to become familiarized with the operating of the building, and not just providing the care of the elders, but also the unique systems that are used to be able to run the facility as a whole. So that's what a number of months have been focused on with the contractor, hence why those costs without the elders have been incurred. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is that expected to be a one-time cost or will that cost for training and housing and everything that you mentioned be ongoing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. That's a follow-up to the previous question so I'll go directly to Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik* Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. So there is the start-up, to your point. However, we know that there will be times staff at times that may leave the facility or go other to other positions and orientation and training will be an ongoing effort for operations. However, that is embedded in the contract cost overall. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just so we know, do we know when exactly the facility will be opened and when the elders will move in? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on that it is a moving target. The plan is to have it ready for residents to move in mid-April, but that may change as we move forward, Mr. Chairman, so it might be between April and June, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Just before I go to the next name on my list I would like to get a clarification. With the contract that's in place and that's being paid out by the Department of Health to the contractor that's going to be operating the facility, it was mentioned there's training and arranging housing and a number of different aspects that these funds have been used for.

About a year ago we were told the facility was going to open last summer, so I'm kind of curious as to why it has waited until now to do that when it was anticipated to open last summer. I would have thought that a lot of that work would have been done on that opening date. I do realize it's a moving target since then, but it seems we're kind of planning behind things. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, you're right. If we take look at the chronology of when this was supposed to open, it was supposed to open back in October 2024, or sorry October 2023ish, and it was delayed until January 2024, and then a whole chronology of events happened and now we are where we are.

All the training and all the preparation work has to happen with a lot of the equipment that in the building, and those equipment could not be put into the building and tested until such time as the building is safe and everything in that facility is able to be tested to its full capacity, if it's water pressure, if it's the oxygen, the whole facility.

For the staff and the contractor to go in there and do their training and good over all the steps in having elders in that facility that need utmost care, you have to ensure that the facility is ready to receive them and that the people are trained to deliver the very important services to these elders in the facility.

To do that you have to train with everything on site and be prepared to receive the clients, and that's why there is that delay. You can't train in an unfinished building. So long answer, but those are the reasons, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. No, I appreciate the response, Minister. If I could just ask, so if the facility potentially could be opening in as little as five weeks, is the staff and everything ready to go, if that date does come along? I understand it's not going to be 22 elders moving in overnight, but is the facility staffing levels and is the facility itself potentially ready to be open in as little as five weeks? Thank you.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, yes. It won't open with untrained staff, so if the contractors are working on training them up and if it's going to take six weeks or seven weeks or five weeks to do that, they will ensure that everybody entering that facility is trained and that the facility is able to begin to receive the clients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for clarifying that. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome. I have a question about the security guards at health centres. They work in shifts. The contract had been given out in May '24 for the building and there are 16 communities in Nunavut and there's 25 total communities. And then there's nine left over. They must have a reason why they're not included.

The other one I would like to ask about is for two years the main estimate, \$17.5 million that's written down, and we've been talking about training needs, in the House and also at the standing committee, to train staff for the building. Can you clarify this, Minister, if my question makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, communities that have elder places, the budgets is for 16 communities but there are 22 health centres now that have a caretaker for elders. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for clarifying that. The budget for two years for the contractor, is it not enough money right away? Can you talk about that some more, to let us know if it's going to be in budget. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget that we're talking about today, it will make it enough. If it was not going to be enough, we would not have requested not enough money. So this should be enough money. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister. Regarding paramedic services, I'm looking for some information and clarification. The paramedic services was developed to help prevent health centre closures, minimize the disruption to health services due to critical staffing shortages across the territory.

The three main objectives of this paramedic program was to prevent clinic closures, provide safe, quality care to clients, and to provide respite to existing clinical staff. Using this service resulted in the need for 2024-2025 fiscal year need \$7.5 million for additional funding.

I'm looking for clarification. These paramedics that were filling in, were they filling in for vacant indeterminate nursing positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They were filling in because there were no nurses in that community, so that's what they would be for. Some of them would be permanent positions or they would be a vacancy in that health centre. But they there are to fill a vacancy in nursing.

There's just not enough nurses to cover the whole territory, especially in certain times of the year when nurses go on leave or and/or their contracts. These are very useful and heavily used personnel within the health system of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. So my follow-up question for this is was the amount for paramedic services actually higher than what

you're asking for? If they were filling it for vacant nurses positions, that means there should have been funding in the main estimates for the department to fund the paramedics' use. Was part of it internally funded, and then the 7.5 million was extra needed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It doesn't quite work that way, Mr. Chairman. When you're flying in and out paramedics and things like that, the costs do go up. Mr. Chairman, if I could have Ms. Hunt respond in more detail through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. It's a really good request question to help describe the landscape on this.

There are paramedics that will be brought in for vacancies in the indeterminant space, and we also know that in a number of communities, for example, two-nurse nursing stations that have high volumes that we need to make sure that there is that respite that the ability to ensure we don't have closures or go on to emergency status, also increases that.

And then the rotational nature. So when we have those rotations, and the cost of the travel for those rotations also provides a large cost to that budgetary line as well.

As we talked about earlier when Health was up, the work that we're doing to reduce some of those costs and work that has not been done nationally that is being done in Nunavut, which is creating a specific role and scope of paramedics in community as part of team-based care, so that there's a very defined role and function for them as part of the health centre team, rather than sort of the nature that COVID really created, was such a challenge in health care providers where they were brought in on a regular basis but not with a clear scope that becomes a sustainable, long-term part of the health care ecosystem. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page 4, Supplementary Appropriation, Operations and Maintenance, No. 2, 2024-2025. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to refer to the out-of-territory hospitals and physicians but I'll refer to the medical travel.

Mr. Chairman, a lot of times constituents and non-constituents need to hear the medical travel policy, and a lot of times patients need escorts and patients are not in those

communities. What I would recommend to the health department, when the patient is being seen, it would be great if the nurses or doctors when they are looking at patients, if they do have to get out of the territory for hospital and patient care, what would be great is if they do have to leave, if there was a protocol in place to inform the patients that the medical travel policy indicates that it has to be this way.

Because far too many times on social media it's being posted about the medical travel policy, and I feel it's time the Department of Health, if they do have a protocol, if a patient that needs to travel for medical travel, inform the patient that this is the medical travel policy to prevent a lot of the issues concerns being posted on social media and a lot of them posted on Facebook.

A lot of times us MLAs, regular MLAs, we're put into a situation where we can't provide them information, and the only way we can get access to information is we go directly to the health minister when it comes to medical travel policy.

So I highly recommend the department at least make a protocol when a client has to travel. Inform the patient that this is the medical travel policy you have to follow. It's just a recommendation, and I hope they take it into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I'm sure the Minister of Health was listening very closely to that suggestion. I have no more names on my list. We are on page 4, Supplementary Appropriation, Operations and Maintenance No. 2, 2024-2025. Total amount not previously authorized \$69,353,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 5, Supplementary Appropriation, Operations and Maintenance No. 2, 2024-2025. Community and Government Services, operations and maintenance. Not previously authorized \$2,700,000. Questions? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the minister can elaborate further in regards to insurance premium. What is the reason why it's there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, the insurance, usually they increase at this time for the premium increase of insurance. That's why it had to be increased because the prices increased for government property. We have to abide by the costs that are rising, so we need to keep up with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Minister. In the communities when we have municipal equipment that burn down, does that have any effect on this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): They would go through NAMEX Insurance, the municipal insurance. This is for the government insurance. Mr. Chairman if possible, through you, I would like to change the witness. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree to allow the Minister to exchange witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please proceed. Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you. Minister, would you like me to direct the response to Mr. Seeley? Sorry first you should introduce – although I just did. Maybe the Minister can introduce his new official for the record, thank you.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After the Four Nations Cup Victory, I would like to introduce my new left winger.

>>*Laughter*

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services. I'm pretty sure he's ready to answer the question through you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The answer is no. It's a separate policies. This request is tied to our leased properties, and insurance paid by the landlords separate policies. No direct impact. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. If I could just ask a follow-up question. So when new leases are signed on, I understand there is not a definitive time per year when that's always done, but typically forecasting insurance premiums is a pretty accurate calculation to be able to forecast. Can I ask Mr. Seeley what unexpectedly occurred to account for this increase? Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The change is that we had a series of leases that did expire during the fiscal year, and the market conditions did change during the fiscal year. The department does take measures to manage its budget uses its internal resources to the full extent that it is able; however, in this case, the overage was just beyond our existing

resources based on what the landlords came back with. And that was included in our leases. So it's a function of time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. We're on page 5, supplementary. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So I would like to focus one more time on utilities expense that the department is seeking an increase in budget for. Climate change is real, and the Arctic is warming up at a rate three times the global average. This is something that I've been stressing on since I first campaigning in 2017. We didn't inherit this planet from those before us, we're really borrowing it from future generations.

When I think of climate change and the increased rates of natural disasters that it causes and the change in the environment that we are experiencing, I can't help but think if we don't do what needs to be done today or tomorrow, it's going to be our kids and grandchildren that will be suffering the consequences. That's why I've really been trying to stress this on the Government of Nunavut to do its part and help Nunavummiut do their part.

One thing that I've been asking the Department of Community and Government Services over the last eight years is, with the growing rates of electricity that the government utilizes and the growing millions that Community and Government Services pays for the power, we're now at \$42 million that the Government of Nunavut paid to QEC last year for electricity, that's roughly almost 15 per cent of the department's budget. So I would like to ask one last time what is the department doing to try and reduce the electricity cost that you're investing in today. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department has been working through the Nunavut Energy Management Program, they are working to improve the older buildings to ensure that they replace the doors and windows with more energy efficient packages. They are looking into where they can include solar and more energy efficient systems into the new buildings that they are building. They will continue to do that and they will continue to seek ways more creative ways in ensuring that the future builds going forward take into account the need to be more energy efficient as the price of energy continues to increase, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I appreciate that the government's Nunavut Energy Management Program is investing in our older buildings to try and make them more efficient, whether it's retaining heat or utilizing low flow technology. But we continue to build hundred-million dollars projects with half-million dollar electricity projections

without utilizing alternative energy aspects such as solar or wind. And I don't understand why. We're just going to have to go back later and incorporate these at a higher cost.

I guess I just wanted to put on the record. I'm very disappointed that with the government's lack of any sort of traction in trying to address the rising power cost and the disinterest in utilizing alternative energy, especially in the new construction. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a very frustrating situation, when you take a look at it from the government side where you do budget or try to budget for infrastructure to have those very energy efficient programs, but because it becomes cost prohibitive, something has to be cut. If you need to be able to build a school with X amount of square footage, and your budget says, okay, either we build a smaller school with the energy efficient things and we build the right-sized school and something has to be cut. Unfortunately, at this point, it's been the energy programs.

I think moving forward, as energy efficiency and solar systems or solar panels and stuff like that, become more cheaper and that's where they want to go. They definitely do consider all those energy efficient programs, but there are limited budgets, Mr. Chairman and other departments are constantly looking for ways to reach the goal that Mr. Lightstone is talking about.

I don't know if anybody in this room that doesn't believe that we need to be more energy efficient. We are in the most tender part of the universe where global warming is impacting the most and we definitely want to have footprints and making sure that we are conscious of energy and global warming, and that we do impact it in a positive way we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I think it's been said in this House that there's a financial cost to not putting these systems into buildings, but there's a social cost as well, and I think it is important to recognize that.

We're on page 5, Supplementary Appropriations Operations and Maintenance, No. 2, 2024-2025. Community and Government Services, total amount not previously authorized, \$2,700,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 6. Supplementary Appropriation, Operations and Maintenance No. 2, 2024-2025, Family Services. We'll start off with item 1, corporate management. Amount not previously authorized, \$1,006,000. Questions? Not

seeing any, total corporate management, total amount not previously authorized \$1,006,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to the next section, family wellness. Item 1. Total amount not previously authorized, \$21,243,000. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So with regard to family wellness I would like to focus in on the social worker situation. It's clear that we're facing both a recruitment and retention struggle or challenge. I believe that the social workers are somewhere in the pay range of pay grade 15, which I believe is far too low, given the stuff they have to expose themselves to and what they have to do to protect children and vulnerable people.

When we had the OAG before us last they had said that the stuff that the auditors had to expose themselves to just reading the reports that these social workers have to do on a daily basis really impacted them, the auditors, and they had to get, I guess mental health supports to try and get over what they've had to read through.

What I'm trying to say is that I strongly believe that what those social workers expose themselves to and put themselves on the line for is far beyond a pay grade 15, and I really hope that the department can find some means to address that pay scale matter, whether it's a market rate adjustment or otherwise.

The other issue as well that has become an issue with the Department of Family Services is the transient nature of social workers. Having different social workers coming in and dealing with children, the child having to retell their stories to different social workers also impacts the service.

I guess the question that I would like to focus on with relation to retention is other departments that have also faced similar recruitment and retention challenges have utilized retention bonuses to encourage their employees in high stress positions to try and stay on and provide more continuity to Nunavummiut.

That's something that I would like to ask, whether or not that is currently being considered by the department to try and address the inconsistency that's brought on by transient employees, the utilization of retention bonuses to try and encourage social workers to stay on longer. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: It thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to replace my left winger again, through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Seeley is getting traded already. Does the committee agreed to allow the minister to exchange witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please. Before I introduce him, I will give the minister an opportunity to do so. Please proceed, Minister.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Jonathan Ellsworth is the Deputy Minister of Family Services, and through you, Mr. Chairman he's ready to respond to the question.

Chairman: Thank you. Hopefully he came with some draft picks. Mr. Ellsworth, go ahead.

Mr. Ellsworth: I'm still Kyle Seeley, I guess, but thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that question.

This is one of the items that we were carefully considering during the course of our evaluation when I first came on. There was a number of issues that the Auditor General identified, including the lack of an occupational health and safety plan, counselling services for social workers, incentive packages. The answer to your question is, yes, in the short form, and I know we're trying to achieve brevity here today, Mr. Chair.

But we want to define the evidentiary foundation by which we can make proposals for those kind of incentives. There's a wide array and suite of things we are looking at at the present time, but we do see that as a barrier for retention.

It's not only the financial incentives, but it's safety and it's counselling and it's balance, work-life balance, these kinds of things, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page 6, family wellness. Total amount not previously authorized. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following up on my colleague's question in regards to the social workers under Family Services, they have a very heavy responsibility and go through a lot of stress in the line of duty. And some, usually, after work they have to go back to their families. I fully support make sure, my colleagues are comments. We have heard about the auditor general's report and the constant changeover of the staff, and because of the rapid changeover, there's usually some information loss somewhere in between.

These issues were brought up by the Auditor General's office and I can't emphasize enough that social workers' responsibilities are hugely stressful. Some of the communities are even having a harder time, because they don't have social workers or anybody to help them in times of stress. I would like this to be reviewed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page 6. Family wellness, item 1, total amount – Mr. Quqqiaq. I'm going to ask members of the committee to acknowledge the chair to get your name on the list sooner, please. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. I'll let you know in advance next time.

Mr. Chairman, in regards to Family Services, when it comes to Social Services worker and mental health workers, in my constituency community of Kugaaruk it has been brought to my attention many times. A lot of them want to go see mental health services, but due to the fact that the health centre is very, very small, and they do need these services, but inadequate building being the community is rapidly growing very, very fast, so I encourage the department to at least let the health department know that the community of Kugaaruk, their priority right now is to get a bigger health centre.

While I'm doing this I'm waiting for a letter from the hamlet of Kugaaruk in support of the community that it is their priority right now, for the general public's information, in the community of Kugaaruk that the hamlet is trying very hard, and unfortunately, if I'm not mistaken, the community is third or fourth in line. But in this meantime, the reason why they want it a priority and be built as soon as possible is the reason why mental health services is needed in the community, and Social Services worker. That being said, I hope that the department takes it as notice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page 6, family wellness, item 1. Amount not previously authorized, \$21,243,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to the next item on the list, income assistance. Item 1, total amount not previously authorized, \$2,994,000. Questions? Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to bring this to light again. A lot of times when income support clients need income assistance, far too often income support workers are not available in the office, and far too often they are not available in the regional hubs in every region. I think it's time that the department comes up with a better way of assisting clients.

I just wanted to bring this to light again. Far too often many constituents get answers from other communities. It would be great when all these clients get income assistance, that when they are being assessed they provide them with phone numbers so that when they are not available there's another option available for them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. While I'm not directing this specifically to you, Mr. Quqiaq, there have been a number of committee members that are bringing up comments that are not directly related to the bill in front of us. We're here to deal with the supplementary appropriation.

I understand there's a lot of issues across the territory that we want to continue to highlight and I respect that, but out of respect for time and the witnesses and everything that we're here to do, I would ask members to direct your questions directly related to the bills that are in front of us. Thank you.

We're on page 6, income assistance. Total amount not previously authorized, \$2,994,000. Any further questions? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Next item on our list, career development. Total career development not previously authorized, \$875,000. Questions? Total amount not previously authorized, \$875,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Next item on my list, we have poverty reduction, total poverty reduction not previously authorized, \$315,000. Questions? Total poverty reduction not previously authorized, \$315,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Family Services, operations and maintenance. Total department \$26,433,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go please to page 7. Supplementary Appropriation Operations and Maintenance No. 2, 2024-2025. Nunavut Arctic College, item 1. Total Nunavut Arctic College not previously authorized \$1,800,000. Questions? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could you provide some information where and what this number is going to be used for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak or am I sensing another trade? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, The increased bandwidth to maintain and support the new low earth orbiting research and education network long term. Nunavut Arctic College is requesting an increase in its operations and maintenance budgets of \$1.1 million in executive support.

The Nunavut Arctic College is requesting \$266,654 in ongoing funding to establish a chief information officer position. This position was approved by the Arctic College board of governors in 2022.

For operational staffing they are seeking \$444,449 in ongoing funding to build a well-equipped specialized the information technology team of four personnel capable of supporting the technical and operational demands across the territory, to ensure reliable onsite expertise in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Nunavut Arctic College amount not previously authorized, \$1,800,000. Any further questions? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Total Nunavut Arctic College not previously authorized, \$1,800,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to Bill 71. My apologies, I got a little mixed up with what bill we were in front of. I'll ask members to go to Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Please go to schedule on page 2. Total operations and maintenance, total supplementary appropriation not previously authorized, \$100,286,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: My apologies, I missed a step. We agreed to the schedule on page 2. Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to Bill 71 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 71 is ready for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, any closing comments?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks, colleagues, for the questions and my hockey team for the answers. I would like to excuse my current left winger before I go into my other opening comments, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Witnesses may be excused and you may refresh. Go ahead, Minister.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: As we're starting a new bill, you can start from fresh with your new witnesses. Thank you. Just for the committee's information, unless somebody objects to a witness being exchanged, I'm just going to go forward with allowing them, to save some time. So with that, Minister, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments on Bill 72. Thank you.

**Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-26 –
Consideration in Committee**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman and colleagues. To my right, I haven't changed. Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance. To my left, Mr. Abraham Sulieman, Comptroller General For Finance.

Mr. Chairman, I appear before you today to present Bill 72, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*. Through this Bill, we are seeking \$280.72 million in supplementary capital appropriations for 2025-26.

I want to note that the Assembly has already approved 98 per cent of these funds through previous capital plans, but this appropriation is required to carry funds forward from 2024-2025 to 2025-2026. This Bill contains one request for new funding of \$5 million.

The government's appropriation process requires annual approvals, so an appropriation is needed to re-allocate unspent funds from 2024-20 to 2025-20 so that we can continue to deliver these much-needed capital projects.

The amount we are asking to be carried over is based on estimates. Once the fiscal year has ended and final invoices for 2024-20 are paid, we will return to the Legislative Assembly to request adjustments.

Through Bill 72 we are seeking to carry over funds for 120 projects. Internally, we consider carry-over requests in two groups. The first group includes 112 projects with attached funding of \$262.14 million, where we have made financial or contractual commitments.

The second group includes eight projects with attached funding of \$13.58 million that the Assembly has approved but that have not yet reached the stage where there are legal commitments to proceed.

The increasing capital appropriation, which has grown from \$200 million to \$350 million over the past few years has led to a higher carry-over amount.

Apart from carry-overs, we are also seeking \$5 million in new capital funding to allow departments to build on the momentum of the new Enterprise Resource Program and prepare the government to further expand digital services. We are developing a new digital governance framework and a budgeting process for these digital projects, but this funding is meant to keep momentum between now and 2026-2027. These funds will be used for government-wide initiatives which can improve our efficiency, workflows, and the services we provide to the public.

Through this appropriation, we are seeking to transfer the capital funds which were previously allocated to the Departments of Community and Government Services and Economic Development and Transportation to the newly created Departments of Community Services, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, in line with their new responsibilities. The net effect of these transfers is zero.

Mr. Chairman, I am available to address questions about the supplementary appropriation to our capital process generally and will be here to respond to any questions the members may have.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are there any general comments to opening comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I'm glad that the minister had noted the rate of growth of the capital estimates over the last few years from 200 million, which was a record back then, to 350 million more recently. But I would also like to point out that the capital carry-overs, the unspent capital budget has grown from 163 million to 230 million and now to 280 million. That is quite a concern when these funds are just locked into the bank from year to year meanwhile there are other projects which cannot proceed because they are cost-prohibitive.

This capital carry-over request of 280 million is almost 80 per cent of the 350 million original budget that we had passed. That is a very significant concern, that we've gotten to the point where we're actually carrying over 80 per cent of the capital budgets. And I think that there would be much better use of these funds than having them spend years locked away in the bank.

I strongly believe the government needs to do more to strengthen its project management in its oversight of these projects to ensure that there's less projects being delayed and better utilization of these funds. That's my opening comments. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll ask members to go to page 4. Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026, starting with the Department of Finance, centrally

administered funds, not previously authorized, \$13,209,000. Any questions? Thank you. Centrally administered funds not previously authorized, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 5. Department of Justice, capital. Directorate. Item number 1, amount not previously authorized, \$994,000. Any questions? Item 1, not previously authorized, \$994,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to item 2, Courthouse renovation. Total amount not previously authorized, \$250,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Total directorate not previously authorized, Department of Justice, \$1,244,000. Questions? Sorry, my apologies. Agreed.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: I'm getting ahead of myself here. Members, please go to page 6. Department of Culture and Heritage, capital, directorate. Amount not previously authorized \$150,000. Questions? Amount not previously authorized, \$150,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 7, Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026 Department of Education. Corporate services. Amount not previously authorized, \$23,058,000. Questions? Item 1, corporate services amount not previously authorized, \$23,058,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to item 2. Amount not previously authorized, \$1,595,000, questions? Department of Education, item number 2, amount not previously authorized, \$1,595,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Department of Education, total corporate services, amount not previously authorized, \$24,653,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 8. Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026, directorate. Item 1, Department of Health, amount not previously authorized, \$34,326,000. Questions? Total directorate, \$34,326,000 not previously authorized. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 9 Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026 Department of Environment, program management, amount not previously authorized, \$4,949,000. Questions? Total program management, Department of Environment, amount not previously authorized, \$4,949,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 10. This is a negative amount. Still needs to be approved. Community and Government Services, capital. Community and government services amount not previously authorized, negative \$102,229,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page 11. Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026 again this is a negative for Economic Development and Transportation. Total department, negative \$29,930,000 not previously authorized. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 12 Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Supplementary Appropriation, capital, No. 1, 2025-2026. Local government services. Amount not previously authorized, \$18,669,000. Questions? Not seeing any, local government services, amount not previously authorized, \$18,669,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. Item 2, \$46,936,000 not previously authorized. Questions? Not seeing any, infrastructure, item number 2, amount not previously authorized, \$46,936,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to item 3, Information Management, total amount not previously authorized, \$1 million. Questions? Not seeing any, Information Management,

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, not previously authorized, \$1 million. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to item 4, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, transportation, amount not previously authorized, \$27,132,000. Questions? Not seeing any, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. Transportation, amount not previously authorized, \$27,132,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to item 5, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, infrastructure. Amount not previously authorized, \$6,950,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to item number 6, transportation. Total amount not previously authorized, \$795,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Item number 7. Amount not previously authorized, still under transportation, \$58,384,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Total department, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut not previously authorized, \$159,866,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 15. This is a long one. Community Services. Local government services. Total amount not previously authorized, \$92,760,000. Questions? Not seeing any, item 1, local government services, amount not previously authorized. \$92,000,760. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to item 2, infrastructure. Amount not previously authorized, \$1,218,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to item 3, transportation. Amount not previously authorized, \$2,517,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page 17. Item number 4, local government services under community services. Amount not previously authorized, \$3,836,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Item number 5, under local government services, still. Amount not previously authorized, \$73,775,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Community Services. Total department not previously authorized, \$174,113,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page 18. Family Services, Corporate Management item number 1, amount not previously authorized, \$367,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to Bill 72. Bill 72, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Please go to the schedule on page 2. Total amount not previously authorized, \$280,718,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed?

Chairman: Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to Bill 72 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to put Bill 72 for third reading on Orders of the Day?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, any closing remarks.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to get Mr. Sulieman to sit at my left. No questions happen when he is here.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, colleagues, and some great suggestions during the Discussion of this Bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your time.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. That's what happens when you bring an enforcer on the table. I'll recognize the clock here. We'll take a 15-minute break here. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed from 14:48 to 15:09

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to call the committee back to order. We're here to deal with Bill 50, *Fuel Tax Act*. Minister Kusugak, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee? Minister.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I do, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to allow the witnesses to appear before the committee?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Please go ahead. Minister, introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left is Thomas Ahlfors, Director of Legislative Division for the Justice Department.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity to present Bill 50, the Fuel Tax Act, an Act to repeal and replace the Petroleum Products Tax Act.

The *Petroleum Products Tax Act*, originally enacted in 1988, was inherited from the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1999. Since implementation, the Act has only undergone minor changes and, as a result, it has become outdated and requires significant updates and improvements.

The amendments proposed in Bill 50 are essential for modernizing our tax framework, improving tax administration, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms. The new Fuel Tax Act will clarify terminology and definitions to improve consistency and understanding. It will add enforcement capabilities and provide more certainty for taxpayers in situations which are not always clear in the current legislation.

These proposed amendments are primarily administrative in nature and are expected to be revenue-neutral. Consumers will see no changes at the pump because of this new Act.

We have already exchanged some correspondence relating to this proposed Bill, but will be more than available to answer any questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes my opening comments.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation have any opening comments? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 50, Fuel Tax Act.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

I note for the record that one motion to amend the Bill was adopted during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee to undertake clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

As introduced, clause 51 of the Bill provided that the Minister may "make regulations for carrying the purposes and provisions of this Act into effect, including regulations respecting the volumetric rate of tax payable on fuel."

The amendment to this provision provides for a maximum rate of tax that can be set by regulation. This approach reflects similar provisions in the new *Liquor Tax Act*.

The standing committee encourages the Minister to publicly clarify the government's timeline for bringing the new *Fuel Tax Act* into force.

As members will recall, the new *Liquor Tax Act* received Assent on November 8, 2022. It is now March 2025, and the legislation has not yet been brought into force.

Information published by the territorial Department of Finance as part of this year's budget indicates that the legislation will be brought into force "once the government finalizes rates and other administrative matters."

The standing committee is hopeful that the new *Fuel Tax Act* will be brought into force in a more timely manner. This concludes my opening comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Are there any general comments to the opening comments? Seeing none, please take your legislative binder out and open to Bill 50, please. And for committee members, I will pause briefly between each clause, in case members do have questions. It's a little different setup than the previous two bills that we've gone through. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 14, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 15, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 16, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 17, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 18, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 19, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 20, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 21, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 22, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 23, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 24, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 25, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 26, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 27, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 28, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 29, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 30, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 31, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 32, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 33, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 34, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 35, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 36, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 37, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 38, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 39, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 40, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 41, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 42, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 43, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 44, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 45, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 46, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 47, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 48, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 49, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Almost there. Clause 50, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 51, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 52, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 53, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 54, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 55, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 56, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to Bill 50 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Pursuant to Rule 62(2) does the committee agree Bill 50 can be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Brief closing comments, Minister.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are my comments. Thank you.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman: Thank you. I'll allow the minister to exchange witnesses to be ready for the next Bill, if I wishes.

Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Just again, because it is a new bill, I'll ask you for the record to introduce your officials again, please.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if I didn't get any questions on 54 sections of that bill I'm not changing my witnesses. To my right is Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left is Thomas Ahlfors, Director of Legislative Division for Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Before us we have Bill 67, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*. Minister, can you please proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appear today to present Bill 67, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, which proposes extending eligibility and payments under the Nunavut Child Benefit for six months following a child's death.

The Nunavut Child Benefit is a non-taxable payment made monthly to qualifying families with children under the age of 18. The basic benefit for 2024-2025 is \$29 per month for each qualifying child. Parents with modest employment incomes also qualify for up to \$30.75 more per month.

The amendment aligns the Nunavut Child Benefit with recent changes made to the Canada Child Benefit through federal Bill C-69. The federal government introduced this change to alleviate the financial burden on grieving parents, ensuring continued support during a difficult time.

Mr. Chairman, this proposed change is a small and tangible act of compassion that can help ease the financial burden for parents during this difficult time.

If the proposed Bill is passed, the amendments will take effect on January 1, 2025, aligning with the Canada Revenue Agency's administration of this provision.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation have opening comments? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 67, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee recognizes that this is a non-contentious initiative.

The standing committee encourages the Department of Finance to work with the Department of Family Services to ensure that income assistance officers in Nunavut communities are advised of these legislative changes and have clear information to provide to clients.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Does any members have general comments to the opening comments? Seeing none, please go to your legislative binder and open Bill 67. Bill 67, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to Bill 67 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Pursuant to Rule 62(2) does the committee agree to proceed, that Bill 67 may be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, brief closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. We'll now proceed with Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act. Minister Kusugak, are you good with your witnesses?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: We will be in a minute, as soon as Brian enters the room.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my left is Brian Moyo, Director of Fiscal Policy for Finance. To my right is Daniel Young, Deputy Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman and Members, I appreciate the opportunity to present Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act, which proposes increasing tobacco tax rates.

The current rates are unchanged since our last increase in March 2017. At the time of that increase, Nunavut had the highest tobacco tax rates in the country. As a result, we saw the first decline in tobacco consumption per capita in several years.

However, because we have not increased our tax rates in eight years, Nunavut now sits in 10th place, an unacceptably low position considering the smoking rates in our territory. Tobacco consumption has steadily trended upward since the brief decline in 2017.

Approval of Bill 68's amendments propose increases to the tobacco tax rates:

- from \$0.30 to \$0.40 per cigarette,
- from \$0.40 to \$0.533 per gram of smoked tobacco, and
- from \$0.30 to \$0.45 per gram of non-smoked tobacco.

At current consumption levels, this tax increase is expected to bring in an additional \$7.6 million annually. This revenue will go to the government's general revenue fund.

We have worked with our colleagues in the Department of Health, who support this measure as part of our broader tobacco reduction efforts. While tax increases are not a

complete solution, they are an effective tool in reducing tobacco consumption, especially among youth.

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

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Chair. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the Minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee also recognizes the challenges involved in setting tobacco tax rates that are of a sufficient magnitude to deter consumption of the product, especially among youth, but which do not inadvertently incentivize the creation of black markets.

The standing committee also notes that Nunavut participates in Canada's coordinated vaping taxation framework. Information published by the territorial Department of Finance as part of this year's Budget indicates that:

"On July 1, 2024, the Canada Revenue Agency began collecting Nunavut tax on vaping products sold in the territory. Rates are set at \$1.12 per 2ml of vaping product (and \$1.12 for each 10ml after the first 10ml) and are levied in addition to the federal rates."

The standing committee encourages the minister to provide regular updates to the Legislative Assembly concerning the taxation of both tobacco and vaping products.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Before we go clause by clause are there any general comments? Seeing none, please open to your legislative binder and open Bill 68, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to Bill 68 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Pursuant to rule 62(2) is the committee agreed that Bill 68 can be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, brief closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for sitting with us today and going through all these bills. I would like to thank all the people that are behind the scenes working on all these bills that we discussed today. Thank you again.

I would just like to take this brief opportunity to say hello to my brother Peter who's sitting in his cottage in Winnipeg, for some reason watching this program. Have a good day, Peter, and let's have a good day. Thanks very much, colleagues, for your support.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses out. I'll ask members to remain in your seats we'll proceed directly to Bill 43, thank you.

Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Before us we have Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*. Minister, if you could introduce your officials and proceed directly to your opening comments, please.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my right, Peter Ma, director, chief executive officer of Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, to my left and to my left Thomas Ahlfors, Director of Legislation, drafting of legislation.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairperson and Members. I would like to acknowledge the good discussion that we had during the review of Bill 43 by the Standing Committee on Legislation. I appreciate the frank dialogue with the Standing Committee on Legislation, which lead to friendly amendments to Bill 43. The use of Aajiiqatigiinni, decision-making through discussion and consensus, was critical to having a bill that all members can agree on.

The intent of Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*, is to modernize the current Act. Among the amendments are:

- Eliminating the role of the Minister in decision-making processes
- Increasing the aggregate loan limit for a single business enterprise and related business enterprises from the current limit of \$2 million to \$5 million
- Additional disclosure of businesses receiving financial assistance in the Corporation's annual report, and
- Aligning the Act to ensure that there are no conflicts with the Canadian Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Chairperson, these amendments support:

- The provision of adequate capital for the growing capital needs of existing Nunavut businesses
- The creation of new Nunavut businesses
- Access to sufficient capital for Nunavummiut to acquire Nunavut businesses, which provides employment, training, and services and/or goods to local economies.

Lastly, Bill 43, supports the Katujjiluta priority of “diversifying our local economies”.

Mr. Chairperson, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to answer any questions that Members may have. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have any open comments to provide? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I am pleased to make opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

I note for the record that five motions to amend the Bill were adopted during the Minister's recent appearance before the standing committee to undertake clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. These amendments:

- Expanded the range of information to be publicly disclosed in the corporation's annual reports;
- Expanded the range of financial instruments that can be offered to clients by the corporation;
- Strengthened the criteria for appointment to the corporation's board of directors;

- Expanded the range of regulations that can be made to include the ability to prescribe criteria for determining the owner or owners of a business enterprise; and
- Clarified the date on which the Bill will come into force.

The standing committee recognizes that Nunavut is a signatory to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Consequently, the government is constrained in its ability to statutorily restrict eligibility for financial assistance to only residents of the territory. The standing committee encourages the corporation to ensure that its operational policies and procedures prioritize Nunavut-owned business enterprises to the greatest possible extent.

The standing committee notes that the 2023-2024 Ministerial Letter of Expectation to the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 3, 2023. The response to the Letter of Expectation was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 12, 2024.

Members were recently informed that the government has discontinued the practice of publishing annual ministerial letters of expectation. The Department of Finance's 2024-2025 business plan indicated that it was "working with territorial corporations on developing memoranda of understanding through the Territorial Corporations Committee." The standing committee looks forward to the timely tabling of the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Memorandum of Understanding with the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does any members have any general comments before we go clause by clause? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Minister, welcome. I want to comment about the write-off of the bills. I was concerned that there will be an increase of write-off total of write-off with the increase from \$2 million to \$5 million increase. I wanted to make sure that you are informing the committee about this, because I just want to point out to you that we have to agree with the bill.

Chairman: Before I go clause by clause I would like to make a brief comment as well. As the chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation noted, there were five motions in this Bill that were accepted by the government. I would like to acknowledge all the work of the Standing Committee on Legislation and supporting staff, and the minister and his supporting staff in coming to agreement on the number of motions that quite significantly, in my opinion, made this Bill stronger than what it was first introduced.

I just want to acknowledge that. There was a lot of work put into this bill. Sometimes it seems to the public like we are going through clause by clause and agreeing to things, and there's a lot of work that gets done behind the scenes. I just wanted to acknowledge that.

I would ask members to go to Bill 43 in their legislative binder, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 14, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 15, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 16, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 17, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 18, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 19, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 20, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 21, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 22, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 23, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 24, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 25, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 26, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 27, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 28, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 29, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 30, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 31, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 32, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 33, agreed.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 34, agreed.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 35, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 36, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 37, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 38, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to Bill 4 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree Bill 43 can be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Brief closing comments, Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation) thank you very much, my colleagues. We made quite a few changes and exchanged correspondences on this Bill in order to tighten it up,

and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. That's how we can work together as a government. And only through working together can we make changes.

(interpretation ends) I also want to thank the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation board of directors who spearheaded this and wanted not current act to be in place. So I really appreciate those board of directors that worked tirelessly with our chief executive officer in getting this Bill updated to be passed now.

I thank everybody for all the work that has taken place to this, and finally and a lot of good opportunities for Nunavut businesses. Please come and visit our Nunavut business credit corporations, because we do need to diversify our local economies, and this is a great opportunity for any new businesses that want to be created within the smaller communities and within all of Nunavut.

Let's encourage our constituents to take and get into business. This is one way of doing it. So I would encourage everybody to do it. So thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. I would ask members to remain in your seats. We'll proceed directly to Bill 64.

Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Gross. Before us we have Bill 64, Post-Secondary Support Act. Minister Gross, if you could introduce your officials and proceed to your opening comments, please. Thank you.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, committee, for having us to present bill 64. With me today on my left, or my left-winger, is our Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu, and my right-winger is Ariel Stockdale (ph), our director of policy. Also in the gallery is our Assistant Deputy Minister of Education Programs, Bill Cooper. Unfortunately, Mr. Chair, our subject matter expert May Baker (ph), our director of the financial assistance for Nunavut students, could not make it here today due to weather.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. Thank you for allowing me to appear before the Committee of the Whole for consideration of Bill 64, *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*.

I want to begin by thanking the Standing Committee on Legislation for their detailed review of the draft Bill. I also want to thank the legislative staff for working closely with my team and the drafting team at the Department of Justice to facilitate the Committee's

input so quickly. This feedback has sharpened the legislation, highlighting key areas for improvement, and enabling amendments that strengthen the Bill, putting Aajiqatigiinniq and Piliriqatigiinniq into practice.

Mr. Chair, Bill 64 is the result of years of effort to revamp the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program. It aims to meet the diverse needs of Nunavut's post-secondary students, remove barriers to their studies, and boost their success.

In 2022, staff from the Department of Education and Nunavut Tunngavik established the FANS Review Project Team, guided by four principles: collaboration, flexibility, simplicity, and openness. This legislation creates a framework to embed those principles in student programming.

Rather than amend the outdated Student Financial Assistance Act inherited from the Government of the Northwest Territories, we are proposing a full repeal and replacement. This made-in-Nunavut Bill, shaped by stakeholders and feedback from this committee, addresses longstanding issues raised by MLAs and constituents. It overhauls not just Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, but also how we support students.

The Project Team found current financial support inadequate amid rising costs, leaving gaps that hinder student success. Bill 64, through its regulations will allow the department to offer increased financial supports especially for Inuit students reducing financial stress so they can focus on academics and improve outcomes. Beyond money, the legislation enables non-monetary supports like transition assistance, tutoring, and navigation services, which are critical for students where financial aid alone falls short.

Program details will sit in regulations, keeping them flexible to adapt to shifting student needs and Canada's post-secondary landscape. This agility will help students succeed despite economic, housing, or technological changes. A key focus is enhanced support for Inuit students, which could transform our territory in the long term. More Inuit with post-secondary education will boost employment in government and beyond.

The Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Report notes that over half of vacant GN positions require university training, while only 29 per cent of Inuit hold post-secondary credentials, and just 3 per cent have bachelor's degrees or higher. Bill 64 supports Article 23 by helping more Inuit graduate and contribute even more to our communities.

Through Bill 64, eligibility for support is simplified into two categories: Nunavut-Inuit and non-Nunavut-Inuit, with benefits in three tiers, primary universal, secondary universal, and Inuit-specific benefits.

This cuts the complex "years of schooling in Nunavut" calculation for non-Inuit and prioritizes Inuit through grants and incentives.

The proposed legislation would also allow the department to align student loans for non-Inuit with the goals of the larger government, including allowing the opportunity for loan remission tiered to high-demand jobs, such as those in the health care or education sectors. This will help the government fill vacancies, increase capacity, and improve services to Nunavummiut.

Collaboration, a core principle and government priority, drives Bill 64. It proposes a post-secondary education forum to share insights, identify trends, and recommend solutions, enhancing responsiveness to student needs and reducing overlap among support providers.

Other clauses enable information-sharing and agreements to make connections and increase access to supports. A formal appeals board will ensure fair, transparent reviews of financial assistance for Nunavut students decisions, upholding openness.

Mr. Chair, Bill 64's significant changes mark a new approach to Nunavut student support for post-secondary education. I am excited by this bill's potential to improve education outcomes for our students, and move us toward the vision our elders aspire to have for a prosperous future for our post-secondary students.

Thank you again for your thoughtful review. I look forward to your questions and comments. Quana.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does the chair of Standing Committee on Legislation have opening comments to provide? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 64, Post Secondary Student Support Act.

The standing committee supports the purpose of the Bill, which the minister described in her opening comments.

For the record, I note that five motions to amend the Bill were adopted during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee to undertake clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. These amendments:

- Clarified the definition of primary universal benefits as a type of post-secondary student support;
- Ensured that all members of the Post-Secondary Student Support Appeal Board established by the legislation are residents of Nunavut;
- Aligned the functions of the Post-Secondary Education Forum established by the legislation more closely to its purpose;

- Expanded the range of regulations that can be made to include the ability to prescribe the scope of every category of non-financial wrap-around supports; and
- Ensured that provisions within the legislation that relate to non-financial wrap-around supports will not come into force until regulations respecting the scope of such supports are finalized.

During her recent appearance before the Committee of the Whole, the minister indicated that if Bill 64 is passed, the department will likely request additional funding in the appropriation value of \$14 million in 2025-2026, \$21 million in 2026-2027, and \$21,500,000 in 2028.

Committee members hope that the enhanced investments in financial and non-financial supports as provided for in the legislation will improve educational outcomes and the success of Nunavut's post-secondary students.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Savikataaq. Before we go to clause by clause, do any members have general comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I would also like to provide some very brief comments to the Post-Secondary Student Support Act.

I've been very happy to support all the enhancements to the financial assistance for Nunavut students program over the years. Qualifications gained through diplomas and degrees are necessary to meeting article 23, a representative of public service and is essential to invest in our youth to achieve that 85 per cent Inuit employment rate.

When I was a student, financial assistance for Nunavut students, or FANS, was better than other programs like Ontario's OSAP, in that FANS was a grant. However, that doesn't mean that it was enough. When book allowance was only \$200 a semester, at times wouldn't even cover one text book. I would consistently rely on additional loans to make up the difference.

I'm happy today that we and Nunavut is it breaking ground, as we're the first jurisdiction to legislate both financial supports and non-financial supports for post-secondary students.

Each year as we see more graduates completing high school, we will see more students going on to post-secondary school and more students leaving home for the first time, which means these non-financial wrap-around supports will be ever more important to ensuring their success. With each passing generation we'll see more be the first in their

family to attend post-secondary education, meaning they won't have the generational knowledge and benefit that other Canadians enjoy.

That being said, this Bill will have a lasting impact for many years to come and I could not be in more support. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Any other general comments? I would like to make a couple as well.

Mr. Lightstone and the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation mentioned the non-financial wraparound supports that are going to be laid out in the regulations. I know we're all very interested to see how those are all going to play out and the descriptions of them and exactly what type of wraparound support our students can expect.

But I would like to take a moment to acknowledge, I believe you said Mr. Baker wasn't able to make it here. I hope he is watching, because I know in the last few years I've approached the minister's office a number of times on different issues with the financial assistance for Nunavut students, and I have to say, in the last year, complaints that have been brought to my attention have dramatically decreased. I've talked to students that have had messages responded to sometimes within minutes, never mind hours, where it used to be days, if not weeks.

I would like to give credit where credit is due with the Financial Assistance For Nunavut Students office. Nothing is perfect yet, but I have to acknowledge that the complaints have gone down dramatically and there's a lot more students that aren't struggling to wait and know how to communicate. So I think the minister's message that went out a couple of years ago giving her contact information and e-mail information, I like to think that that has made a dramatic difference. I just wanted to acknowledge that work.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: I would like to ask committee members to go to their legislative binder and open Bill 64, Post-Secondary Support Act. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister and your officials. Couple of quick clarification questions with regards to types of supports. Over the years I've heard and seen complaints with regards to some of these students that are receiving financial assistance getting their payments late. They were expecting it like on a Thursday and it didn't show up until maybe Monday, type of thing. How is that being addressed with these amendments? Will the department ensure that the day that the student is supposed to get their food money, that they will get it on that day? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Simailak. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. So we are working to address those issues that have arisen due to payments, and I know that within the government there is a system that does take time for students or anyone to be paid through the Department of Finance as it has a lot of checks and balances that it needs to go through. We can't stress enough how important it is for students to get their forms in to the department, to the Financial Assistance For Nunavut Students Office as early as possible.

We have made improvements with our enrolment forms, student enrolment forms with the Nunavut Arctic College, and I think that form has really helped students in that area to have a revised form that's more in sync and that helps students get paid on time.

We are also working on the new on-boarding of the Fusion Cloud, and that will help with our database and uptake, so things will be more streamlined. Hopefully in the near future we'll have very little hiccups due to any issues with payments, especially we know how important it is to get paid, and especially as students that they really rely on that money to get paid and to be paid on time.

Hopefully within this next school year those issues will be really decreased and students will have hopefully no issues with those solutions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for the response. My next question around types of support. One of the recommendations was a transition support person for full-time students who are moving away to Nunavut to live in the south for the first time and who require transition support from a family member. If each student will have a parent or guardian escort to help them set up for their first time schooling down south, is there a projected budget for this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. The total cost is just under \$1 million for the transition support person. It would be \$935,463 projected. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. If the unfortunate should happen where the student does have to drop out from the schooling, would the student and the parent or guardian have to pay back that wraparound support that was issued? Because that could be over \$10,000 in airfare and accommodations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the member for that question. For the wraparound supports, that would not have to be paid back. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Minister and your staff. I also have a question here regarding the support for students. Sometimes students are very young or quite young when they are going to school and some have their own children. And with a lack of funding or they need support from their own families, so the funds for children, is the amount for students sufficient, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. We're looking to increase the living allowance by \$400. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Sorry, you had something to add Minister?

Hon. Pamela Gross: Yes, sorry. I meant to say per child at the end. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is great news. And good to see that the support will be there for students.

The other concern often raised by students more than once I've heard, that child care is often a concern. Is there support towards that, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Child care is incorporated into that \$400 and factoring in within our territory we're at \$10.00 a day child care, that would put a person who is in post-secondary or anyone else, their bill would be \$200 a month. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. If I can just ask a supplement to Mr. Malliki's question and the Minister's response, when is that increase going to take effect? Do we have to wait until the legislation comes into effect? Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you for that question. We would have to wait pour the regulations to come into effect. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 14, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 15, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 16, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 17, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, regarding the appeals board, appeals committee, who will sit on the appeals committee? Like I know there's going to be a callout to the regional Inuit associations and Nunavut Tunngavik as well, but how will the selection be made? I'm actually looking for assurances that the appeals committee will not be stacked in the Government of Nunavut's favour. I'm looking for assurances that it will be unbiased as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the member. So we will do a letter callout to the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the regional Inuit associations, and the nominations will come forward to the executive council, and from there that will be how the process goes forward to selecting the members for the appeals board. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm actually looking for assurances that it will not be stacked, like it could all be Government of Nunavut employees where they would feel obligated to side with the Government of Nunavut. So just looking for wondering how this will be dealt with so it is as unbiased as much as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the member for that question. So by working with these organizations, we wanted to keep it as unbiased as possible, so the board will be comprised of one resident of Nunavut, one resident of the Kitikmeot region, one resident of the Kivalliq region, one resident of the Qikiqtani region, and one Nunavut resident who is not an employee of the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 17, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 18, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 19, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 20, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 21, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 22, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 23, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 24, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 25, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 26, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 27, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 28, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 29, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 30, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 31, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to Bill 64 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Pursuant to rule 62(2) is the committee agreed to bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, brief closing comments please.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to all the committee members for this wonderful work that's before us. I know it will be transformative for Nunavummiut to our post-secondary students that are coming, and hopefully encourage students to go to post-secondary with the enhanced supports that are going to be available for Nunavut students.

I want to thank the entire team with the Department of Education, as well as the Department of Justice as well as their support along with the team that helps the drafting process and the committee with the research side and coming back to us. There was a lot of back and forth on this Bill, so thank you all.

Just a special shout out to May Baker in Arviat and the staff there in Arviat as well. We had someone else who was with us, Allan Kunuk, who was with our team really worked hard to get us where we are and I just want to thank everyone once again.

We can't wait to see the long lasting impacts this will have for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you my apologies to Ms. Baker for calling her Mr. Baker earlier.

>> *Laughter*

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. I will ask committee members to remain in your seats. We'll proceed directly to Bill 69. Thank you.

Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Before us we have Bill 69, An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025. Premier Akeagok, if you could introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments please.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am joined by Deputy Fowler to my right, as well as Thomas Ahlfors, Director of Legislation Division from the Department of Justice.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to have this opportunity to present Bill 69 - An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025.

We committed in the Katujjiluta Mandate to “Review and improve the GN’s organizational structures to meet increasing demand for programs and services and to identify opportunities for further decentralization.”

Mr. Chairman, we have worked together in this House to review the business plans and main estimates that will support the work of the Department of Community Services and the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

The Bill we are reviewing now represents the final foundational step for the new organization. One of the activities undertaken during planning of the reorganization was to identify legislation and regulations that contain references to the government’s organizational structures that no longer exist, or that will no longer exist because of the reorganization.

Bill 69 amends five acts to allow for the removal of references to departments from legislation and regulations:

- *The Archives Act*;
- *The Cooperative Associations Act*;
- *The Commissioner’s Land Act*;
- *The Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*; and
- *The Vital Statistics Act*.

These amendments do not simply replace references to existing departments with references to the new departments. The Government of Nunavut has been working to ensure legislation is drafted in language that allows for operational decisions to be made and implemented without requiring legislative changes. This means using generic descriptions of responsibilities rather than specific references to current government structures.

These responsibilities are then assigned to specific departments and ministers through the establishment of departments and responsibility for acts regulations that are made under the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. These regulations have been updated for the reorganization and will come into effect on April 1, 2025.

Mr. Chairman, the amendments are straightforward replacements of references to departmental structures with one exception. The *Commissioner’s Land Act* does not refer to a specific department. The amendments are necessary to support amendments to regulations made under the act: The Commissioner’s Airport Lands Regulations, and the Commissioner’s Land Regulations. These regulations provide for the delegation of authority from the Commissioner to the staff level. Currently, the regulations refer to specific departments.

The regulations cannot be changed to conform to the Government of Nunavut's practice of assigning responsibilities through the establishment of departments and responsibility for acts regulations without first amending the Commissioner's Land Act, specifically to remove the regulation making provision requiring the commissioners to "authorize a person" through regulation. The "authorizing of a person" requires a reference to positions and departments in the regulations.

Bill 69 would allow the commissioner, on the recommendation of the minister, to delegate responsibility through a letter of authority.

Mr. Chairman, the individuals responsible for this work within the Government of Nunavut will still be responsible for the same work should the Bill receive assent. However, the paperwork required to authorize their work will change. Nunavummiut will not see a difference when interacting with staff regarding Commissioner's Land as a result of this legislative and regulatory change.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to answering any questions members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation have opening comments to provide? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 69, *An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the minister described in his opening comments. This is a technical and non-contentious initiative.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Any general comments to the opening comments? Seeing none, please go to Bill 69 in your legislative binder. Bill 69, *An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to Bill 69 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: And pursuant to rule 62(2), does the committee agree Bill 69 is ready to be placed on Orders of the Day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Brief closing comments, Minister.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really want to thank all the members for the support on this Bill. I reflect back to the first day where we met in Cambridge Bay where we talked about the importance of providing enhanced services to Nunavummiut, and this really is a final piece of delivering on that promise. We all collectively came through.

I really want to say thank you so much to the incredible staff that we're so fortunate to have that worked so hard to work around the realignments of the two departments, and for that I want to say thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses out. And as we've concluded business before us in the Committee of the Whole now, I will rise to report progress to the speaker. Thank you.

>>Committee adjourned at 16:20 and House resumed at 16:22

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

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bills 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 71, and 72, and would like to report that Bills 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 71, and 72 are immediately ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker: The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Ms. Brewster.

The motion is carried. Item 21, Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 71 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025* be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: The motion is in order. To the motion?

A Member: Call the question.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 71 is ready for assent. Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 72, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026* be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Member: Call the question.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 72 is ready for assent. Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 50, *Fuel Tax Act* be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Member: Call the question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 50 is ready for assent. Third Reading of Bills, Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Pangnirtung, that Bill 67, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Member: Question.

Speaker: The Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 67 is ready for assent.

Speaker: Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member from Pangnirtung, that Bill 68, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Member: Question.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 68 is ready for assent. Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Third Reading

Hon. David Akeegok: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I urge the Greenland people to have a good polling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet North that Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you.

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

A Member: Question.

Speaker: The Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 43 is ready for assent. Third reading of bills. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Third Reading

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, that Bill 64, *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Member: Question.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 64 is ready for assent. Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Third Reading

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Cambridge Bay, that Bill 69, *An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Members: Question.

Speaker: The question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? The Motion is carried and Bill 69 is ready for assent. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: I seek consent to return to item 5 on Orders of the Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Asking for consent. Thank you.

Speaker: Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5 on the order paper. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. I just want to do recognize two of my constituents, Laurie Paniak (ph) and Lucy Pitsooloo (ph), who are in the House today, Mr. Speaker. They are both from Taloyoak, Mr. Speaker, so let's welcome them greatly to the house. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Back to Orders of the Day. I now ask Mr. Clerk to ascertain if Her Honour the Commissioner of Nunavut is prepared to enter the chamber to give assent to bills.

Assent to Bills

Commissioner Aariak (interpretation): Please be seated. As Commissioner of Nunavut I'm very pleased to give assent to the following bills:

Bill 43 -- An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*;

Bill 50 – Fuel Tax Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 50, *Fuel Tax Act*;

Bill 63 – An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 63, *An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act*;

Bill 64 – Post-Secondary Student Support Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 64, *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*;

Bill 67 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 67, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*;

Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Assent to Bill

Bill 68, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*;

Bill 69 – An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025 – Assent to Bill

Bill 69, *An Act Consequential to the Government Reorganization of 2025*;

Bill 70 -- Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 – Assent to Bill

Bill 70, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026*;

Bill 71 -- Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025 – Assent to Bill

Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025*; and

Bill 72 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Assent to Bill

Bill 72, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*.

That's the end of the bills. In a turbulent world at this time, we find beauty and comfort in the change of season from dark to light. As you prepare to go home, I wish you safe travels.

Speaker: Thank you. Before we proceed with the last item on the order paper, I have a few parting remarks. On behalf of all members I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to our new Sergeant-at-Arms, Eemeelayou Arnaquq. I would also like to thank our pages, whom I will recognize by name, David Allooloo.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Carlita Foyn.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Darren Ningeongan.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Anika Qaunirq.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Gabriel Salamonie

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Amy Veevee.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: And C.J. Vincent-Wolf.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Please join me in expressing our appreciation to these young Nunavummiut.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: As always, please join me in thanking our interpreters.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: For their tireless work, especially when we are sitting for more than 12 hours at a time. Quana.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: I also wish to take this opportunity to publicly thank our former Languages Commissioner, Ms. Karliin Aariak, for her service to the territory.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ms. Aariak's term has recently ended, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours. I am confident that I speak for all members when I say that it has been a long few weeks here in Iqaluit, and we are all looking forward to returning to our constituency and family and home communities. Warmer weather is coming. I encourage all members to spend time on the land, where they can relax and rest.

A number of members will be back in this chamber next month for important televised committee hearings, and we will be back together in May for our Spring Sitting.

I am extremely proud of my staff in front of me. They have been keeping everything in order and they make me look good up here.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: I thank Ms. Tupik and Ms. Nooshoota and especially our Clerk who has done his first sitting as the clerk of this Assembly.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: With that we'll move on to item 22, *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22, *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk (interpretation): Thank you very much. *Orders of the Day* for 1:30:

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 Motion
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, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Thursday, May 22, at 1:30 p.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:42*

APPENDIX – March 11, 2025



Lᓕᓕᓕᓐᓇᓐᓇᓐ
Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Return to Oral Question

Asked by: Mr. Hicks, MLA for Iqaluit Tasiluk

Asked of: Hon. David Joanasie

Number: 1167 – 6(2)

Date: 2025-03-05

Subject: Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan

Question:

Mr. Speaker, I noted with interest the joint statement that was issued yesterday by Canada's Energy and Mines Ministers regarding critical minerals. Mr. Speaker, the Minister was one of Nunavut's two signatories to the joint statement, so I know he'll be able to explain it clearly.

The joint statement indicated:

"We will take decisive action, including the acceleration of resource development, through more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes."

Can the Minister indicate the extent to which this commitment will impact the current review of the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Response:

The importance of having efficient, timely permitting and regulatory processes has been identified by the Government of Canada for several years as has the

Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy, published in 2022, which allocated approximately \$40 million to “support northern regulatory processes in reviewing and permitting critical mineral projects.”

This commitment does not have a direct bearing on the current review of the Draft (Recommended) Nunavut Land Use Plan, but could result in other processes or identify gaps or inefficiencies in the regulatory process at-large and take steps to address them.



ᓄᓇᓂᓐ ᐱᓕᓕᓕᓂᓐᓂᓐ
Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Return to Oral Question

Asked by: George Hickes, MLA from Iqaluit-Tasiluk

Asked of: Hon. John Main, Minister of Health

Number: 1157 – 6(2)

Date: March 4, 2025

Subject: Aging with Dignity

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide a response to a question I received on March 4, 2025, regarding new Aging with Dignity indicators under the Shared Health Priorities. These indicators were established by the Canadian Institute for Health Information and federal, provincial and territorial governments to measure progress, and address common challenges and gaps in care.

Currently, there are six public Aging with Dignity indicators, and they include metrics like falls in the last 30 days in long-term care, residents actively engaged in their daily life and care activities, and supply of personal support workers.

Many of the indicators align with the new national long-term care standards, when it comes to safety and quality improvement in long-term care and experiences and outcomes affecting long-term clients and families. All new long-term care facilities built in Nunavut, including the new Rankin Inlet long-term care centre, will meet the national long-term care standards.

Although the six indicators will not result in immediate changes to operational decisions, such as decisions associated with who will be offered rooms or beds, more broadly the new national long-term care standards drive decisions associated with the new long-term care facilities.

Data collection for these indicators is a challenge across Canada. The Department of Health continues to engage in discussions with the Canadian Institute for Health Information on the indicators, including the existing gaps in data collection that make it challenging for Nunavut to report on some of these indicators. Currently, the Canadian Institute for Health Information is gathering data on only two of the six indicators.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



ᓄᓇᓃᑦ ᐱᑦᐱᑦᐱᑦᐱᑦᐱᑦ
Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Return to Oral Question

Asked by: Joanna Quassa, MLA Aggu

Asked of: Hon. David Joanasié

Number: 1165 - 6(2)

Date: March 5, 2025

Subject: Search and Rescue – Equipment

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide further information regarding the call out from Nunavut Emergency Management to communities under the Community Based Ground Search and Rescue Grants and Contributions Program. MLA Aggu, Ms. Quassa, asked for information regarding the response my department received and what new resources will be provided to our local search and rescue organizations.

The call out for equipment needs was first issued in July 2024 and later extended to December 2024. The extension gave our team the opportunity to consult with community search and rescue leads during the 2024 search

and rescue forum and encourage participation. I can report that five of our municipalities responded to the callout: Kinngait, Baker Lake, Naujaat, Whale Cove and Taloyoak.

Callout responses included request for communications and safety equipment. New communication and safety equipment will be provided to our municipalities through Go-bags, upgrading and replacing missing and obsolete search and rescue tools. Replacement supplies include items such as SPOT & INREACH devices, Satellite phones, Backup batteries for devices, and go-kit contents items such as high visibility clothing and materials, matches, headlamp, sleeping bag, survival gear, mittens, toque, and much more.

Nunavut Emergency Management will continue to work with our municipal search and rescue teams to ensure they have the equipment they need as responder preparedness and safety continues to be a priority for our department.

Mr. Speaker, MLA Quassa requested an update on the Community Safety Liaison Program, which is being funded through the Nunavut Association of Municipalities by Indigenous Services Canada under their Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities initiative.

A call out went to all municipalities in Nunavut to submit an application to participate in the pilot program. Funding was available for a total of seven municipalities. Applications were received from: Pond Inlet, Kugluktuk, Iqaluit, Gjoa Haven, Grise Fiord, Baker Lake, and Cambridge Bay. All communities who applied have been approved to receive the funding and have now been notified. Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.



Return to Oral Question

Asked by: Adam Lightstone, MLA Iqaluit-Manirajak

Asked of: Hon. David Akeeagok, Minister of Justice

Number: 1139 – 6(2)

Date: March 3, 2025

Subject: National Sex Offenders

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I provided to MLA Lightstone on National Sex Offenders.

According to the RCMP, as of March 6, 2025, there were 428 sex offenders registered in Nunavut, of whom 78 were non-compliant with their reporting requirements, and there were 22 High Risk Offenders, four of whom were non-compliant with their reporting requirements.

Non-compliance with reporting does not necessarily indicate that the RCMP is unable to locate the offender or that the offender is intentionally avoiding their reporting obligations. In almost all cases, the offender's registration has simply expired, and they willingly fulfill their reporting requirements once reminded or notified by the RCMP. However, if an offender is actively attempting to evade reporting, the RCMP will investigate the circumstances and may pursue charges if warranted.

According to data from the Nunavut Court, since 1999, thirteen offenders have been charged under section 490.031 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*

for failing to comply with requirements under the *Sex Offender Information Registration Act*, of whom five were convicted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



ᐱᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐᕐ
Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Return to Oral Question

Asked by: Ms. Killiktee, MLA for Uqqummiut

Asked of: Hon. David Joanasie

Number: 1145 – 6(2)

Date: 2025-03-05

Subject: Contaminated Sites

Question:

As the Minister is aware, the Cape Christian contaminated site remediation project is located in my constituency, near the community of Clyde River. The site was abandoned by the American military and handed over to the Government of Canada in the year 1975, half a century ago.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that the cleanup of this site is the responsibility of the Government of Canada. Can the Minister indicate how his department is working with the federal government in prioritizing the cleanup of the Cape Christian site.

It is of a major concern to us because it has an impact on the community, and there's machinery and other debris that have been dumped into the ocean. We would appreciate it if this work was initiated as soon as possible.

Can the minister confirm how many other contaminated sites are located in the vicinity of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, and can he indicate the approximate cost of fully remediating these sites. That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Response:

Cape Christian

The Government of Nunavut (GN) is not involved in the current remediation of Cape Christian, as it is now the Federal Government's responsibility. In the 2000s, the GN worked with the Federal Government to clean up the parts of the site it was responsible for, and this work was completed in the early 2010s.

The Federal Government finished its remediation in 2010, and the site is now in a long-term monitoring phase.

The Department of Community and Government Services (CGS) managed the GN's portion of the cleanup. Cape Christian is no longer listed in the GN's public accounts.

The Department of Environment is not aware of any assessments or cleanup efforts related to debris in the marine environment. The responsible federal agency is the Department of Crown and Indigenous Relations Canada (CIRNAC). I can work with the member to help bring these concerns forward to our federal partners.

Contaminated Sites in Clyde River & Qikiqtarjuaq

The GN is aware of 8 sites in Clyde River, 4 of which are the GN's responsibility under the contaminated sites policy. Additionally, GN is aware of 7 contaminated sites in Qikiqtarjuaq, 2 of which are within the GN's responsibility under the same policy. The current estimated cost to remediate the sites which the GN is responsible for in these communities is \$10.4 million