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**2nd Session**

**6th Assembly**

**HANSARD**

Official Report

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**Iqaluit**

**Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA**

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Uqqummiut)

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(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Thursday, May 23, 2024**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Deputy Speaker** (Mr. George Hickes): Thank you. Mr. Simailak, can you lead us in prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Simailak.

**Speaker's Statement**

Before we proceed with the orders of the day, I am pleased to welcome members back to the House for our spring sitting, and I extend a very warm welcome to elders and Nunavummiut who are following our proceedings on radio, television, and Internet livestream.

I wish to advise the House that Speaker Akoak and the Members for Arviat South and Netsilik have been delayed due to flight cancellations. We look forward to their joining us as soon as possible.

I also wish to advise the House that the Member for Kugluktuk will be absent for the duration of the spring sitting due to a family emergency.

Before we proceed with the orders of the day, it is my duty to advise the House that I have received the following message from Her Honour the Commissioner of Nunavut. The Commissioner, in her words:

**Money Message**

I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut the passage of Bill 47, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025*, during the 2024 spring sitting of the Second Session of the Sixth Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We will now proceed with the orders of the day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. We will start off with the Premier, Premier Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 420 – 6(2):**  
**Nunavut Hosts Northern**  
**Premiers' Forum**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good afternoon" to my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut, particularly our colleague who is going through a difficult time. He is in our thoughts and we will keep him in our thoughts.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure to welcome my northern counterparts, Yukon's Premier Ranj Pillai and Northwest Territories' Premier R.J. Simpson, in Mittimatalik from May 6 to 9 for the annual Northern Premiers' Forum.



In our meetings, we discussed shared priorities, including arctic security and sovereignty, disaster preparedness and response, critical infrastructure gaps, housing needs, and the health and well-being of northerners.

I want to thank my friend, Levi Barnabas, the Vice-President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, as well as my good colleague and our friend, Minister Karen Nutarak, His Worship Mayor Joshua Arreak, and the many elders and community members of Mittimatalik for welcoming us and sharing so much knowledge about their hamlet with our visitors.

Mr. Speaker, the highlight of our time in beautiful Mittimatalik was the on-the-land excursion we took to the *sinaaq*, the floe edge. After three days of discussions about arctic sovereignty and security, we travelled to the mouth of the Northwest Passage. We were joined by numerous community members as well as the Nauttiqsuqtiit Inuit Stewards.

While at the *sinaaq*, local hunters harvested a polar bear and I shot a seal, all to be shared with the community. Our visitors experience first-hand the importance of harvesting in our communities and how our lives are intertwined with the land and wildlife that sustains us.

Mr. Speaker, meetings, such as this one, are critical to strengthening our voice as northern leaders ahead of engagements with our provincial colleagues at the upcoming Western Premiers' Conference and the Council of the Federation meetings later this summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Premier. Minister of Environment, Minister Qavvik.

**Minister's Statement 421 – 6(2):  
Reminder for Harvesters**

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I stand today to wish our harvesters a safe and productive harvesting season. With spring now here, many Nunavummiut are getting out on the land to enjoy our beautiful territory.

Mr. Speaker, most of our wildlife is very healthy and we all know that country food is very nutritious. However, animals can and do get sick or injured. There are health testing programs in place, such as the walrus testing for trichinella done right here in Iqaluit, as well as other communities, and all regions have various wildlife health monitoring programs in place.

Mr. Speaker, my department produced a *Nunavut Harvester Safety Guide* a few years ago and copies are available online on our government's website and through hunters and trappers organizations and wildlife offices across the territory.

I would like to remind everyone that if they observe any wildlife acting sick or strange, or notice disease or illness in harvested animals, do not consume the animal and please notify your local conservation officer. The consumption of infected and unsafe harvest can cause

serious illness in both people and animals.

Mr. Speaker let's all be safe while out harvesting and enjoy the wonderful country food our territory has to offer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, minister. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Minister's Statement 422 – 6(2): \$190 Million for NIHB Funding for Medical Travel**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my colleagues. It's great to be back here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share that the Government of Nunavut has reached an agreement with Indigenous Services Canada on the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this new agreement includes \$190 million in additional funding to offset the increasing cost of essential medical travel and associated administrative expenses. It ensures that Inuit in Nunavut will continue to have health care services that are seamless and client focused.

Signing this agreement ensures our ability to fund needed coverage through Non-Insured Health Benefits, but also reinforces the importance of strengthening partnerships under the *Katujjiluta* mandate. I would like to thank and a very sincere *ma'na* to Minister Hajdu and her officials for their

ongoing efforts to address the financial gaps that existed under the previous agreement. I would also like to thank and a very sincere *ma'na* as well to Minister Holland for learning about and supporting Nunavut's significant needs in providing essential health care for everyone.

Retroactive to April 1, 2023, this two-year interim agreement addresses the current financial challenges being managed within the Department of Health, but it also paves the way for both organizations to continue collaborating with Inuit in Nunavut on an agreement that meets the long-term needs of Nunavut Inuit. This agreement is a testament to Health's unwavering commitment to enhancing health care services across Nunavut, ensuring a brighter, healthier future for our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Next name on my list: Minister of Education, Minister Gross.

**Minister's Statement 423 – 6(2): Nunavut Sivuniksavut 2023-24 Graduation**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back to our colleagues and to everybody listening, and my thoughts and prayer are with those who have been recently affected by family incidents.

Mr. Speaker, last week I was fortunate to attend the Nunavut Sivuniksavut graduation in Ottawa along with colleagues and Nunavut Sivuniksavut

alumni from this House, including Premier Akeegok and Minister Joanasie. With great pride and nostalgia, we watched 30 students receive new certificates commemorating their hard work and latest accomplishments.

Nunavut Sivuniksavut is a unique program that offers Inuit youth a post-secondary academic and cultural experience. It fosters a positive and collaborative work environment, where Inuit youth can develop their skills, broaden their knowledge, and establish a strong academic foundation, preparing them for the next phase of their life's journey.

Mr. Speaker, as one of several alumni in this House, I can attest that their education helped immensely and it also helped me through my education and career. Some of this year's graduates told me that they plan to join the workforce quickly, while others plan to further their post-secondary education in teaching, trades, and art.

Whatever path they choose, we now have 30 new empowered Inuit youth equipped with extended cultural knowledge, enhanced communication skills, newly gained independence, and leadership lessons that can be used to support family, community, and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, our government remains committed to supporting our future leaders through our ongoing investment in Nunavut Sivuniksavut, financial assistance, and other support for students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of this House to join me in expressing heartfelt

congratulations to this year's Nunavut Sivuniksavut graduates. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Minister Gross. Next name I have on my list: Minister of Family Services, Minister Nakashuk.

### **Minister's Statement 424 – 6(2): Federal Cuts to Labour Market Transfers**

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I planned to rise today to highlight the work Family Services is doing to train Nunavummiut for job readiness using federal government funds from the Targeted Labour Market Transfer Agreement, but I am unable to do that because the Government of Canada cut \$625 million from the labour market transfers in Budget 2024.

This is extremely disappointing and means a loss of \$890,000 training dollars in Nunavut, which forces us to make deep cuts to 18 different training programs and cancel a call for training proposals.

Mr. Speaker, I have witnessed firsthand the valuable impact the programs we offer have in developing skills, creating opportunities, and fostering economic growth at the community level. The reduction in funds jeopardizes the progress we have made and threatens to widen the existing gaps in access to

education, training, and employment opportunities for Nunavummiut. Nunavut already faces unique challenges that come with geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, high cost of training, and high cost of living.

The Government of Canada is hindering the ability of Nunavummiut to contribute fully to the economy, perpetuating unemployment, underemployment, cycles of poverty, and limiting our progress toward a more equitable and prosperous society. They are sending us backwards in time.

Mr. Speaker, provincial and territorial labour market ministers have called for an emergency meeting with Hon. Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, to ask for the funding levels to be reinstated. I hope to have better news for my colleagues in the fall sitting. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Minister Nakashuk. Next name I have on my list: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister David Akeeagok.

**Minister's Statement 425 – 6(2):  
Government of Canada,  
Government of Nunavut, and  
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated  
Launch the Nunavut Regional  
Energy and Resource Table**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Good day. Before I begin, I send happy birthday wishes to my dear wife today. She was not able to be here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to announce that in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Canada, my department and the Department of Environment formally joined the “Nunavut Regional Energy and Resource Table” on behalf of the Government of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) The regional tables are a nationwide initiative which aims at advancing top economic priorities in the energy and the resource sectors in each of Canada's provinces and territories. The regional tables, initiated by Natural Resources Canada, involve multiple federal institutions investing through different programs, such as the Canada Infrastructure Bank, the Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund, the Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program, and Strategic Innovation Fund's Net Zero Accelerator initiative. In the coming months, the partners will work together to identify and advance joint economic priorities, while providing opportunities to better align our regulatory and permitting processes.

Through this forum, both public dollars and private capital will be leveraged to support economic development, job creation, and climate actions in Nunavut. By pursuing opportunities alongside Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, I believe this partnership provides a venue to advance meaningful socio-economic development that reflects Nunavummiut's goals and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, our territory benefits greatly from responsible resource development and new energy projects, and I look forward to seeing more

benefits for our communities and to all the possibilities this new collaboration will bring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. I would just like to make note to members that we only have one page today, so please take that into consideration.

Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Sammurtok.

### **Item 3: Members' Statements**

#### **Member's Statement 560 – 6(2): Nunavut Ministers Visit Rankin Inlet**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my thanks to Nunavut's Premier and cabinet for coming to the fine community of Rankin Inlet to hold their ministers' retreat from May 12 to 14, 2024.

Mr. Speaker, at one time, the community of Rankin Inlet was considered as the possible capital of Nunavut. As a central hub for Nunavut, easily accessible from north, south, east, and west, it is a perfect location for hosting important gatherings such as this.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's ministers visited the community at a time when the trout derby was being held and they had the opportunity to see the large, huge, enormous lake trout that can be caught in the area.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to join the ministers to visit the new long-term care facility which is nearing completion.

Hopefully, its doors will soon be open to Kivallirmiut, possibly even this coming summer or early fall, and allow for some of our elders to come home from the elders' facility in Ottawa.

I look forward to future visits from Nunavut's Premier, Nunavut's ministers and their staff so that they can fully appreciate what Rankin Inlet has to offer. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

#### **Member's Statement 561 – 6(2): Coral Harbour's New Mayor, Patterk Netser**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my colleagues and my constituents, as well as Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to clarify and announce to sharing this celebratory result after the recently elected mayor resigned in Coral Harbour, and a new mayor was elected via by-election, and this occurred this spring, and the resulting winner is no stranger to this House.

I wish to congratulate and welcome the new mayor, and I look forward to working with Patterk Netser, so I ask my colleagues to share in celebrating this development in my constituency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Member's Statement 562 – 6(2):  
Public Safety**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, visitors in the gallery, and Nunavummiut watching our proceedings.

I rise today to again address the issue of public safety in our capital city. Mr. Speaker, as you know, this has been one of my key priorities during my service as a Member of this House. There is an urgent need to address public safety in the community.

Information published by the RCMP indicate that there were over 12,000 calls for service in the city during 2023 alone. That's over a thousand calls per month, and some of the figures are particularly shocking: the fact that almost 7,000 calls are related to alcohol; over a thousand calls related to assaults; and dozens of sexual offences involving victims under the age of 16.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but it is obvious to anyone who has lived in Iqaluit for a significant period of time that the situation is approaching what can only be described as a crisis.

Mr. Speaker, we all know someone who has been personally impacted by violence, and my own family is no exception. As my colleagues are aware, I lost my sister, Sula, and her daughters, Alex and Aliyah, to violence.

I would like to take this opportunity to notify you and my colleagues that I will be unable to participate in next week's

proceedings, as I will be joining my family in Pond Inlet for a healing event related to our loss.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the support that we have received from victims' services to make this commemoration possible.

Mr. Speaker, although the warmer weather is always welcome, it is unfortunate that this is accompanied by a visible increase in such behaviour as public intoxication, violence, and crime. I again call on the government to take steps to ensure that there is a strong security presence in high-impact areas throughout the warmer months, especially near the beer and wine store.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to conclude on a positive note. As the House may be aware, the City of Iqaluit's new public safety committee recently held a meeting at which it brought forward new terms of reference and a new Iqaluit Community Safety Plan.

Mr. Speaker, I very much endorse and support the work of the public safety committee, and I am glad to see that both the Government of Nunavut and the RCMP are participating in its work.

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

*>>Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

**Member's Statement 563 – 6(2):  
Thanks Daughter for New Coat**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, all.

I would like to recognize my older daughter, Lily. I'm once again wearing a brand new *atigi*. She finished making it a few days ago. She just turned 14 in March with her twin sister. She's got a twin sister, so the older twin is the sewer in our family.

Lily, thank you very much. I love you. I'll wear this very proudly during my meetings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

**Member's Statement 564 – 6(2): State  
of Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk  
Elementary School**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Nunavut and Igloolik, and I wish happy birthday to our sister-in-law, Jennifer McGee-Qaunaq.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the state of despair at Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk Elementary School.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to review the 219-page report prepared by Accutech Engineering on its July 2023 assessment of the school's building condition. It is very concerning that so many of the recommendations from the report are considered critical, meaning

that they could indicate serious safety hazards.

Mr. Speaker, I do recognize that the Ataguttaaluk school is all originally built in the late '60s; it was modified in 1986, 2002, and 2022. I also recognize that building standards have evolved over the years and what is now considered not up to code may have been acceptable when the school was built and its additions were added. However, many of the issues at the school are simply the result of years of wear. The building is showing its age and a great many repairs are now urgently needed.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the time has come for our government to consider building a new school for the community of Igloolik. Mr. Speaker, we encourage our youth to attend school and continue with their education. It is important that they have a safe and comfortable environment to learn in.

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

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Quassa. The next name I have on my list: the Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

**Member's Statement 565 – 6(2):  
Recent Passing of Mother**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm also appreciative we have gathered once again here and will once again be in session.

In particular, I rise today to speak to this fact of regularly getting queried about family and due to that reason, although it

isn't very happy news, nonetheless, because they resided in other communities in the past. My dear later mother, Ragelee Milortuarjuk Angnakok, recently passed away on April 10, so other people will be aware, as I still get questions on her health, and this is just my introductory explanation first of all.

Especially most of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my constituents of Uqqummiut that I was recently in Clyde River and provided the perfect opportunity where I was warmly welcomed. My constituents also provided a listing of action items they wanted dealt with and I have a copy of them, so I will try to do what I can to deal with all the concerns people expressed and needed help about. I thank the people of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. They gave me several opportunities to talk on the radio, and these shows help to clearly outline the local issues.

I just wanted to speak to this issue, so I will concentration on my participation in this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: the Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Member's Statement 566 – 6(2):  
Update on Tommy Tatatoapik**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We seem to be missing some of our colleagues today, but you are all in our thoughts today, and I offer our love in this matter I am about to speak to.

This elder, well known and whenever we here speak publicly about elders, they watch these proceedings as many informed me, and I wanted to speak to one of the elders in my riding. This elder from Arctic Bay, who frequently goes on air on CBC radio, especially on the community developments, Tommy Tatatuapik also nicknamed Ittussamajaaq, and an indigenous elder just turned 87 this past Monday.

Since he was celebrating his 87th birthday, he started riding his ATV, but apparently, it was not running very well, resulting in an accident and he was medevaced to Iqaluit and then onwards to Ottawa as he sustained injuries in his rib cage, breaking some ribs and other bodily injuries. He was in quite some pain, and if people can remember him in their prayers, due to his status as a well-known man, please include him in your daily prayers. I hope that he recovers soon, but right now we don't know what the future holds, and I know you all help with prayer.

I wanted to ensure we all know about this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: the Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

**Member's Statement 567 – 6(2):  
Recent Northern Premiers' Forum  
in Pond Inlet**

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of Pond Inlet and Nunavut, and I retain you in my thoughts as well today, especially our colleagues.



First, I wish to voice my gratitude to the Premier, as he attended a recent conference held in Pond Inlet, and it was rather well organized, and residents happily welcomed the participants and voiced their appreciation of the visitors who arrived. The weather also cooperated, and with the logistics prepared, everything worked out smoothly.

I wanted to announce my gratitude on the success of this event, so I thank our Premier for taking the time to go to Pond Inlet, along with our mayor, Joshua Arreak, whom I thank as well. He warmly welcomed the participants, and especially our local residents of Pond Inlet, who showcased the hospitality of the people of Pond Inlet, so I thank them.

That is what I wanted to say because it was an extremely well organized meeting and the weather was perfect. Everything was perfect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you for that. Now, the last name on my list: the Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

**Member's Statement 568 – 6(2):  
Recent Visit to Kimmirut**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my fellow MLAs and the residents of South Baffin. Prior to starting, I wish to offer our sympathies to our colleagues who recently lost relatives, so we empathize further with them.

Mr. Speaker, we recently celebrated the 25 years of Nunavut and this Assembly, since its advent as it led to the hamlets in Kinngait and Kimmirut who also celebrated the occasion of 25 years of Nunavut.

Nonetheless, at the beginning of April, I was able to visit Kimmirut on to the 5th and the community was very welcoming. However, the Governor General Her Excellency Mary Simon had made plans to visit the community of Kimmirut, but due to the weather, that trip never materialized. I would like to acknowledge her by voicing my thanks. However, we can still ensure that her message was provided digitally via the Internet to the students at the Qattalik School, where she spoke about what her role is, and also in celebration of Nunavut's existence of 25 years.

However, to my constituents, I would like to thank them for their unending generosity, and especially now, during the springtime, as the weather is getting warmer with longer daylight hours, everybody wants to remain outdoors for much longer. We see many activities of Nunavummiut going fishing, geese hunting, going to their cabins, and so forth. Mr. Speaker, we want them to be in a safe situation, but again, I would like to acknowledge and recognize the celebration this spring, and please ensure you work in partnership to keep everyone safe during this upcoming season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Next, Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Member's Statement 569 – 6(2):  
Happy Birthday to Son**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also appreciate this opportunity to make this statement. I also wish to voice my gratitude as we receive a lot of support while we are here, especially as this past spring we undertook many community visits to convey our message.

I wish to thank all the residents of Nunavut who ardently and passionately welcome the visitors to their communities, especially when we are the visitors, as we too lost a loved one this spring. You receive a lot of support from all over when you are bereaving no matter where you may be in Nunavut.

I thank all Nunavummiut who passed on their condolences. Further, my son is celebrating his birthday today, so I wish him a wonderful day as I dearly love him. I am also quite proud of his achievements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Item 3. Members' Statements. Moving on, Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Mr. Clerk.

**Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**

**Return to Oral Question 796 – 6(2):  
Certification of Educational  
Institutions**

**Clerk (Mr. Quirke):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling the Return to Oral Question 796 – 6(2), which was asked during the winter 2024 sitting of the

Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Qavvik.

**Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the  
Gallery**

**Mr. Qavvik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I wish to acknowledge an elder for whom I rise: Mr. Lew Philip, a long-time resident of Iqaluit who will be acting as part of our team during this spring sitting, here in this session in the Assembly.

The Government of Nunavut has publicly announced our interest in the inclusion of our elders during sittings at our Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, in light of this original idea to commence the inclusion of our elders during our initial caucus gathering at Cambridge Bay, we all attended to this event in Cambridge Bay in 2021 and we spoke to the need for the inclusion of our beloved elders within the operations of the government representing Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, this is the initial stage to appoint one elder for this session as an advisor during this spring sitting. Mr. Lew Philip will be with us to avail himself, provide directives and support, and have the ability to provide help and direction to any member here, and he will be available here in the Assembly. If you need to see him, he will be there for all the MLAs and be available to all members starting this Thursday, from the hours of 11 to 12 and 2 to 3 p.m. with a lunch break.

Also, during breakfast around 9:30, we normally meet here at the caucus rooms. He will be here until eleven o'clock.

Mr. Speaker, during this time while we meet at the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Philip will be attending question period as well as being available for MLAs while we are not gathering in the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we have also allocated a space for him at the Natsiq Room, and you're able to meet him there. We also have a room for refreshments and he will participate in events in our room during that time. He has been selected to participate in the Natsiq Room, which is the Office of the Clerk, and he will be available for any MLA who wants to talk with him when, and our pages as well will have access.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, please join me in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Philip. I hope this initiative is a success and extends beyond this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Welcome to your House, Mr. Philip. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. The reason why I rise today is especially to acknowledge the following, in particular this person who has acted as one of my employees ever since I started in my role here. I take great pride in her abilities, and I learn a lot of nuanced lessons, as she is no stranger having been an MLA and a minister previously,

Ms. Mike. I wish to warmly welcome her to her House.

Additionally, I take great pride in our in-House elder, Mr. Lew Philip, it kind of belittles one during our meetings here to know that he will be amongst us as we do our daily duties and he will be involved, and he will be able to receive questions and provide wise directions, as this will quantify our perpetual announcements of respecting our elders. This solidifies the principle of having an elder assist us in governing our territory, and with this actual implementation and inclusion of an elder, it provides a tangible presence and shows how we can accomplish these goals.

I will depend on these two individuals so much and I would like to warmly welcome them to their House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Welcome to your House. Moving on, we will go to Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

### **Item 6: Oral Questions**

#### **Question 838 – 6(2): Family Wellness Strategic Plan**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome everybody back to Iqaluit and to our esteemed elders who are in the House today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, it is almost exactly one year since the Auditor General of Canada's report on child and family services in Nunavut was tabled in this House. That report, like the two reports before it in 2011 and 2014, addressed a wide range of concerns respecting services provided to Nunavut children, youth and their families. The situation has been described as a crisis and the need for a strategic plan to address the situation was immediate.

This past February, the minister tabled the Family Wellness Strategic Framework and indicated that the next step in developing the Family Wellness Strategic Plan was to engage with Inuit organizations and other stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on what consultations with Inuit organizations have taken place and what specific input provided by the Inuit organizations has been incorporated into the strategic plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister of Family Services, Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for your question on this issue. The report in detail, especially on areas that Family Services need to address, we all know what they are, and we have stated as Family Services what further we must do from what we heard from Nunavut residents and the consultations with different organizations, in particular Family Services, how they -- how improvements may be made.

We also listened from the elders through our visits and what further improvements may be made and in communities.

For non-profit organizations, we have approached them about what further actions we may take, including the hamlets, and together we develop further plans to include our concerns, especially in areas where we can work more closely, for example with health department and what they can do.

And other areas what we can do for our youth in schools, if there were concerns, what the details are looking at other means to provide support, especially in protection of our children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has indicated that the government's response to address many of the Auditor General's concerns and observations will be based on a "whole-of-government approach." As an example of that approach, on March 7 in the Committee of the Whole, the minister stated:

"When we're talking about the whole-of-government support, NHC has provided modular units to the Department of Family Services, and four of those units are going into the communities to ensure that we are getting more staff housing support in that area."

Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation has indicated that these four duplex units

have been allocated to Kinngait, Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq, and Sanirajak.

Can the minister confirm that these units will be used for staff housing and not for transitional housing, and can she elaborate further on what other actions have been taken to address housing needs for family services staff in Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. This is a very good question. The four communities that were identified where Nunavut Housing will provide support, and also different government departments that are more available now in providing support. In particular, after the report was given, the communities today, the foundation and the laws have been made, and we have stated what better uses we may utilize the units we have supplied.

The issue of shortage of housing for staff is also one area we've been working on. We are constantly working with the CGS and how we can provide more staff housing to our employees and upon getting staff housing, perhaps an office could be included, to make sure to have more program services at the community level. There are different uses in the communities, and we're focusing on the availability at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, I am happy to hear that there is a plan to address not only the housing issues but also office space and workspace for those very important roles and positions to work with our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister may recall, I have asked on a number of occasions about the establishment of an oversight body for social workers, a body that they are accountable to and that can provide them with support. On March 7, 2024, the minister replied to my question on this issue stating, "Yes, that's in the works."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how she envisions this social worker oversight body will be structured and administered, and give us an update on what steps have been taken to date to establish it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for your question. I just also want to add that social workers do not intentionally try to make errors, and we do know that they are much-needed resource in the communities. They have a very complex type of work that they have to have as a job, and many people know who they are and sometimes when they want to work with families, they look for ways to figure out what can be the answer to their problems or issues.

I know that the Auditor General was recommending that social workers are lacking in support, as was identified, and

how can we review that and what can we do to improve the situation. We have looked into it and we are still looking at how best, through best practices that we can look at to support the social workers at the community level, so that they may maintain a healthy role in the community.

That's why we have that oversight body, so that they will be able to have an opportunity for the worker to allow them to go and approach that office, and also deal with children in care and (interpretation ends) foster care outside of Nunavut or within Nunavut, how do we oversee that.

We are also working towards ensuring that if there are reports being done on a facility, we are looking at outside bodies to start investigating, but in terms of how we are overseeing disciplinary actions on our employees, the practice at this time is again, that is the same thing as any government employee at this time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The next name I have on my list: the Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### **Question 839 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the issue of safe drinking water supplies for Nunavut communities.

As the minister will recall, he tabled the Government of Nunavut's Drinking Water Strategic Framework during the Legislative Assembly's sitting of May

29, 2023. The document indicates that the water treatment infrastructure in the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River is owned and operated by the municipalities.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtii*, can the minister indicate how his department works with the municipalities to ensure that the infrastructure is kept up to date and that the communities' drinking water supplies are tested on a regular basis for contamination from bacteria or any other sources? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. As you know, all our communities want safe drinking water and I can assure you that we're working closely with the hamlets because we want to ensure that they are safe. We have a strategy, as she mentioned, the Drinking Water Strategic Framework that was tabled.

With regard to the funding, it's approximately \$125 million that has been set aside to ensure that the municipalities' infrastructure will be up to date in terms of their drinking water supply.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the MLA that we do ensure that the water is always tested and that there's quality testing and ensure that there's no contamination of any kind. We work closely with the Department of Health on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the communities having safe drinking water is important and I do agree that we do need testing done to ensure it is safe, and we work closely with the Department of Health. It's an important issue and we need to ensure that we work.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtii*, as the minister is aware, his department recently issued a request for proposals to develop a business case in relation to water treatment infrastructure in the community of Coral Harbour.

One of the stated goals of the work is to "Bring the plant in line with treatment objectives in Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*."

For the record, do the water treatment plants in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River meet current federal standards?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. Again, my department does try to address drinking water quality alongside all municipalities. We do have and try to incorporate operator training to ensure that there is improved monitoring so that there's an increased level of oversight on inspections, for example.

Mr. Speaker, for the water treatment plants in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River, they meet the water quality regulations from when the time they were designed, but we are working towards making sure all water treatment facilities in our territory are up to the standards that are being updated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the response. I do agree that we do need to ensure that the water treatment facilities are up to current standards.

Recent news reports have indicated that the Department of Community and Government Services maintains a "list ranking the risk level associated with water infrastructure across the territory."

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtii*, the new report indicates that "Clyde River's water source is expected to be depleted by 2025."

Will the minister commit to tabling a copy of this listing in the Legislative Assembly before the end of our current spring sitting? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At my department, we do have a prioritized listing around how we are addressing water infrastructure in the territory. We are looking at, for example, what are the riskiest. From a risk-management perspective, we look at the condition, age, the pipes, the

foundations, and all these critical parts of a water treatment plant or the reservoir. Looking at that, we work with the communities to see which area is the highest focus and from that, we do try to come forward with addressing those needs.

In terms of the list that my colleague is requesting for tabling, I'll discuss this with my officials and see what level of information that has been listed or the reports that we have been working on. There are highly technical documents of this nature regarding water infrastructure. We will see if we can look at that and I'll work with my colleague to come back to the House on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

**Question 840 – 6(2): State of Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk Elementary School**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education. I hope I said that correctly.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the minister must be aware of the building conditions at Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk Elementary School.

(interpretation ends) Can the minister provide an update on how her department is working with the Department of Community and Government Services to ensure that the most critical repairs are being carried out as soon as possible? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. Yes, we're very aware of the Ataguttaaluk Elementary School in Igloolik and the repairs that are needed. We are working with our colleagues with the Department of Community and Government Services. We did work with them to do a building condition assessment, which was completed by Accutech in December 2023. From that, we are looking to bring and do critical repairs to the school. We're working on that and a supplementary appropriation for those funds will be coming forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for the work that the ministers are planning to get done.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk Elementary School was originally built, as I stated earlier, in 1968 and has been modified a number of times with renovations and additions in 1986, 2002, and 2022.

Can the minister indicate whether her department has brought forward a business case in the capital planning process for a new school to be built in Igloolik and, if not, why not? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Gross.



**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. We are aware of the emergency repairs that need to happen to the school and we are working to bring the school forward in the preplanning phase. That's an area where we do have other schools also that are going forward. I don't know which ones will go forward, so I can't guarantee, but we are doing our best to try to ensure that we do seek funds from the federal government, for example, and I'll work with the department to see what other resources are available. As always, we try to advance our schools and we can only do a limited number every year, but we are always looking for outside funds to support our schools and the infrastructure in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. It would be nice to find extra funding somewhere so that there could be a new school built. I think it's the best thing right now for Igloolik because the school is very old. (interpretation ends) It's one of the historical buildings that we now have in Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, the Accutech Engineering report documents a significant number of issues that need to be dealt with at Igloolik's Ataguttaaluk Elementary School. In a recent media report, a representative from the Department of Community and Government Services is quoted as saying that 9 of 25 critical repairs have been completed out of a total of 127 issues to be fixed.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that the repairs are undertaken without delay and, also importantly, without disrupting school times for the students who have already lost so many hours of education due to the COVID pandemic? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again for the question to our colleague. Mr. Speaker, I can say that the department is working diligently to get the repairs completed and we're working and hoping that we will be able to work on that critical work this coming summer as soon as possible. School is out on June 12 in the community, so hopefully we won't have any disruptions very soon to that work that needs to go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

#### **Question 841 – 6(2): Kivalliq Intercommunity Road**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up today on the subject of the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road, which is a project of tremendous importance to the communities of the region.

As the minister will be aware, his department recently provided an update on the status of the project during this

year's Nunavut Mining Symposium. The update indicated that:

“Most people felt the road would have a positive impact for communities and businesses. There were some issues expressed about the proposed route due to the potential impact on caribou and other wildlife; an alternate route to Baker Lake may be preferred.”

Can the minister clarify what specific concerns have been identified with the current route proposal and can he describe how his department is working to address the concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The public consultations have taken place and we are trying to decipher the information of what we heard. Part of that work that is still ongoing is to try to figure those out within what we heard and as part of the study, those concerns that were raised will be part of the report. As the member mentioned, a majority of them were about the caribou that was a major concern and that's something that we definitely will have to take into factor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will also be aware, his department's recent update on the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road project indicated that the “initial route corridor”

was determined by considering a number of factors, including the Nunavut Planning Commission's Recommended Nunavut Land Use Plan. As the minister will recall, the proposed plan was submitted in June 2023, almost a year ago.

Can the minister confirm what role his department is playing in reviewing the proposed land use plan and can he indicate when this process is expected to be completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really appreciate the minister's interest on the Nunavut draft land use plan. Yes, that draft plan is still under review. I'm working very closely with my minister colleague from Environment, who is the lead on the Nunavut Land Use Plan review. Within that, he and his department have asked for all departments' input. We definitely have provided our input as part of Economic Development and Transportation.

As part of the Kivalliq road, there are identified areas of calving areas and the restrictions that are being considered will need to be taken into factor. It is something that I will work very closely with the minister in terms of what our government will determine on whether to approve or reject the draft land use plan. Right now it's under review. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I last raised this issue during our recent winter sitting, I received assurances from the minister that he would be working with his provincial and territorial counterparts in “calling on the federal government to enhance and restart the National Trades Corridor Fund and the Oceans Protection Plan, which are the two major programs that help build roads and ports.” Mr. Speaker, let me be the first to applaud the minister for his efforts. Thank you.

Can the minister tell me what specific commitments he has received from Ottawa to fund the nation-building Kivalliq Intercommunity Road project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This project is funded through the National Trade Corridors Fund. That means a lot. That’s a project that we have been using funds to start our studies and from the studies, we move forward into projects. We have been successful in doing that with our federal partners, and I hope and plan that this continues. If there are going to be any new programs that will be introduced, this study will help us advance way further than any other projects in terms of trying to get projects with new programs that are being rolled out within the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Question 842 – 6(2): Child Sexual Abuse**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier.

As I mentioned in my member’s statement, my theme for today will be focusing on public safety. However, I believe that the largest risk to public safety is that of child sexual abuse.

Mr. Speaker, for years, I have been trying to raise this matter and express my concerns in this Assembly and in the greater community, and I have been asking questions to Justice, Health, and Family Services, trying to get a grasp on the situation, and for years, I was going nowhere. Departments were unable to provide this information, whether it be a number of referrals for social workers, or convictions, or charges laid in the courts.

Then in my frustration, on June 6, 2019, I had escalated it and asked pointedly to the Premier of the day whether or not he had considered the high rates of child sexual abuse to be a crisis in Nunavut, and I did not get a direct response. However, when I posed the exact same question to the Representative for Children and Youth in 2021, she had agreed with my position that there was in fact a crisis, and more recently restated as much at our more recent televised hearing.

I would like to ask the exact same question to the Premier: does the Premier consider the high rates of child sexual abuse to be a crisis in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank my fellow MLA for bringing up this issue for many years and working tirelessly on getting the statistics and other information. I would like to first of all thank him. I do agree that one is way too many when it comes to child sexual abuse in all of Nunavut. It's very concerning. We saw some statistics recently.

I'm not exactly sure how to respond to your question because we need to have a thorough review and consult with my ministerial colleagues, especially (interpretation ends) Family Services, Justice, *amma* Health. (interpretation) It is an urgent situation. I haven't done a thorough review, but I can say that I absolutely agree with you and one is too many. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again would just like to also restate my position, as the Representative for Child and Youth had done. I strongly believe that our children are facing a crisis in the territory. I have said this before and I'll say it again: the Government of Nunavut is failing to meet its obligations to protect our youth, but that responsibility does not lie solely on the Government of Nunavut's shoulders. Again, it is going to take more than a government-wide approach; it will take a territory-wide approach.

I do note that the government does all it can to protect children, but unfortunately

it is most often reactionary, through apprehension for children at risk or charging and conducting investigations on the perpetrators. However, I still strongly feel that there have not been enough proactive measures, but I would like to note that Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami as well as the Pauktuutit Inuit Council of Canada have both hosted campaigns to address the issue of child sexual abuse in Inuit Nunangat, including Nunavut. It's unfortunate that these federal Inuit organizations have done more in Nunavut to address this significant matter.

As our government mandate is to collaborate, I would like to ask the Premier if he has had any discussions with his federal counterparts at ITK or Pauktuutit or at our more territorial or regional Inuit associations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Premier Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to thank my colleague for bringing forward a very good question. I would just like to stress the important investments we have been able to make as a government, especially in light of the Auditor General of Canada's report that did come within this Assembly.

I would like to note that previous governments didn't act on the recommendations that came, and I have been working very closely with, in particular, the Minister responsible for Family Services to ensure that we see investments to address the very important issues that are before us. We have been making historic investments

to address, really, the important issue that the member across is asking. Will there be a lot more work ahead of us? Absolutely. We have been seeing investments come, whether it's infrastructure or whether it's new PYs, to address the challenges that we are seeing around that right at the community level.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues here on this side to ensure that we really tackle this issue from a whole-of-territory and whole-of-government approach to unlock the necessary resources for us to address at the root of the issue, and that's to protect the children in our community, especially those that are most vulnerable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary. No? Thank you. Next name I have on my list: the Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

#### **Question 843 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern an important issue of water infrastructure.

As the minister is aware, his department recently issued a request for proposals for the development of a business case report for an upgrade to the water treatment infrastructure in Coral Harbour. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this work, which is planned to include:

“...an upgrade to the treatment process, an expansion of the existing raw water

reservoir and an improvement to the resupply operations, all to meet the needs of the community until at least the year 2050.”

Can the minister clarify the extent to which these upgrades will be eligible for federal funding? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Joanase.

**Hon. David Joanase:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our water infrastructure in Nunavut, we have been trying to make strides in upgrading or replacing old water plants. We have a brand new one in Whale Cove that has been just online recently. With that, we are also trying to maximize our funding and accessing federal funding around water and wastewater infrastructure.

For Coral Harbour specifically, I do know that we are in the planning stages for that community, and we do hope to have something lined up for over the next coming years to address the needs of Coral Harbour but also other communities that were highlighted; Clyde River. We're working on new treatment plants in Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, and Kugluktuk. These are all in different stages, and we are trying to maximize our resources financially. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the request for proposals indicates that the upgrade to Coral

Harbour's water treatment infrastructure is also intended to:

"Bring the plant in line with the treatment objectives in Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water...*"

Can the minister confirm whether or not the current treatment plant presently meets federal guidelines? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Joanásie.

**Hon. David Joanásie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As stated earlier, the drinking water regulations have evolved over time, and there are some requirements to operate and upgrade and maintain this infrastructure. As the standards go higher, we do try to meet those.

My department is committed to working with all the municipalities as well as regulators to ensure that our water treatment infrastructures are operated safely and sustainably. We do have a huge amount of investments going towards many communities over the next few years in particular.

Mr. Speaker, alongside this, we are developing and planning to invest into implementing operational plans to ensure these treatment infrastructures are operated as designed. It's ongoing work that my department is working with municipalities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was not answered. I was asking if the treatment plant meets federal guidelines.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he tabled the Government of Nunavut's *Drinking Water Strategic Framework* during the Legislative Assembly's sitting of May 29, 2023.

The document indicates that the Department of Community and Government Services "manages water treatment plants" in a number of Nunavut communities, including Nauyasat.

Can the minister confirm what upgrades are planned for Nauyasat's water treatment infrastructure? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Joanásie.

**Hon. David Joanásie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nauyasat wastewater upgrade project, the design and all functional reviews have been 99 percent completed. The treatment plant lagoon and wetland project, we are trying to proceed alongside in working with the municipality on this. The design needs to be reviewed based on the expected design's recommendations, which is coming from a lagoon liner study that was conducted for wastewater treatment sewage lagoons. We anticipate that the work will begin this summer in 2024 and the anticipated completion date is the fall of 2025. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtoq.

**Question 844 – 6(2): Helping to Prevent Suicide**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet.

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

Mr. Speaker, National Mental Health Week was in early May and it was good to see the fishing derbies and other activities being held around Rankin Inlet to promote good mental health. However, I was disappointed that more was not being done specifically to address the prevention of suicides.

Can the minister indicate whether any thought has been given to hosting regional conferences to bring together youth and elders as well as mental health workers to talk about ideas, activities, and initiatives that can prevent people from thinking about suicide as a solution to their problems? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for asking that question. Mental wellness, we are looking at the whole thing, comprehensively. We know it's a big job to do in Nunavut, and there are different groups that can be made available to help.

Mr. Speaker, holding conferences and meetings, as my colleague was suggesting, that may help, yes, I agree

with the idea, and the research that has been done and the work that will have to be done for the next five years. We're almost finished the plan for the next five years, the (interpretation ends) Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan. (interpretation) I don't know how to say that in Inuktitut, so I apologize.

The action plan is getting close to being finished, but it will have to be approved by the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated before we can present it to Nunavummiut. Part of the action plan will be to hold conferences with Nunavummiut about this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the last few months, in the Kivalliq region alone, there have been five suicides. In the past couple of weeks, there were two suicides. We must do more to prevent this sickness from spreading because the notion of suicide spreads like a toxic virus.

Just the thought of suicide can affect us all in a highly negative way. The impact of an attempted suicide is incredibly hurtful, and when someone does take their own life, it is devastating to everyone around them.

Can the minister inform this House of Nunavut's current suicide count for 2024? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister of Health, Minister Main.

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of the question, of course, my sincere condolences to everyone who has been impacted recently by suicide. It's not only in the Kivalliq, we've had several deaths, and every single one of those individuals was loved by their families and by their community members, and every single one of them is an incredible loss.

I think that the work that we are doing in terms of the *Mental Health Act* in Nunavut and working towards implementation of our new *Mental Health Act* which will allow for greater family involvement, which will allow for a greater emphasis on Inuit cultural values and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* to come into the mental health system in Nunavut, that's a focus for us.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have the number as of today in terms of the year's tally of these unfortunate events, but I can commit to providing that number to the member. I think, if that number isn't zero, which it isn't, it's a signal to us that we need to do more...

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. John Main:** ...and so the number is important. Every single one of those individuals is important. My department is committed to doing more and to making improvements to support Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)

Any number more than 'one' suicide is too many. I look forward to a day when the minister's answer is "there have been zero suicides this year."

Mr. Speaker, when a suicide occurs, I am always asked what I am going to do about it. It saddens me greatly that I don't have any answers. People say, "What is our MLA doing about this problem?" But we are not the experts. We need guidance and resources to better enable us to support our constituents.

Will the minister commit to providing Members of Nunavut's Legislative Assembly with suicide prevention kits that we can use in our communities to help address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Again I thank the member for raising this issue.

In terms of committing to providing kits, I'm not quite sure what specifically the member is referring to. I can certainly commit to making available a list of different resources on suicide prevention that I can share with members. I'm just a bit unclear in terms of what the kit would entail, but I can certainly commit to providing a list of resources and then working with members on that.

Mr. Speaker, I think that one of the most important things that we need to continue focusing on here in Nunavut is hope and that there is hope. There's always hope. Even in the face of



incredible tragedy and difficult events for the future, there is hope.

We now have more Inuit working in the field of mental health in Nunavut than we've ever had, and that's through our paraprofessional program, Mr. Speaker. We have stronger non-profit organizations doing work at the community level, like Pulaarvik Kablu in Rankin Inlet, than ever before and the Department of Health is supporting those non-profits, Mr. Speaker. We have more clients accessing counselling through our Healing by Talking Program, the remote program, than ever before.

These are things that are improving. There is more service. There is more discussion and dialogue on the issue of mental health, I believe, year by year. It's through that incremental progress and strategic, coordinated actions that we are going to be able to make change for Nunavummiut. I look forward to working with all Members of this House, all departments, anyone in Nunavut, any organization who wants to contribute is welcome and needed to make change. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

#### **Question 845 – 6(2): Syphilis Testing**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again today. I would actually like to thank my fellow members for bringing up these two very important issues. Mr. Speaker, there's no denying that the crisis of child abuse in Nunavut has an absolute impact on the crisis of suicide in Nunavut, and we

must take decisive action on both of those issues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues are aware, I have a keen interest in the social determinants of health and wellness across our territory. Along with the sexually transmitted infections of chlamydia and gonorrhea, syphilis is on the rise across Canada. Since the initial outbreak in 2012, Nunavut has continued to see an increased number of heterosexual syphilis cases.

What we know is that between 2012 and 2020, 655 infectious syphilis cases were reported, with 53 percent of those reported cases amongst females.

Thankfully there have been no congenital cases reported, and that is obviously due to excellent public health measures to ensure that babies are born safe.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an overview of how prevalent syphilis is in Nunavut and what key factors are contributing to the rise in cases? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the public health issues that we're dealing with in Nunavut, syphilis is a major concern and, as the member indicated, the outbreak that was declared in 2012 remains ongoing.

In terms of the contributing factors to this outbreak, one of the big factors we know is around education and awareness, making sure that Nunavummiut are aware of syphilis, what it is, how it presents itself, and how it can be tested and treated. One of the things about syphilis is that it can present itself in many different ways. It has been called the great pretender, so sometimes it can be very difficult to diagnose for health professionals.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the member asked about the prevalence. In terms of the territorial totals, in terms of cases, looking at the last five years, we're somewhere between 50 cases and 100 cases per year is what we have been going through. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the relatively quick and easy urine tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea, tests for syphilis require a blood sample. And as we know from our experiences during the COVID pandemic, sending samples to a laboratory in the south can mean at least two weeks before the results come back, and those long delays in specimen transport actually allow more for time for infection to spread.

The media has recently reported on a new rapid test for syphilis being rolled out in Nunavik, which involves a quick and easy finger-prick with the results available the same day.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate whether the Department of Health is considering implementing this rapid test

for syphilis in Nunavut and, if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Yes, we are interested in that new equipment which will allow for quicker testing and diagnosis. We are doing the preliminary work to implement point-of-care testing in one community in Nunavut to see that available.

Mr. Speaker, we also have contracted an infectious disease specialist working for us to provide territory-wide remote advice and coverage in case management of syphilis. We have also updated the medical directive for syphilis to reflect updated education and training requirements for public health and community health nurses. That new directive also includes point-of-care testing, which the member was referring to. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important to be aware of the things we can do to keep ourselves healthy. We rely on eating a good diet, participating in regular exercise, and getting ourselves tested to make sure that we know as soon as possible that we don't have an infection. Those are steps that we can each take to keep ourselves as healthy as possible. What we know is that many of the sexually transmitted infection rates occur highest amongst 20- to 39-year-olds.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not ashamed to say that I have had a sexually transmitted infection. In fact, it's kind of a fact of life in Nunavut if you are sexually active. Even if you have a committed relationship or a partnership where you believe that it's just the two of you, what we know is that sexually transmitted infections do occur even within those relationships.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the occasion to speak to a number of young people who have indicated to me that they have a really changing view of sexually transmitted infections. That really surprised me, which is why I stand here today and feel comfortable in declaring that aspect of my health, because young people feel today that infections are not forever and if they do catch one, then they can be treated for it and move on. However, we know that there are a number of sexually transmitted infections that are long-lasting, such as HPV and HIV, and those are very concerning to me.

Can the minister describe what health promotion activities are currently underway in our communities to reduce the stigma of and to encourage Nunavummiut to get tested for syphilis and other sexually transmitted infections? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. In terms of the awareness and promotion piece, it's very key for us in terms of not just on syphilis but other sexually transmitted infections, and I thank the

member for helping to encourage dialogue on this important matter.

There's an excellent website. I actually don't need the briefing note here in front of me; it is [irespectmyself.ca](http://irespectmyself.ca), and we have sexual health information available in multiple languages specifically for Nunavummiut. It's an excellent resource. I encourage Nunavummiut to check it out.

The promotional pieces that we're working on are things like community health representatives who do information sessions on the community radio, sometimes they are in schools. We have community-based condom distribution at health centres. We have 'Safer Sex' pamphlets and posters, which include information about testing. Those have been distributed across the territory.

As the member mentioned, when it comes to syphilis, the department does pay particular attention to those who are pregnant, in order to stay ahead of the risk of congenital syphilis. It can be transferred from mother to child.

The outbreak is continuing and it's going to require a continued effort on syphilis to get the case numbers under control, the guidance coming from the Chief Public Health Officer's office. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

#### **Question 846 – 6(2): Public Safety**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the new Minister of Justice and they concern the

issues that I raised in my member's statement concerning public safety.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has previously been vocal and a strong supporter of increasing policing resources in her own constituency.

During the previous Legislative Assembly, I had an opportunity to accompany RCMP officers on a community patrol, and I can attest to the need for the force to be adequately resourced.

I would like to ask: can the minister elaborate on the staffing levels of the Iqaluit RCMP detachment and what specific discussions her department has been having with respect to increasing the number of officers stationed in Iqaluit to meet the challenges of our city's growing public safety crisis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Justice, Minister Nutarak.

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. This is an issue I have worked on as well, and I can say that in Iqaluit there is one staff included at the RCMP and one person will be added through the (interpretation ends) First Nations and Inuit Policing Policy. (interpretation) It will be an addition to that and the issue on safety is being developed. The RCMP is working on the safety of the beach in the area during the spring and summer and they would do patrols when they have enough staff.

Perhaps that answers the question. Thank you. This is the first question I

have received in my post. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Deputy Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the honour of asking you your first question and I think you did an excellent job at providing a response.

However, Mr. Speaker, it's clear with the rising trend in the summer rates of violence and crime and other concerns to public safety that here in Iqaluit we are facing a very drastic situation.

I know that the RCMP are doing their best to provide policing services and keeping our residents safe. However, I strongly believe that the Iqaluit detachment is under-resourced and under-staffed. Right now they are doing the best they can to meet the needs, but again, it's more of a reactionary approach and there are not enough precautionary measures.

However, Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that we do need more RCMP officers here in Iqaluit. I would like to ask the minister if she would commit to looking into this matter of expanding the number of officers and resources in the Iqaluit detachment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Nutarak.

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has been developed with increase in hiring Inuit within the RCMP, and made available online and any office that anyone who

may want to be recruited, they have to be reviewed thoroughly. They can submit that at home, online, or at the police station. We continually want to see an increase in those.

(interpretation ends) The department is always working and looking into this issue, and trying to get more policing. We understand we are lacking policing everywhere in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another common concern that I hear from constituents is that when offenders from other communities complete their sentences at the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing facility here in Iqaluit, they end up remaining here in the city, and the perception is that this contributes to public safety problems.

I appreciate and recognize that there are a number of factors involved in this issue, and I appreciate and recognize that the government cannot simply force people to return to a community where there may be nowhere for them to live and even fewer mental health and substance abuse supports.

I would like to ask: can the minister elaborate and expand today on how her department is working with other partners to address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister Nutarak.

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member. (interpretation ends) Corrections always offers to transport offenders back home after their sentencing. (interpretation) That's the response I can provide to you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

#### **Question 847 – 6(2): Trichinella Testing in Nunavut**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I will ask the (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment.

(interpretation) In his minister's statement earlier today, he mentioned trichinella testing. I would like to know which communities in Nunavut he was referring to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to my minister's statement for reminding harvesters to report any wildlife occurrences in regard to whether sick or strange or noticed disease or illness in harvested animals, last year I provided a minister's statement advising the communities that experienced or reported symptoms of sick caribou or in the communities from Kugluktuk and Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was not answered. I want to know which communities have trichinella testing and which community the research is taking place in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my apologies to the member. Mr. Speaker, during my role in the previous as the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, I remember that the trichinella detection program is offered in Iqaluit and also in Rankin Inlet for the Kivalliq region.

At the time, I remember Nunavut Arctic College was seeking to further conduct tests within Rankin Inlet, but it was funded through Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated that the community from Rankin Inlet did the program. With a very lack of awareness within the testing in trichinella within the Kivalliq region, there were very few samples that were submitted to the Rankin Inlet detection program. I believe it needed more awareness to spread across the Kivalliq region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response to my question. I know that there are three communities in Nunavut that harvest walrus or maybe four. There are great walrus hunters in the Amittuq region and in my other constituency community of Coral Harbour, there are genuinely great walrus hunters. I'm wondering if that testing program would be made

available in those communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Minister Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our communities in Nunavut, we do have local conservation officers on site. They are the first point of contact when a walrus is harvested to fill out an application. That application is submitted to the Department of Health, where the Department of Health notifies the harvester. The Department of Environment does not notify the hunters, but rather we work closely with the Department of Health to report the samples where trichinella was detected.

At this time, the trichinella program is offered through Nunavut Arctic College alongside with the Department of Health, and those are the right departments whether they will further provide the programs in the region of Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Members will note that the time allotted for question period is over. We will move on. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 8: Returns to Written Questions**

#### **Return to Written Question 007 – 6(2): Suicide Rates and the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy**

**Clerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling the Return to Written Question 7 – 6(2), which was asked during the winter 2024 sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Replies to Opening Address. No. 10. Petitions. No. 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Sammurtok.

**Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

**Tabled Document 268 – 6(2):  
Exchange of Correspondence with  
the Ministers of Health and  
Economic Development and  
Transportation Concerning  
Security at Nunavut Health  
Centres and Airports**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table today a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Ministers of Health and Economic Development and Transportation concerning security at Nunavut health centres and airports, which I encourage all members to review with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Tabling of Documents. Ms. Killiktee.

**Tabled Document 269 – 6(2):  
Correspondence from the Minister  
of Health in Response to Oral  
Question 750 – 6(2)**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have one document to table today, which is a copy of the Minister of Health's recent letter to me concerning questions that I asked him during the winter 2024 sitting regarding the issue of birth certificates.

I encourage all members to review the document with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Tabled Document 270 – 6(2): Qulliq  
Energy Corporation's 2022-23  
Annual Report**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the Qulliq Energy Corporation's 2022-23 Annual Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Minister Main. Minister of Family Services, Minister Nakashuk.

**Tabled Document 271 – 6(2):  
Ilagiitsiarniq Family Wellness  
Strategic Framework 2023-28  
Progress Update Report**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the Ilagiitsiarniq Family Wellness Strategic Framework 2023-28 Progress Update Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Minister Nakashuk. Tabling of Documents. I have a number of documents to table today, six to be specific.

**Tabled Document 272 – 6(2):  
Declaration of Assent for Bills 37,  
39 and 40**

**Tabled Document 273 – 6(2): 2022-  
2023 Annual Report of the  
Integrity Commissioner of  
Nunavut**

**Tabled Document 274 – 6(2): 2022-23  
Annual Report of the Chief  
Electoral Officer of Nunavut**

**Tabled Document 275 – 6(2): 2023-24  
Annual Report of the Information  
and Privacy Commissioner of  
Nunavut**

**Tabled Document 276 – 6(2): 2022-23  
Audited Financial Statements  
under the Legislative Assembly  
Retiring Allowances Act**

**Tabled Document 277 – 6(2): 2022-23  
Audited Financial Statements  
under the Supplementary Retiring  
Allowances Act**

The first document is the Commissioner of Nunavut's Declaration of Assent for Bills 37, 39 and 40, all of which were passed during the recent winter sitting.

The second document is the 2022-23 Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut.

The third document is the 2022-23 Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Nunavut.

The fourth document is the 2023-24 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut.

The fifth document is the 2022-23 audited financial statements under the *Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act*.

And finally, the sixth document is the 2022-23 audited financial statements under the *Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act*. Thank you.

Tabling of Documents. Seeing none, Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Item 14: Notices of Motions**

**Motion 033 – 6(2): Appointment of the  
Representative for Children and  
Youth – Notice**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, May 27, 2024, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Ms. Marilyn Jane Bates be reappointed as Representative for Children and Youth, effective July 22, 2024.

At the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Minister Nutarak.



**Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills****Bill 41 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act – Notice**

**Hon. Karen Nutarak:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 41, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendments Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Bill 42 – An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act – Notice**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 42, *An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act*, be read for the first time. (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Minister Main. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister David Akeeagok.

**Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act – Notice**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 43, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Justice, Minister Nutarak.

**Bill 44 – An Act to Amend the Creditors Relief Act and the Public Service Garnishee Act – Notice**

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 44, *An Act to Amend the Creditors Relief Act and the Public Service Garnishee Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Joanasie.

**Bill 45 – An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act and the Hamlets Act – Notice**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 45, *An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act and the Hamlets Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Minister of Justice, Minister Nutarak.

**Bill 46 – An Act to Amend the Coroners Act – Notice**

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, that Bill 46, *An Act to Amend the Coroners Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. And finally, Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

**Bill 47 – Supplementary  
Appropriation (Capital) Act, No.  
2, 2024-2025 – Notice**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, May 24, 2024, I will move the following motion: that Bill 47, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 2, 2024-2025*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, minister. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills.  
No. 16. Motions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Item 16: Motions**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with her motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

**Motion 033 – 6(2): Appointment of the  
Representative for Children and  
Youth**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

WHEREAS section 2 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* provides that the Representative for Children and Youth is appointed by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly to hold office for a term of five years;

AND WHEREAS the appointment of the present incumbent expires on July 22, 2024;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to recommend an appointment to this position;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Ms. Marilyn Jane Bates be reappointed as Representative for Children and Youth, effective July 22, 2024.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I'm getting my exercise in today.

As a member of the Management and Services Board, I am very happy to make some brief comments to the motion today.

As the House is aware, Ms. Jane Bates has been serving as the Representative for Children and Youth since July 2019.

Ms. Bates received her Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1994 and began her professional career as a family services social worker for the Peel Children's Aid Society.

Ms. Bates first came north over two decades ago, when she moved to the Yukon, where she served in progressively more senior positions in

the field of youth and family support services.

Ms. Bates has specialized training and experience in the areas of child protection, family services, youth justice, crisis intervention, restorative community conferencing, and critical incident investigation.

Since her appointment as Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth, Ms. Bates has appeared before standing committees of the Legislative Assembly on a number of occasions to present her office's important annual reports.

Her professional competence and deep commitment to the well-being of our territory's children and youth is very evident, and I look forward to this House unanimously recommending her reappointment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Brewster. To the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

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

Item 17. First Reading of Bills.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Congratulations, Ms. Bates.

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Mr. Malliki.

### **Motion 034 – 6(2): Early Adjournment**

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 46, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, that the House adjourn for the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The motion is in order and not subject to debate. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

We will now proceed to Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for May 24:

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

14. Notices of Motions

15. Notices of Motions for First

Reading of Bills

16. Motions

17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 41
- Bill 42
- Bill 43
- Bill 44
- Bill 45
- Bill 46
- Bill 47

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Bill 38

20. Report of the Committee of the  
Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>> *Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.  
This House stands adjourned until  
Friday, May 24, at 9 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House adjourned at 15:41*

## Appendix – May 23, 2024



**Asked by:** George Hickes, MLA from Iqaluit-Tasiluk

**Number:** 796-6(2)

**Date:** March 6, 2024

**Subject: Certification of Educational Institutes**

Mr. Speaker, for Students to access these funds, the educational institution that they are enrolled in must be on placed on a Master List overseen federally by the Minister for Employment and Social Development Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the second way a Post Secondary Institute can be placed on the Master Designated List is to apply to be placed on a Province or Territory's Master Designated List or placed on the National Master Certification List. Since the Member raised this question in the Fall Session, I can confirm that Nunavut Arctic College staff have been



involved in productive conversations with staff at Advance Education with the Department of Education, and staff at Employment and Social Development Canada and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program.

Mr. Speaker, these discussions have resulted in the recommendation that the Nunavut Arctic College work to be placed on the Master Designated List of a province or territory who participates in the Canada Student Loan Program. Previously, the Nunavut Arctic College was on Alberta's Master Designation List, which lapsed in 2018. I can confirm the College has begun discussions with its University Partner, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, to apply to be placed on the Master Designated List with Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



## **Return to Written Question**

**Asked by:** Janet Brewster, MLA Iqaluit-Sinaa

**Asked of:** Honorable John Main, MLA, Minister Responsible for Suicide Prevention

**Number:** 007-6(2)

**Date:** March 12, 2024

**Subject:** Suicide Rates and the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy

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**Question:**

1. Between October 27, 2010, and March 11, 2024, broken down by calendar year and month:
  - a. How many residents of Nunavut died by suicide within Nunavut?
    - I. How many of these suicides were committed by Inuit?
    - II. How many of these suicides were committed by non-Inuit?
  - b. With respect to suicides committed by Inuit, please disaggregate the data by?
    - I. Sex;
    - II. 10-year age cohorts;
    - III. Method;
    - IV. Presence of intoxicating substances in body at time of death;
    - V. History of substance abuse;
    - VI. Engagement with counselling services from the Department of Health or other Government of Nunavut entity within 12 months prior to death; and;
    - VII. Previous reported suicide attempts.



## Response:

As part of their investigations, the Coroner gathers information from various departments, including Justice, Family Services, and Health. This includes medical records, travel medical history, and RCMP reports. The Coroner also conducts interviews with key individuals connected to those who have died by suicide. This information is securely stored in paper files at the Coroner's office. This information is gathered by the Coroner to determine cause of death.

Health has established a data-sharing agreement with the Coroner (Department of Justice) to access, collect, and store the data collected. Under this agreement, the Departments can share aggregated information that has been gathered.

1. a. Between 2010 and March 2024 broken down by calendar year and month:

- I. There were 451 deaths by suicide among Inuit in Nunavut. Table 1 presents the number of suicide deaths among Inuit tabulated on an annual basis from January 1 to December 31 of 2010 through 2023. For the year 2024, data is provided from January 1 to March 26.

**Table 1. Annual Suicide Mortality Rates among Inuit in Nunavut.**

Year	Total Suicide Deaths
2010	30
2011	33
2012	26
2013	45
2014	28
2015	30
2016	32
2017	24
2018	31
2019	39
2020	27
2021	36
2022	27
2023	37
2024	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>451</b>

Table 2 presents the monthly distribution of deaths by suicide among Inuit in Nunavut, aggregated over five-year intervals from 2010 to 2023. Data for 2024 is included up to March 26. To comply with data disclosure protocols, instances

where the number of deaths is less than 5 are suppressed, and counts are presented over a five-year period.

**Table 2. Monthly Suicide Mortality Rates among Inuit in Nunavut, per Five-Year Period.**

Month	5-year Count		
	2010-2014	2015-2019	2020-2024
January	10	14	21
February	10	11	13
March	17	17	6
April	16	17	13
May	18	15	8
June	12	16	16
July	8	15	8
August	23	10	12
September	12	9	8
October	11	10	11
November	14	13	9
December	11	9	8
<b>Total Suicide Death(s)</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>133</b>

- II. In the reporting period from 2010 to March 26, 2024, the total number of suicide deaths among non-Inuit individuals is 7. Due to data disclosure protocols, which require suppression of counts less than 5, only the aggregate total for this period can be provided without annual breakdowns.

**b. With respect to death by suicides among Inuit in Nunavut:**

- I. There were 112 deaths by suicide among females and 309 deaths by suicide among males between 2010 and 2024. Table 3 presents the number of deaths by suicide among Inuit by sex tabulated on an annual basis from January 1 to December 31 of 2010 through 2023. For the year 2024, data is provided from January 1 to March 26. Due to data disclosure protocols data for the years 2017 and 2024 are suppressed.

**Table 3. Annual Suicide Mortality Rates among Inuit in Nunavut by Sex.**

Year	Total	Female	Male
2010	30	7	23
2011	33	7	26
2012	26	6	20
2013	45	11	34
2014	28	7	21
2015	30	5	25
2016	32	8	24
2017	24	<5	>15
2018	31	5	26
2019	39	10	29
2020	27	5	22
2021	36	6	30
2022	27	11	16
2023	37	13	24
2024	6	<5	<5
<b>Total</b>	<b>451*</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>342</b>

\* The overall total is the sum from 2010 to the mentioned date. However, the aggregate figures for males and females do not include the data from 2024 for privacy reasons, which explains why the totals for females and males do not equal 451.

- II. Table 4 presents the number of deaths by suicide categorized by 10-year age groups, aggregated over five-year intervals from 2010 to 2023. For the year 2024, data is provided from January 1 to March 26. Counts are presented over five-year periods, rather than annually or monthly, to adhere to data disclosure protocols. To comply with data disclosure protocols, data for the age group 0 to 10 years for the period 2020-2024 are suppressed.

**Table 4. Inuit Suicide Mortality Rates by 10-Year Age Groups, Aggregated Over Five-Year Periods.**

Age (Year)	5-Year Count		
	2010-2014	2015-2019	2020-2024*
0 to 10	0	0	<5
11 to 20	64	53	30
21 to 30	60	56	57
31 to 40	20	22	30
41 to 50	10	16	12
51+	8	9	<5
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>133</b>

- III. Table 5 presents the methods of deaths by suicide, from 2010 to 2024. For the year 2024, data is provided from January 1 to March 26.

**Table 5. Methods of Suicide among Inuit from 2010 to 2024.**

Method	Years
	2010 – 2024*
Hanging	297
Firearm	142
Other	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>451</b>

Regarding items IV – VII, validated data is currently only available from 2014 through 2022. To validate the data, Health must extract the individual data from Coroners' files and cross reference those findings with individual health records. When data extraction from Coroners' files began, 2014 was the chosen starting point to reflect the current infrastructure, protocols and available resources. Data from 2022 onwards is in the process of being validated and is not yet available.

#### *Disclaimers on the Data*

This does not include information in paper records. The information pulled from Meditech relies on coding and search terms. If someone initially presented for a different reason than accessing mental health services or outside of an appointment with a mental health nurse the visit may not be included in the data.

Access to counselling numbers do not include visits outside of the health centre or hospital setting (e.g., crisis response teams, healing by talking, visits with paraprofessionals traditional counselling, counselling run via wellness funding).

- IV. Table 6 details toxicology test outcomes associated with deaths by suicide through 2014 to 2022. The "Toxicology Test Completed" row enumerates the total number of toxicological examinations performed, which are conducted at the discretion of the Coroner, depending on the specifics of each case and the condition of the body. The "Positive Toxicology Results" row reports the count of tests that detected the presence of alcohol, cannabis, and/or other controlled substances.

**Table 6. Toxicology Findings in Inuit Suicide Deaths. 2014-2022.**

	2014 - 2022
<b>Total Number of Suicides</b>	274
<b>Toxicology Test Completed</b>	202
<b>Positive Toxicology Results</b>	126

- V. Table 7 presents data on the history of substance or alcohol misuse among Inuit who died by suicide from 2014 to 2022. Information regarding substance use or alcohol misuse is derived from patient medical records, RCMP records and/or Coroner interviews. If the medical records show a history of cannabis use or

frequent severe intoxication, or if interviews with family and friends reveal a similar pattern, this information is noted in the table.

This information is not selective to only medical information. The data is dependent on the availability and reliability of the information.

**Table 7. History of Substance or Alcohol Misuse Among Inuit Who Died by Suicide, 2014-2022.**

	2014 - 2022
<b>Total Number of Suicide</b>	274
<b>History of Substance Use or Alcohol Use</b>	147

- VI. Table 8 presents data on the engagement with mental health counselors or other mental health professionals (e.g. mental health nurses) within the 12 months preceding death by suicide, from 2014 to 2022. This number reflects the number of individuals who accessed these services at least once.

**Table 8. Engagement with Mental Health Counsellors or Professionals in the 12 Months Prior to Suicide Deaths Among Inuit, 2014-2022.**

	2014 - 2022
<b>Total Number of Suicide</b>	274
<b>Mental health professional/counsellor visit, 12 months</b>	80

- VII. Table 9 presents the number of Inuit who had previously attempted suicide and subsequently died by suicide between 2014 to 2022. Data on prior suicide attempts are obtained from patient medical records and/or coroner interviews with friends and family.

**Table 9. Previous Suicide Attempts Among Inuit in Nunavut Who Died by Suicide, 2014-2022.**

	2014 - 2022
<b>Total Number of Suicide</b>	274
<b>Suicide Attempts in Lifetime</b>	108