



**Legislative Assembly of Nunavut**

**Speaker**

**Hon. Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeeagok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Community Services;  
Minister of Human Resources;  
Minister responsible for Nunavut  
Business Credit Corporation; Minister  
responsible for Nunavut Development  
Corporation; Minister responsible for  
Trade; Minister responsible for Mines;  
Minister responsible for the Workers'  
Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

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

**Bobby Anavilok**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of  
Education; Minister of Justice;  
Minister responsible for Labour;  
Minister responsible for Human Rights  
Tribunal*

**George Hickey**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker; Chair of the  
Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. David Joanasie**  
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister  
of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Nunavut; Minister of Environment;  
Minister responsible for Energy*

**Joelie Kaernerik**  
(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**  
(Uqummiut)

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**  
(Rankin Inlet South)

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

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. John Main**  
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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

**Solomon Malliki**  
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee  
of the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

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

**Karen Nutarak**  
(Tununiq)

**Daniel Qavvik**  
(Hudson Bay)

**Joanna Quassa**  
(Aggu)

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**  
(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**  
(Rankin Inlet North-  
Chesterfield Inlet)

**Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee  
of the Whole*

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Monday, September 15, 2025**

**Members Present:**

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

>>*House commenced at 13:00*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Mr. Tony Akoak): Good afternoon. Before we start with proceedings, Mr. Malliki, please proceed with a prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker:** Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Hon. Government House Leader, Mr. Joanasie.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 654 – 6(2): Minister Absent from the House**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): I would like to inform the House that P.J. Akeeagok will not be in attendance today. He's having a meeting with the ministers in Ottawa. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Minister's Statement 655 – 6(2): Build Canada Homes Announcement of 700 Homes**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It's nice to be back.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform this House of a major step forward for housing in Nunavut. The Government of Canada has announced it will partner with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to plan and deliver approximately 700 public, affordable, and supported housing units for communities across the territory.

>>*Applause*

Mr. Speaker, as we await further program details from the Government of Canada, NHC stands ready to deliver and is already at work, with planning and due diligence underway for delivery under a multi-year, multi-site stream aligned to community need and readiness. This critical funding will be used to add desperately needed public housing, introduce more affordable housing supply for workers and families, and provide supportive homes with the services people need to live safely and with dignity.

Mr. Speaker, we are ready to seize this opportunity because of the groundwork laid through Nunavut 3000. Over the past two years, NHC has put in place the tools to advocate and prepare for this opportunity, working diligently to develop the partnerships and approaches that will allow us to accelerate housing at scale.

We have engaged with municipalities and hamlets to advance site screening and due diligence, and are securing land readiness, servicing, and logistics. Through negotiated contracts and pre-qualified supplier pools, we are taking a disciplined approach to construction, and are expanding Inuit employment and training pathways so that local workers and businesses benefit as we build.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the prime minister and our colleagues in the Government of Canada for their vote of confidence in NHC's plan and capacity. This injection of housing through Build Canada Homes enables us to accelerate supply across the housing continuum and deliver results in every community.

With Canada's trust and the delivery systems we have built under Nunavut 3000, we are moving from targets to outcomes. Through Igluliuqatigiingniq – our plan for building houses together – we are creating more homes across more communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

**Minister's Statement 656 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Power Plant Construction**

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share progress on Qulliq Energy Corporation's project to build a new power plant in the community of Kugluktuk. The existing facility was constructed in 1968 and has long exceeded its expected lifecycle. Replacing this plant is crucial to ensure a safe, reliable, and modern electricity supply for residents and businesses in the years ahead.



(interpretation ends) Over the past several years, QEC has advanced this project through environmental review, detailed planning, and multiple procurements. While an initial hybrid diesel-solar concept was announced in 2019, market volatility, material cost spikes, and funding schedule constraints led to significant delays and scope adjustments across several re-tendering efforts. Despite these headwinds, the project remained a priority for Nunavut's energy infrastructure.

I am pleased to report that, following approval by the Financial Management Board in August 2025, QEC is proceeding to award the design-build contract for the new Kugluktuk power plant. The total approved project budget is \$74.38 million, including \$37.27 million from the Arctic Energy Fund.

In 2025, the competitive procurement to select a design-build contractor moved forward, reflecting renewed momentum on this file. The new plant will be designed for efficiency, resilience, and long-term sustainability. Consistent with QEC's approach across the territory, the facility will include provisions that allow future connection of community-scale renewables. This ensures Kugluktuk can benefit from clean energy integration over time without compromising today's reliability.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Kugluktuk deserve dependable, modern electricity infrastructure that supports community wellbeing and local economic activity. Qulliq Energy Corporation will continue to work closely with the hamlet and its partners to keep residents informed as the project progresses through the detailed design and construction phases.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

### **Minister's Statement 657 – 6(2): MX-13 Survey**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to provide an update of a muskox aerial abundance survey my department completed this year on MX-13, the southern mainland Kivalliq group. This aerial survey was supported financially by both the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's Wildlife Research Trust and the Department of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, muskox is an important source of country food and other materials are used for traditional clothing and crafts. This management unit is accessed by harvesters from

Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, and Arviat. We were able to have local hunters and trappers organizations select observers from all of the communities participating on this survey, which was flown from July 21 to August 2, 2025.

Mr. Speaker, in 2016 the muskox population was an estimated 4,437 muskoxen, and the total allowable harvest was maintained at 182 muskoxen. My department will consult and share results from the 2025 survey when they are available with the Kivalliq hunters and trappers organizations.

After the consultation, my department will take this information back to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board so they can make informed decisions about future harvesting of the population.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to be able to work with and support Nunavut's hunters and trappers organizations in our co-management system. I also wish to extend a thank you to all who participated in the aerial surveys as your collective knowledge and expertise is critical in the success of such surveys. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Minister's Statement 658 – 6(2): Nunavut's Post-Secondary Landscape**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, and good afternoon, colleagues and people of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, like many in Nunavut and across the Inuit regions, I have been following the discussions around the creation of an Inuit Nunangat University being led by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. As we know, no single post-secondary institution can meet the diverse educational needs in any jurisdiction. I look forward to continued updates on these important efforts.

As these discussions take place, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the strength and contributions of our own post-secondary institution here in Nunavut. For more than three decades, Nunavut Arctic College has been a trusted and important part of education, training, and research in our territory. Supported by Nunavummiut and by the Government of Nunavut, the college reflects and responds to the needs of our communities, offering programs grounded in Inuit Societal Values and rooted in Inuit language, culture, and history.

The College provides a wide range of programs from trades and health to education, business, and the arts. We are home to Piqqusilirivvik, Nunavut's cultural school, who supports the growth of Inuit knowledge for future generations. The College also operates

community learning centres in every Nunavut community, each base-funded for at least one adult educator and a janitor, ensuring that learning opportunities are available across the territory.

Through strong partnerships with universities across Canada, Nunavummiut can pursue degree programs right here at home while maintaining connections to national academic and research networks. These partnerships also ensure that our graduates hold the same credentials as their peers across the country, prepared to meet the needs of our territory and to succeed in the wider Canadian workforce, should they choose to leave Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, in Inuktitut, Nunavut Arctic College is known as Silattuqsarvik, a place of wisdom, where practice, reflection, and resilience lead to growth and excellence. Our programs, our graduates, our facilities, and our people stand as proof of the College's significant role in Nunavut's future.

*Qujannamiik.*

*>>Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

### **Minister's Statement 659 – 6(2): Strategic Infrastructure Development in Nunavut**

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the Government of Nunavut's ongoing commitment to developing and maintaining critical infrastructure across our territory, work that is essential to the well-being of Nunavummiut and the long-term prosperity of our communities.

From airports and ports to water and wastewater systems, and long-term care centres, our government is investing in infrastructure that connects, protects, and empowers Nunavut. These investments are about building opportunity, resilience, and equity.

Mr. Speaker, our efforts are guided by the Katujjiluta mandate, which calls for action to close gaps in infrastructure and services. We are advancing the mandate through strategic planning and prioritization, ensuring our investments reflect local needs and add long-term value to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as part of our efforts, we collaborate with federal departments such as Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada and Transport Canada to develop

funding programs and agreements that support transformative infrastructure projects, including:

- New air terminal buildings in six communities,
- Deep water ports and small craft harbours,
- Long term care facilities, and
- Water treatment upgrades in over ten communities.

Mr. Speaker, these projects are shaping Nunavut's future. They will improve access to essential services, strengthen economic development, and enhance the quality of life for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

#### **Minister's Statement 660 – 6(2): Direct Appointment in the 6th Legislative Assembly**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight our significant progress in hiring Nunavummiut into indeterminate positions in the Government of Nunavut.

Since the advent of this 6th Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, there have been 448 direct appointments made within the public service in every community in Nunavut. Of these, 428 appointments, over 95 percent were for Nunavut Inuit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this hiring achievement is a strong demonstration of our commitment to Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement, and building a representative public service that reflects the people we serve. Direct appointments are an important staffing tool to remove hiring barriers and create meaningful career opportunities for Nunavut Inuit in all departments and agencies. Quite often, the direct appointment process is used to hire long-term casual employees into their positions on a permanent basis.

Mr. Speaker, each direct appointment represents more than a number or statistic. It represents a Nunavut Inuk gaining full-time, indeterminate government employment, building their skills and experience, and contributing directly to the delivery of programs and services in their home communities.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Human Resources will continue to support the direct appointment process and work with all departments and public bodies to strengthen Inuit employment. These results show that our efforts are having a real impact, and we will continue to make Inuit hiring and retention a top priority.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

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

#### **Member's Statement 900 – 6(2): Thank Amittummiut and Family for Support**

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Amittummut, colleagues, Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my appreciation since I came to this House I have worked hard on Nunavummiut language for youth, and in areas of housing, how Nunavut and our government can make things more equitable, and start looking at communities not as small communities, because we Inuit also struggle in our communities.

I wanted to make this statement today because gratitude goes a long far way. First of all, grateful to my wife, Samantha Morgan and my son, Samuel Morgan who I named after my father.

We go through hardships and sometimes difficult to stand here and you ponder how can I serve better. She has been supportive every time I have to travel. Although we go through hardships, the struggles we may be in the wrong or not, something comes up, even if it's small, that encourages us.

I would like to thank Amittummiut and in a way regret; however, my gratitude is greater here, because perhaps I voice your voice also, perhaps.

Being an MLA is a hard job. Some may think it's easy, because we stand up and just ask questions. But there are many other areas, details and so forth that we have to work on, and sometimes people may think it's not difficult. And this really affects you personally. These struggles obviously are there but encouragement comes from my wife to continue on.

I would like to ask the House for permission to extend my member's comments. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you. I've been very grateful to date as I start concluding my stay here. I won't stop, however. The next candidate who may be elected I will give my full support. As I mentioned, this impacts our lives, our personal lives. Those who have had parents, I've always envied you. When you remember back of the words that you sometimes struggle, but you look elsewhere for encouragement.

I hope the next MLA, please, what you hold dear and strive for for the benefit of your people will be your strength. We have not all gone through a smooth phases. You have regrets and so forth, but we also have gratitude.

And I would like to thank all the Amittummiut, I can say now, and thank you for listening. I'm overheated. Sometimes you have to make some jokes to make you smile, with so much paperwork we have to read through and sometimes that is much.

My conclusion is thank you. *Qujannamiik*. Hopefully the next MLA will be in my thoughts. Thank you for listening to my thoughts, little me. May God be with us all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

### **Member's Statement 901 – 6(2): Support Our Men's Shelter**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to Mittimatalimiut and welcome, Minister Kusugak.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) I rise today to raise a concern that was brought forward by one of my constituents with respect to the operation of the men's shelter in Pond Inlet. Mr. Speaker, I recognize the critical need for shelters for vulnerable residents who do not have a place to call home and I appreciate the support that can be provided is often limited by resources, volunteers, and the lack of funding.

Mr. Speaker, when shelter is only available on an emergency basis, there is not much opportunity for an individual accessing the service to improve their situation. Mr. Speaker, I encourage the government in its effort to create programs, especially for men who find themselves in this situation. They would greatly benefit from programs for hunting, job skills, food preparation, budgeting, learning how to manage their expenses, pay bills, and more. Not all men have the power to do these things, and they may not have had the opportunity to learn them.

Mr. Speaker, many men would also benefit greatly from healing sessions with their peers and fellow men.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to any initiatives being brought forward by our government department and our hamlet authorities to help and assist these who need extra support. I encourage groups and individuals to reach out to offer a helping hand, or to ask for help as the case may be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

**Member's Statement 902 – 6(2): Run As an MLA Again**

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform you here in this House this fall that I will be running again as an MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluk. Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to thank our Lord, who has guided me and always guides me and showed me the pathway to date in my life time. I am uplifted in many ways. Thank you, my Lord.

I also like to thank my relatives, my family, my wife, Margaret Qappik. While I travel here to Iqaluit for meetings I have to leave them. Although it is difficult to leave your family. I love my family. My mother, my father and my in-laws, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, my biggest gratitude is to the people of Sanikiluaq, my constituents of Hudson Bay, who have voted me in, who believe in me. Thank you so much, Sanikiluammiut, that I'm able to say for you for the past four years.

Mr. Speaker, I was questioning myself how MLAs worked this past four years. From you, my colleagues, I've learned a lot from you. You have been like my own instructors in the past four years. Listening to you and observing all of you, I've learned much to be an MLA.

I would like to run again on October 27 using my abilities, and those who are not running again, I also thank you for serving Nunavut. And hopefully those who will run again, I encourage you to try hard. Thank you.

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

**Member's Statement 903 – 6(2): Culinary Arts Course in Baker Lake (Simailak)**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, all, and welcome back, Minister Kusugak. Good to see you in the House again.

Mr. Speaker, in the month of June I had the honour of heading up to Agnico Eagle Mines Meadowbank operation to have a meeting with the general manager, Eric Steinmetzer from Agnico Eagle, to see how things are going up there and to see what ideas we can come up with.

I had given the suggestion about running a culinary arts course in partnership with Nunavut Arctic College. They loved the idea so much that they are trying to run with it, so on September 9 I took part in a Teams meeting with Barbara Olson of Nunavut Arctic College, acting dean of trades. Thank you to the minister and her staff. And Joanie Denome (ph) of Agnico Eagle. They are trying to find a way to see what it would take to run a culinary arts course in Baker Lake, with the idea of perhaps expanding it to other communities to come into Baker Lake and take part care in a culinary arts course.

It's only through partnerships where we can succeed and get things going off the ground. It cannot be done by one entity. It cannot be done only by Government of Nunavut; we need partners, and this is where the idea was born from.

During the Teams meeting Ms. Olson mentioned that there are some regulations, some rules to run a culinary arts course, health inspections, health regulations and whatnot. And I understand that, but I also challenge Nunavut Arctic College to use Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, *qaunigtoniq* (ph) being in a way, to finding a way, Aajiiqatigiinniq, decision-making through discussion, and Piliriqatigiinniq, working together for a common cause.

And they are working on it right now to see what it would take to run a culinary arts in Baker Lake. I'm hoping we will have success with that very soon or having another Teams meeting in about, not too long from now. I'm hoping I will have a successful to pass on later on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 904 – 6(2): Congratulations Terry Uyarak**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate (indiscernible). On Friday my colleague and I were welcomed to go watch to premier's office because an individual from Igloolik was awarded King Charles



Coronation Medal, Terry Uyarak. I congratulate you. He never stops working. Even though he is a senior and he's got a private business as well, and he travels all over Nunavut. I would like to, on behalf of everyone, I would like to congratulate Terry Uyarak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member from Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**Member's Statement 905 – 6 (2): Kugluktuk Power Plant**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To Kugluktuk, the visitors.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a short statement about Kugluktuk's power plant. Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, one of the issues that I have been pushing for since the beginning of this Assembly is the urgent need for a new power plant for the community. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday last week I asked more questions on this subject to the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Mr. Speaker, information published by the government indicates that the contract to design and build a new power plant for Kugluktuk was awarded to Pilitak Enterprises.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased that the procurement process has successfully concluded, and work can now get underway.

I look forward to closing closely monitoring this project, and encourage Qulliq Energy Corporation to ensure that the design of the plant allows for future incorporation of renewable energy technologies.

I also encourage the Qulliq Energy Corporation to ensure that the construction of the new power plant maximizes the use of local labour.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by expressing my appreciation to the minister and the corporation for responding to my concerns and achieving this important milestone. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 906 – 6(2): Thanks Quttiktuqmiut for Support**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a member for the high Arctic, my term will be ending in a very short time. I would like to

send my appreciation and thank you to the hamlet council of high Arctic and to the mayor of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay and Arctic Bay. I was able to work closely with you, representing the three communities. Mayor Meeka Kiguktak, Mayor Aziz Kheraj, and Mayor Ulayjuk Nakatarvik (ph) were always available to me every time we need to consult with them or talk with the municipality, and also talk about the issues of Nunavut. They work very hard. Meeka has been working very hard for a long time. Her laugh and lightness always uplift the other majors in Nunavut, and also my colleagues at the Legislative Assembly kept saying that she's such a good mayor.

And Aziz as well, he went back to being a mayor, although he took a short break. He has been running his business for quite some time, and once he started becoming the mayor of the municipality he has developed and been very productive and worked very hard.

We try to work together closely with the three communities of the high Arctic. Ulayjuk, his only language he speaks is Nunavummiut and he's an elder. He was elected as a mayor, but he was councillor for long time, but he recently became a mayor. Although he's a quiet man, but every time he works, his hard work produces. And we can feel him as he's an elder, and we listen to him and he's got interesting things to say.

Working closely with the mayors I will miss working with the mayors. I have tried to work closely with all the mayors and thank them as well. I know that they will work hard and continue to work hard, and they became friends of mine. And I believe that we'll continue to work and know each other. So I just wanted to point that out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member Statement. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

#### **Member's Statement 907 – 6(2): Arviat Graduates and Celebrations**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past months I remember during, after the meeting on June 7 in Arviat there was a graduate John Arnalukjuak High School. The graduates of Arviat were close to 30 students. I can't really recall exact number of the students that graduated. June 7 was a great, enjoyable day and we celebrated the graduates of young people and their parents and the teachers, and we celebrated them. One thing we enjoyed very much, the Minister of Education Pamela Gross had attended the graduation to Arviat, as she was invited. And I thank you for going over there.

And also Eva Arreak, the Commissioner of Nunavut also attended to celebrate the graduates in Arviat, to celebrate the graduates with Arviammiut. Minister of Education and Nunavut Commissioner, I would like to thank you for attending the graduation in Arviat school.

There are three Arviat schools in our community, Levi Angmak elementary school, Qitqliq Middle School, and John Arnalukjuak High School.

The three schools, working at the three schools, the teachers work very hard. As the minister had seen the hard work of the teachers. I'm very pleased of that. And I know that they work very closely with graduates, but they have started working with them since kindergarten.

There are three individuals that were awarded King Charles III Coronation Award, (indiscernible), Mary (indiscernible), and John Junior Savikataaq were awarded the King Charles Coronation Medals. I'm very pleased and congratulate the three individuals that I just mentioned because they work very hard. The Commissioner came over to award them and I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, on June 7 was such a great date for Arviammut. I thank the individuals for coming to celebrate with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

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

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): I was supposed to say *quana*, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize an individual who was able to attend here, and I thank the staff for allowing the individual to come here as I stated, Samantha Morgan, my wife, had made this, these are called (indiscernible), vests. And also she made the tie. I would like to acknowledge Selma Morgan and also our babies that I was given. I kept saying I'm not going to raise her. Now we are raising her, adopted, Selma, who's named after my father. So I wanted to acknowledge them.

And also an individual, Don George Oolaatitak, who is visiting. Everybody is aware of who he is in Nunavut. Thank you for allowing me to acknowledge them, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, because from my constituent I would like to welcome Dan. When he was very small he was very talkative and people used to ask him to sing. Welcome.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the individuals, although they were recognized earlier. But also the daughter over there is named after my grandfather, so we used to tease each other. Even though she's named after my brother and she's named after his sister, we used to tease each other all the time as well.

I would like to recognize who used to be in Naujaat as well welcome, Dan George. He's also my son-in-law. Although his namesake called me Sakkik (ph), so for the first time I called him Ningna (ph), which means my in-law. I also would like to recognize Judy's wife and also NTI vice president. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although these individuals were acknowledged, the individuals that I work very hard with, and I'm very pleased that NTI he has been elected for second vice president. Paul Inguk, welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross** (interpretation): *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon everyone in the House today. Welcome to our Assembly. I just want to acknowledge and say a welcome to our vice president of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Paul Inguk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Welcome to everyone sitting in the gallery.

Item 6, Oral Questions. Minister for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

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

#### **Oral Question 1404 – 6(2): Activities of the Nunavut Development Corporation**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Good afternoon to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Development Corporation. As the minister is aware, Iqalukpik fish plant was established in Chesterfield Inlet four decades ago. Over the years it has contributed to the development of an in-shore commercial fishery in the region, and provided important employment opportunities for the residents of the community.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Development Corporation's current business plan indicates that "the Nunavut Development Corporation would like to work with the Hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet and to the Iqalukpik fish plant to possibly create a subsidiary of Kivalliq Arctic Foods such as the one in Whale Cove."

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nunavut Development Corporation is a very important entity, and I hope that they continue well with all the things that they are trying to create. Right now the staff at the development corporation has been working hard and I can't get into the details of his question right now, but I know of the work that they are doing and I know it's in good hands and work is being done very well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Development Corporation's most recent annual report indicates that the corporation purchased over 25,000 pounds of caribou meat and 2,000 pounds every muskox harvesters during the 2023-2024 harvest year. Can the minister confirm how much meat was purchased from the Chesterfield Inlet harvesters during the 2024-2025 harvest year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that is part of the annual reports and once that annual report is available, I'll be able to provide how many pounds of meat has been purchased in Chesterfield. I do await for that report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, he tabled the government's strategy plan for fisheries during the fall 2023 sitting of the Legislative Assembly. In July of this year the minister announced signing of an agreement with Greenland concerning fisheries in the Davis Straight and Baffin Bay. Can the minister indicate how the Nunavut Development Corporation and Department of Community Services are working together to develop a strategy for the expanding inland fisheries in the Kivalliq region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Corporation – my apologies. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I apologize. Over the last week I've been sitting in the committee, so I've been referring to Mr. Chair. I really apologize for not calling you Speaker. So from now on continue to call you Mr. Speaker. You're a wonderful role doing that.

Mr. Speaker, my division of fisheries and sealing works very closely with the Nunavut Development Corporation and all other entities in getting that fishing strategy done and in the implementation. It is at the implementation phase now, and those discussion between our officials from various places will continue. I do hope that the end result is that we'll see our local economy more diverse, and provide opportunities to have meats available throughout the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1405 – 6(2): Youth Cardiac Screening in Kugaaruk**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, just last week the Department of Health issued a press release stating that the youth of Kugaaruk would be undergoing cardiac screening, because of the higher than expected number of cases our youth have a condition that leads to their hearts becoming enlarged and weakened. Mr. Speaker, more than a third of the population of Kugaaruk are in this age group.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us what additional help and wellness resources will be provided to families of the community of Kugaaruk to address this health condition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

In terms of additional supports that can be provided to Kugaaruk residents, we're still at the early stages of this project. I don't know if I would call it a project; of this initiative. The first stage, which we are now entered into, is going into the community and then conducting a detailed screening to determine the prevalence of this condition, and following, once we have results from that and we know more about how prevalent this condition is, then we can mobilize additional resources accordingly. At this point we're still in the early stages of this initiative, and we thank Kugaaruk residents for their cooperation and support from the local community so far. (interpretation) thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health press release notes that "participation in the screening is optional", but it also says "if you choose not to have your child screened, notify the school directly." It sounds like the screening of children is going to go ahead at our local schools whether or not parents are aware it is happening.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly explain how parents and families of children in Kugaaruk are going to be formally informed what have this heart condition is, why the screening is necessary, and what the results of the screening mean. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) So my understanding of the process to have your child screened is that a form must be completed, and so if a family does not consent, does not wish to have their child screened, then they can choose not to. They don't have to fill out the form. The children who would be screened are the ones whose family have provided the required paperwork back.

We really appreciate support from the Department of Education and Arviligruaq Ilinniarnvik staff. Being able to use the school for an initiative like this is important

because they are nice public facilities, nice and spacious, and the children are already coming there on daily basis.

Parental consent is absolutely a key part of the process, and we are making contacts available for children --not children, for children's parents who have questions or would like more information about this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister for your answers. Mr. Speaker, while I certainly appreciate that the Department of Health is working hard to diagnose and treat certain conditions to improve long term health outcomes, there are also a number of urgent and critical short term health needs in Nunavut.

For example, many of our children are suffering from serious dental issues, and hundreds are waiting to travel from their home community to receive those services. We recently addressed the high cost of medical travel in this House, with the department's medical travel budget going \$18 million over budget this fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, the press release indicates that if a heart condition is found as a result of the screening in Kugaaruk, a follow-up will be arranged at the children's hospital in Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, if parents have to wait to travel with their children for follow-up appointments to address this heart condition, this could result in a significant amount of stress and worry.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister assure this House, and especially the residents and parents of Kugaaruk, that his department has set aside sufficient funds for children to travel with their parents as escorts, to get the necessary follow-up treatment for this heart condition that they will soon be screening for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In terms of the member's question, there isn't a specific pot of funds that has been allocated towards this initiative, in terms of the travel, but I would explain it in this way, that there are many conditions and many health issues that when identified will trigger additional costs on the department in terms of out-of-territory care and/or travel. Those would be items we would consider to be demand-driven. So we are not about to deny anybody necessary health care based on budgetary considerations. We



don't start turning away patients when we expended our medical travel budget for the year; that would simply not be acceptable, and it would be contrary to the *Canada Health Act*.

We appreciate our partners at Stollery Children's Hospital, who are working with us and what we're trying to do with this initiative is bring care closer to home and bring the equipment and the staff who have specialized knowledge as close to those children as possible, so that they don't have to travel. And that's where we are. We are at the initial stages of the project, and as I mentioned earlier, we really appreciate all the support from Kugaaruk residents today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaerner.

**Oral Question 1406 – 6(2): Sailijaaqvik Boarding Home**

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask questions with regards to the Minister of Health with regards to the Sailijaaqvik Boarding Home.

Mr. Speaker, we have all been bringing up the problems at Sailijaaqvik Boarding Home, I would like to ask the minister, how shall I say this. Those people that have to stay there and they are just trying to help the situation, with luggage. When people are kicked out of the boarding home, are they provided a hotel right away? Or is there an investigation by Patient Relations after someone has been kicked out of the boarding home? Can the minister explain what has been done to make the situation better?

We have witnessed people who have gone for medical travel getting kicked out of the boarding home, and they were nowhere else to turn to, and they are wondering why is nobody helping me. And when there are untruths that occur in these happenings, when people lie and then things happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, we try to help by different means the people who administer medical travel and hotel stays and we have staff who are always available. The medical travel office, I believe they are quite able and tireless workers. We always say that we have an Office of Patient Relations, and that office, they can look into different situations.

Mr. Speaker, I believe they have to always use that, people should always try to be good to each other, and sometimes anger and yelling or pointing at people, when that is happening, our staff, we try to support them as a government. When people are yelling

and misbehaving and harassing behaviour, we have to deal with them through our staff to make sure that our staff are not abused. So we try to base everything on being good to others. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, when there's yelling in the boarding home, and yes, I'm very proud of the staff that work up there at the boarding home.

My question was, if they are kicked out of the boarding home, are they provided a room in a hotel when they are not intoxicated? How do you deal with the patients who got kicked out of the boarding home? Or if there's false accusations by the staff, what type of support do you provide to the client at the Sailijaaqvik boarding home? Are they provided a room in a hotel room? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, if there's yelling or accusations or threatening someone, when those occur in the boarding home, they are provided alternate housing or accommodations. But we do have challenges. We have to take care of our staff as a government. And we provide the services to the client, but we would also have to provide support to the staff, because we want them in a safe environment and without harassment to the staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Working together, training and working together, just talking about those three. There's a ten-year agreement between the boarding home and the business that operates it. If there's harassment or some other incident happening – I am talking about a true event that happened at the boarding home, and I brought it up on whether there is proper support given to the clients who has been kicked out of the boarding home.

Sailijaaqvik is a place of peace. When an incident occurs, can the minister indicate that if an individual is brought out, could you give them time to make sure that the accusations are true? If I should complain, if I should make a complaint to the Patient Relations Office and since I got kicked out, I have nowhere else to go, is it possible to give them time so that they can review the incident?

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to have a private discussion, and I agree to do the review about any incident that happened at the Sailijaaqvik boarding home. It's alcohol free, and that's one of the major causes of the disturbances that happen at the house.

We have to support the staff. They are prohibiting any alcohol going into the building, because we want the clients and the staff to be a safe environment. We also want to see smooth operations and to provide proper accommodations to the clients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Oral Question 1407 – 6(2): Medical Translation and Interpretation**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer one of my constituents wrote an eloquent letter to the Department of Health's Office of Patient Relations respecting the urgent need for adequate medical translation and interpretation services for medical clients who do not speak English fluently, or at all. This letter was copied to myself and to the minister.

Can the minister tell us whether he has had the opportunity to read this letter, and if he has, can he provide some information on how his department works to ensure that there are adequate medical translation and interpretation service for Nunavut residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for raising this. This Department of Health is committed to providing Nunavummiut with services in their language of choice, and we employ clerk interpreters to provide interpretation services to clients in boarding homes. They also provide while clients are receiving health care services or while they are on medical travel.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at the Qikiqtaaluk region we currently have 32 clerk interpreters who are employed in the region, and they are a key resource for us as we strive to meet the language requirements of our residents. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the information, Minister. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that filling health care staff positions is

an enormous challenge for the Department of Health. Many of our discussions have focused on staffing of nursing or paramedic positions, and these are in the critical to ensuring health services can be delivered across Nunavut.

On that note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the minister for providing me with an update on the nursing situation at the Pond Inlet health centre as recently as last week.

Mr. Speaker, however, the positions of clerk interpreter and community health representatives are also critical in our health care system. Can the minister describe how his department works with such entities as Nunavut Arctic College to recruit and train candidates to provide medical translations and interpretation services across the territory and for clients who have to travel outside of the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) I agree on the clerk interpreter roles as well as community health representative. Those are very key positions in every community, and we do take effort to make sure that our staff are being provided the opportunity to ladder up. We could have a staff go from working at the front desk into a clerk interpreter role, and we have seen numerous examples of that.

Nunavut Arctic College is a key partner for us, in terms of the medical terminology. It's a very specific and very specialized type of language training. We have continued to work with Nunavut Arctic College over the years, and we thank them for allowing our staff to participate in some of their modules language training.

We also have received funding for a medical terminology training initiative where we had on-site training provided in real time, instead of classroom based courses. We also had some Inuktitut language training at Qikiqtani General Hospital offered recently.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. I have taken the medical terminology interpreting continuing course, and it's a very good program. I recommend a lot of the interpreters to take it.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents presented a very articulate argument for why the Department of Health should prioritize the implementation and funding of professional

translation and interpretation services in all health care settings, including our health centres, Iqaluit, and Ottawa hospitals, clinics, and emergency services. She wrote:

“These services are not just helpful, they are essential for ensuring equity, safety, and dignity in health care for all patients, regardless of language background.”

I agree. Does the minister also agree with this sentiment? And if so, will he commit to directing his officials to look into contracting professional interpreting and translation services, especially in those areas of health care where they are currently lacking? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I commit to looking into whether there are any gaps. We currently have a contracted service. It's called “Can Talk”, where there's on-demand translation abilities. But I can commit to looking into whether there are areas that are not covered by that, and whether we can look to fill those gaps.

However, I should mention that we are limited to what budget we have in place, and so there may need to be a business case or additional resources sought if we do identify specific gaps. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1408 – 6(2): Marine Infrastructure**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, and I would like to revisit the important issue of marine infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, in March of this year the federal Department of Transport announced \$47.7 million in funding for projects in Nunavut under the Safety Equipment and Basic Marine Infrastructure in Northern Communities Initiative. One of the specific projects included in the announcement was work to improve sealift areas in a number of communities including Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of the Sanikiluaq project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department is advancing a number of infrastructure upgrades through the Canada's Ocean Protection Plan. Regarding Sanikiluaq specifically, we have budgets anticipated to go to tender in 2025, following transfer from other projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the update. Mr. Speaker, other projects included in the federal announcement for the installation of safety lights at fuel resupply locations and the location of fuel resupply manifolds in order to reduce environmental risks. Can the minister confirm if Sanikiluaq was included in the scope of work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have to get back to the member on the specifics, but these projects, we are proceeding on a number of communities looking at installing mooring bollards, and as my colleague mentioned about the manifold, having to relocate or setting up new six-inch pipelines for the different types of fuels that we deliver to the community. I'll have to get back to the member on it specifically. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the ministers correspondence in this area.

Mr. Speaker, information published by the Government of Nunavut indicates that Sanikiluaq's current infrastructure plan as ended has identified the need for improvements to the community's small craft harbour. It's my understanding that the municipality has undertaken some planning work, in cooperation with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. As the minister is aware, there is a significant blue economy potential in Sanikiluaq. I would like to ask the minister how his department has been working with the municipality and federal partners to identify further sources of funding to accomplish this goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my minister statement around different investments that we're putting towards infrastructure and our capital needs, trying to close some of these gaps, we are tapping into as many federal program funding investment programs that we can, and including Oceans Protection Plan, and the National Trades Corridor Fund, among others.

Mr. Speaker, my department will continue to loop with the municipalities that are impacted to make sure that the scopes are fitting the needs and are budgets that we're presenting or that we're working with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1409 – 6(2): Activities of the QEC**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible of Qulliq Energy Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the first subject I would like to explore with the minister today is the status of the Iqaluit Nukkiqsautiit hydroelectric power project.

As the minister is aware, the corporation recently announced that a memorandum of understanding with the project proponent was signed late last month, and the announcement indicated that signing would help both parties to define a detailed commercial relationship for the potential future sale of water power.

Mr. Speaker I'm very happy to see this progress towards a greener future for our territory's capital city, and I am concerned that the capital dollars to construct the infrastructure have not yet been confirmed. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of capital funding for the project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for her question.

(interpretation ends) Qulliq Energy Corporation does support this project and we're very, I would say excited about the potential of this partnership, and with Nukkiqsautiit Corporation as the lead, they would be, when it comes to the capital funding, they are proponents and they would be the ones to find the capital dollars.

Mr. Speaker, Qulliq Energy Corporation did receive – it's not capital funding but it's \$495,000 from Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada for utility studies that will assist us in the development phase of the Nukkiqsautiit project. So we are appreciative of those funds.

And the memorandum of understanding is another step forward or another tool that will help us move forward with this project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday of last week Nunavut Tunngavik issued a release and response to the federal government's announcements regarding major projects, and the Iqaluit Nukkiqsautiit hydroelectric power project is one of the four projects that NTI is formally supporting.

Can the minister indicate what resources NTI is contributing towards the project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not at liberty to speak on behalf of Nunavut Tunngavik in terms of what specific resources they may have put towards this project. Mr. Speaker, it is a project that's still in the early stages, but the member mentioned the work or the talk nationally around major projects, and it is, in a general sense when it comes to major projects in Canada, it is a very exciting time. And things seem to be moving very quickly on some fronts.

When you're looking at major projects like the Iqaluit hydro, it's very encouraging to see a federal government that's interested in building big in Canada, but what that will mean for this specific project, we're yet to see that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm also excited about those partnerships. I just thought I would try to ask.

Mr. Speaker, we know that it will take time for us to reduce our dependency on diesel, and until that day comes, it is vital that our capital city's power infrastructure is in good condition. As the minister will recall, the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a public service announcement in May of this year, concerning the frequency of power outages in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, winter is just warned the corner and I wonder, can the minister update the House today on what infrastructure upgrades were undertaken this summer at the Iqaluit power plant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) in terms of Iqaluit's power plant, we have been focused on replacing the G1 genset, and that's a major component of the power plant. We have had several of our gensets that were requiring repair, and so we were impacting customers through our



reliability issues and we look forward to seeing that G1 genset installed. I believe the project is still ongoing, so the genset is not yet commissioned, but it's work that is important in terms of fulfilling our mandate of providing reliable energy to communities right across Nunavut, including Iqaluit, and we will continue working diligently on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1410 – 6(2): Balance of the Stabilization Fund**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut's Petroleum Products Division. Mr. Speaker, my first question is what is the current balance of the stabilization fund. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of course our Petroleum Products Division, we have our revolving fund that we use on the year-to-year basis and with that, the stabilization fund of course, looking back in past years, it fluctuates on a year-to-year basis. It reached of course it was at a minus 24,791,000 at the end of 2022-2023, and for the 2023-2024 it went to minus 19.220 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know very well in this House we had to vote for a supplemental appropriation to top up that to bring it within its legal parameters.

Mr. Speaker, I know it's no secret in this House that stabilization fund is used to help cushion any impact of any significant fuel prices, and having it with less than \$1 million within its maximum allowable limit, I notice with interest there was a public service announcement put out a few days ago, already calling that there's going to be a no expected fuel increased prices for the remainder of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, when typically those announcements don't even come out for another couple of months, until the searift costs are fully analyzed.

I would like to get the minister's, some information on how they came about to make this decision to hold fuel prices at the current levels, when that stabilization fund is already nearing its maximum limit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the years we have kept the fuel prices in a stable condition, and this is eating away at the stabilization fund deficit that we've been having to deal with, as my colleague mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, we're working on projected forecasts at this time, and it's looking like we'll keep fuel prices stable.

I'll note that our neighbours to the south in Nunavik, they are paying a buck-84 per litre over the past year, but they are seeing a reduction in their fuel prices down to 1.66 per litre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question I had asked was how did this government come about the decision to keep the prices as they remain right now, knowing that it's going to handcuff the next government, if there is any significant increases in fuel costs; that that cost is going to have to be passed on to the consumers.

Mr. Speaker, nobody in here wants to pay more for fuel than we have to, but as the minister mentioned, the revolving fund for the Petroleum Products Division is supposed to be worked on a cash or cost-recovery basis, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I would like to get confirmation from the minister on why they made the decision now, to make an announcement a week before the caretaker mode kicks in, to not raise fuel price when we're close to the maximum allowable limit now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government and the Petroleum Products Division have been and remain committed to fair and transparent fuel pricing in the territory. Again, from the forecasts and what it's looking like, of course there's going to be audits on the Petroleum Products Division's operations throughout the year and what that comes out of, but it is looking like things can remain stable. We're looking at that from a go forward basis, and again, depending on the fuel prices of the day, we'll continue to see fluctuations, year in, year out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1411 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Airport**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. As the minister will recall, I have asked him a number of questions since the beginning of this Legislative Assembly concerning the need for a new airport terminal building in Kugluktuk.

Mr. Speaker, the new airport terminal building was officially opened this summer. I was very pleased to have hosted the Ministers of Transportation and Community Services when they recently visited Kugluktuk to mark the opening of the new building.

Mr. Speaker, the new airport building terminal has been open for almost three months. Can the minister provide an update on the first few months of its operation.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for welcoming us to Kugluktuk this summer back in June when we had a chance to visit for the grand opening ceremony.

Mr. Speaker, all the new terminal buildings are designed to be accessible, equipped with emergency standby generators and all the fixings.

As of now I haven't heard any, I've heard that it has all been smooth sailing for these new terminal buildings that have been online this spring and summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, there is need for the airport facility building to be safely demolished. Can the minister provide an update on these plans.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I should say smooth lifting off and landings, instead of smooth sailings.

Mr. Speaker, for the old assets that are around the airports and how they will be surplussed or disposed of, that was part of the work that will be undertaken to ensure that the safe demolition of that old building is done. We'll keep my colleague my

department will work to ensure that the community is aware of the next steps as they proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, the Nunavut airports 20-year capital needs assessment update was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in March 2023. Information published by the federal Department of Transport indicates approximately \$6.7 million was approved in recent years, under the federal Airports Capital Assistance Program for the rehabilitation of airside granular surface.

Can the minister indicate what plans his department has to work with the federal department to pay and extend Kugluktuk's runway so that it could accommodate jet service in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department has obtained federal funding through Canada's Airport Capital Assistance Program, as my colleague mentioned, about the granular rehabilitation projects in Kugluktuk and Pangnirtung, as well as Whale Cove.

Regarding his other part, around possibly potential paving the runway in Kugluktuk, that would be something that my department will have to continue to consider, among other capital priorities going into future years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Uqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

#### **Oral Question 1412 – 6(2): Update on Home Care Program**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time (interpretation ends) I stand for the last time before the 6th Assembly concerning the home care program. My questions, I direct them to Mr. Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, during our recent deliberations on the department's request for funding for the future long term care facility in Cambridge Bay, I was pleased to note that the deputy minister's comments respecting the continuum of care for elders, from aging in place to home care, to continuing care, and finally long term care, can the minister provide an overview of what specific initiatives and investments have been made over this past year

to provide more supports for elders to stay in their homes and age with dignity.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question.

(interpretation ends) The home care program is important in terms of elders and those living with continuing medical issues, and allowing them to stay at home as long as possible and to receive care closer to home as possible.

In terms of the last year that the member is asking about, we have completed our home care review, and it identified some issues with the program, one of which was the tracking of clients. I would like to state on the record that our number of active home care clients as of July 2025 was 458. Previously we were overcounting the number of clients.

We've identified a number of ways to improve the program, and our intention is to take the findings from that program review and turn those into business cases where we would seek additional funds. Right now home care is funded through a combination of vote 1 and vote 4 funding. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for being attentive to what we work very hard to make sure that it goes through. Thank you very much for that.

(interpretation ends) And now, Mr. Speaker, I have addressed the importance of training and the importance of training and hiring personal caregivers in our communities to provide the right kinds of support and assistance that elders need so that they can remain in their homes, in their communities near friends and family.

Last May the minister stated that delivering of the online personal caregiver training programs began in 2020, and that in the first part of 2025, 17 individuals were taking the course. Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how many community-based personal caregivers have taken this online training since 2020, and how many are currently being paid to provide local assistance to elders in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) It is sometimes handy to have the Minister for Nunavut Arctic College sitting next to me, Mr. Speaker.

I do appreciate the question because these positions are very important. In terms of the personal care skills courses that have been delivered, which are largely for our home care workers, we've seen students from a large number of communities right across Nunavut who have participated, and these are hybrid, so some of the courses are online and some of them are in person. So it's quite a detailed list.

We do have total enrolment in the different modules. The courses that have been delivered is 87, 87 was the enrolment number, total, and I can provide additional information to the member, if that will be helpful.

Health is working with Nunavut Arctic College for continued online delivery of these courses because we want the training to be continual and the onboarding of new home care workers to be continual. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will expect that as well. Yes, these are very interesting to hear. I know that this program is improving as we near the end of our term. Thank you so much for that.

(interpretation ends) Local home care programs can make a big difference to enable an elder to stay in their home, instead of being moved to a continuing care facility or a long term care facility. On May 28, 2025 the minister stated in this House, "we have recently completed our home care program review", and he also stated that "we have a bit of a road map that has been established, including supporting caregivers better and also supporting our staff in terms of their professional development and remuneration."

Can the minister provide an update on what has been done over the past six months to better support home care staff and other caregivers, and to improve the home care program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) Over the last six months we've started working on new policies to close gaps that have been identified through our program review, so that work is ongoing. I know it's maybe not super exciting, but new policies do mean in many cases

improvements on the ground in terms of our programs. We continue to work closely with Nunavut Arctic College on professional development opportunities. That's one of the things coming out of the review. Our staff are interested in learning more and developing their skills, and we want to deliver that to them.

In addition to our work with Nunavut Arctic College, home care nurses can request funding through our professional development initiative to get individual support, and we have additional funding through the aging with dignity agreement that's going to go towards additional educational opportunities for home care teams in the current fiscal year. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1413 – 6(2): Petroleum Products Division**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure again on Petroleum Products Division in Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, I quote from the blues on September 12, when the minister and I had an exchange, and I'll quote the minister:

“Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, where there is market where the private sector already does sell propane, we do not want to impede on that. So considering those options and whether or not there's a plan to not sell propane there, those will be factored in.”

Mr. Speaker, for the record I support Petroleum Products Division selling naphtha in Arviat, and for the record, for the new tank farm, I support that aviation fuel for planes, P50 or whatever it's called, Jet B to be sold in there and that was in the plan.

But Mr. Speaker, we have a private sector that sells naphtha within the community, so I'm afraid that Petroleum Products Division might not sell naphtha anymore.

Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that the jet fuel will not be included as being available for sale in the new tank farm because we have a private sector that sells jet fuel in Arviat. Can I get a clarification on that, because if they won't, if propane will not be sold because private sectors sell it, I'm afraid that naphtha will not be sold because the private sector is selling it.

Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid the new tank farm that jet fuel will not be sold there, because the private sector provides it. Can I get an explanation from the minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our Petroleum Products Division does sell the different list of fuel types, including naphtha and Mr. Speaker, this has been a long-standing thing that the department and the division has come forward to date in serving Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, propane is I think an emerging market that might be something that's more new to the communities in that so we're looking at what options we have around that and how do we support the market, but also in the case of naphtha, we do have that product available. And it might become people are using less and less naphtha and moving into propane so we have to look at the inventory of these two different fuel types to make sure that they balance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear any confirmation whether naphtha would still be sold in Arviat by Petroleum Products Division because there's a private sector to provide it. Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear any assurance that the new tank farm will still be on the books to sell jet fuel because there's a private sector that sells it. I didn't hear those, and I'm hoping and we've been going back and forth a lot that propane will be sold in Arviat under PPD.

Staying on the blues here, the next sentence, I just want a clarification on this too. The minister quoted on the same day in the same exchange:

"And if there's other communities that may be close to Arviat, Rankin Inlet or other places, we'll look at this very closely."

Again, can I get an explanation on what the minister meant by that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's in relation to I know the member had shown some high interest in this area of providing propane to his community, so we're looking at not just his community but the whole region as a whole and the territory.

Mr. Speaker, my department's Petroleum Products Division has looked at this, considered around what it would take to provide propane to not just one community but others as



well, how much resources it might take to do that, and of course we'll continue to assess and re-assess on a go-forward basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the minister has been considering it and it was highly likely that Arviat was going to be a pilot project to start selling bulk propane through Petroleum Products Division. It has been two years. The minister has said the same thing for two years, and now they are looking at options. The end of this government is coming to end very shortly.

What I would like is assurance from this minister to leave some note to the incoming government that the selling of bulk propane in communities, specifically Arviat, will be highly considered and will be looked at seriously so that Petroleum Products Division can sell bulk propane in Arviat and other communities that need it or want it. Can I get assurance from the minister that some notes will be coming from the incoming minister that's coming in after the election. Thanks.

**Speaker:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I can say that Petroleum Products Division has prepared and is preparing to issue a request for quotation for a market scan and business case on propane sales in Nunavut. We expect the contract to be awarded this fall, and there is to be a final report available in winter 2026. From that, any future decisions on contemplating development of a propane program will be grounded from the outcome of this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1414 – 6(2): Igloolik Arena**

**Ms. Quassa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community Services. As the minister will recall, the community of Igloolik suffered a devastating loss earlier this year when the Kipsigak arena was destroyed by fire.

During the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly the minister indicated that the Office of the Fire Marshal's investigation into the incident is ongoing. Can the minister provide an update today on the Office of the Fire Marshal's investigation into the cause of the fire, and can he provide an approximate timeline for when the office's final report will be completed and shared with the municipality of Igloolik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the investigation is still ongoing. I don't have a definitive date as to when that will conclude. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) During the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly the minister indicated that the infrastructure was insured under the municipality. During last Thursday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister indicated that a number of concerns have been identified with the NAMEX municipal insurance program. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the insurance process in respect to Igloolik's arena. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are working very closely with NAMEX, in terms of we have provided funds towards that to help with the high cost and we are working very closely in terms of the Igloolik arena on where it fits through the insurance process. That process is still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear that.

I want to take this opportunity to again thank the many community members who have been stepping up in recent months to identify ways of providing recreational programming to the community.

Mr. Speaker, Igloolik's world famous Artcirq Black Box Studio was located in the arena. I will say again that it is important that planning to replace the arena begins as soon as possible. Can the minister clearly describe how his new department is working with the new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to include a new arena in the government's five-year capital plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, whichever way it needs to go definitely whether it's through Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut or through the NAMEX program, we'll find solutions to ensure the loss of that recreational facility that included for other organizations, that our government will remain committed to helping the community regain that back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1415 – 6(2): Mining Sector**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have more questions today for the Minister responsible for Mines. Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, I asked him a number of questions during our recent spring sitting about the urgent need to reform and streamline our regulatory processes so that it does not take a decade for a new mining project to reach production.

Mr. Speaker, I have serious concerns regarding this, because as I mentioned in this House, Agnico Eagle has been preparing to shut down their Meadowbank gold project north of Baker Lake, they are now projecting as early as 2028. They are still searching for more gold, but they are preparing for as early as 2028 to shut down that mine north of Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I was heartened to read the prime minister's announcement concerning Canada's new national critical mineral strategy. The announcement indicated that "the priority for the major projects office will be to help more critical minerals projects get to final investment decisions within a two-year window. This will ensure that our critical minerals industry can grow, and that Canada and our global partners can benefit from our value chain for clean technologies and defence."

Can the minister clearly describe how our government will contribute to this critical work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you'll see five was passed, and that was one of the clear things that under the federal government that they want to fast track a number of projects, and through that major works project, we are going to work very closely with the federal government to make sure that we whatever needs to be streamlined that we'll do that through our process, if needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister for your response. Mr. Speaker, during our recent spring sitting, I drew the attention of the House to a public statement that was issued by our territorial Chamber of Mines. I will quote from it again:

“Nunavut’s mining sector still faces a lengthy regulatory process, compounded by multiple permitting processes, excessive reporting, and overlapping jurisdictional requirements, all of which can discourage investment and delay critical projects.”

Mr. Speaker, although I was pleased to hear the minister say that he shared my concern with this statement, I was disappointed that he could not provide any specifics as to how the government would take action to address these issues. Can the minister indicate today what actions he has taken over the past few months to address these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through our federal-provincial-territorial meetings that was held in Prince Edward Island, we had lengthy discussion on this, to see how as a nation what kind of barriers are causing the delays and how we can work better and look for best practices.

That work is ongoing and through that, any other refinements that we need were, we’re definitely going to need to work together with our institution of public governments along with the three parties, the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik to make sure that ours don’t become a barrier. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. I’m glad this government has been working on streamlining some processes and trying to ensure we’re not a barrier to some new mines opening up in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me that in order for our environmental review processes to work efficiently, we need institutions that are fully functional. As the minister is aware, the voting members of the Nunavut Impact Review Board are appointed by the federal government, the territorial government, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. Can the minister confirm whether or not a new chairperson has been appointed, and can he confirm how many vacancies are currently on the board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I’ll have to consult with my good colleague to my left in terms of whether that has been done, as it is his department that is the one that sort of helps our government go through those appointment processes for the institution of public government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to rule 39(7) I seek unanimous consent to extend oral question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are none. Question period extended for another 30 minutes. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Oral Question 1416 – 6(2): Paramedic Services**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for allowing us to extend question period. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and they are regarding paramedic services.

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago I was happy to praise the department's ingenuity when they had utilized paramedics to prevent health centre enclosures. Mr. Speaker, last year when the paramedics contract exceeded \$25 million, I recommended that the minister integrate paramedics into the public service. I would like to ask the member if he can provide an update on the status of this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for the question. (interpretation ends) The member has highlighted a key initiative of the Department of Health. Over the past year, since the program was established, paramedics have helped us to provide so much valuable service. They have helped us to keep our health centres, the health facilities open. Where staff shortages might have resulted in closures, paramedics have really helped us out.

In terms of the incorporation of paramedics into the department, that's an ongoing process. We had paramedics in the last fiscal year. They were deployed to all of our 24 community health centres plus Qikiqtani General Hospital, so every facility that we have right across Nunavut.

Our spending on paramedic services has decreased from last fiscal year, and this highlights progress that we've made on our recruitment and retention strategy towards nursing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response that this initiative is ongoing. As was previously indicated just today, one factor that enables the enhancement of health care service delivery in Nunavut is hiring local and hiring bilingual health care professionals.

My next question I would like to ask the minister is, with the current paramedic service contract, whether or not there are any stipulations that require that the training of local bilingual paramedics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The current contracts do not include requirements around training. However, we would welcome any investments towards that end.

Mr. Speaker, we have primary care paramedics working in the territory as well as advanced care paramedics, and we've also secured a paramedic practice consultant who started working in April 2024, and that position is to centralize work on the paramedic program, support the operation, as well as continuous quality improvement and supporting a trained and competent paramedic work force. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, another instance where I was aware, I applauded the Department of Health, was when they partnered with NTI and Ottawa university to secured seats in the Doctor of Medicine program.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Department of Health can and should be helping and assisting Nunavummiut with achieving their paramedic program courses and qualifications, as the minister has indicated, there is an obvious need for paramedics within the public service but there's also a need for paramedic services in municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, the minister had previously indicated or named the Ambulances For Nunavut non-profit society which had sent up a total of I believe 15 ambulances to our territories into our communities. Unfortunately the majority of these are just used as stretcher services, which is a glorified taxi, bringing medical care patients from health centres to the air terminals.

I would like to ask if the minister would direct his staff to bring up discussions with NTI and southern post-secondary institutions to help secure seats to have a number of Nunavummiut go down and train together as a cohort. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) That's an excellent suggestion. However, you know, we're playing this, we're in a bit of a dance right now where we're being asked to commit to things and then we're also being not to tie the hands of the next government. I'll dance back and forth and try to find the right moves there, Mr. Speaker.

The paramedic programs, typically they are a one- to two-year diploma program and training more Inuit, getting more Inuit into health occupations is a long-standing item at the tripartite table between Nunavut Tunngavik, ourselves, and Indigenous Services Canada. I can highlight the paramedic issue or opportunity for discussion at that table. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1417 – 6(2): Funding for Hamlets**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to Community Services. (No interpretation) I would like to see more support (no interpretation).

**Speaker:** There is a technical issue. Hon. Minister of Community Services, David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the funds at this time that is budgeted by the municipal hamlets, for example, mobile equipment program, 5.5 million that we distribute to the communities have not changed to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the municipal hamlet budget varies, receivables for water system, land lease, and you have a daily operations budget. You may have enough budget for other programs, but sometimes the operations they do not necessarily have the budget for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are various programs and funding we provide for the hamlets. For example, the budget formula that we use. And when communities are in debt we provide the support, and on occasion when more support is needed, we have staff coming into the communities that provide

support. And communities are always eager to work with us closely and we will continue to provide that support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you Minister for that. Hopefully this will continue and communities do make effort, but they are sometimes in a situation where they need financial support, and the community hamlets are always devoted to due diligence. And on occasion they are limited, but the continued support is something I continue to encourage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say thank you to my colleague for representing the hamlets properly. We always have to work well with the hamlets, although they are independent bodies. We can only rise up if we work together, and this will continue. I would like to thank my colleague for bringing up this situation where, when a hamlet is starting to fall, they can get more support.

We are always looking for other ways to support the hamlets and are willing to work with them, and we want to make sure before they run into a deficit we are involved. I just wanted to add that, and thank my colleague again for asking the proper questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Oral Question 1418 – 6(2): Direct Appointments and Vacancy Rates**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to question the Minister of Human Resources on their minister's statement today, direct appointment in the 6th Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, on the very end of the ministers' statement, it says, it's talking about the direct appointments:

"These results show that our efforts are having a real impact, and we will continue to make Inuit hiring and retention a top priority."

Mr. Speaker, my first question is what was the vacancy rate of the government at the start of this government, and what is the vacancy rate now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.



**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have the exact vacancy rate then and for now, but I will get that as soon as I find my information that's within my binder. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact that the minister stated that the results show that our efforts are having a real impact, the vacancy rate would be a good indication of the impact that it had. What percentage of less income – sorry what percentage of less vacancy rate would be considered a significant change? If the vacancy rate was 42 per cent and now the vacancy rate is 41 per cent, is that a good result? Or should there be a larger spread?

I'm just asking the minister's position on what ruler to use if the vacancy rate has been a good impact or a real impact through direct appointments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I was questioned about last week, I think it is very good news that our overall Inuit employment is now at 52 per cent, and we want to see that. Through at the 10-year implementation plan that we have, our department is tasked to continually raise it and to reach at the representative level that we want to see. We do have all the plans that have been approved for each of the departments, and each have in terms of by occupation that we're doing it in various ways. So I don't have a specific. This will be a significant improvement, but it's one that we continually raise the bar and challenge our departments in terms of recruiting and retaining more Inuit in our workforce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that other information that he has provided. I hope the minister will get back to me as if the vacancy goes down by one percentage is that a significant impact.

For my final question, the minister stated that Inuit employment is at 52 per cent. What was it at the beginning of this government's term? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was under 50 per cent. I can get the actual percentage, but it was below 50 per cent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1419 – 6(2): Dental Clinics for the Communities**

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask my question to the Minister of Health in regards to dentistry. I would like to know what sort of planning they do, and how many dentists have been planned to go to Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) To provide treatment in Nunavut communities the Department of Health, on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada, issues contracts with dentists and other dental service providers, and so the number of days per community is established in an agreement that we have with Indigenous Services Canada. Department of Health continues to advocate for increased service days and increased service access for Nunavummiut. We've been pushing for that over a number of years, and we'll continue advocating for more time to see the dentists in more communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for the response. We always hear about, well, if the dentist is still in town, or if they can make an appointment, and then they hear that there's no more room for the dentist to see you, and you'll be seen next time around. And sometimes they wait a long time. I would like to know how that can be improved.

(interpretation ends) I will switch to English. Has the department looked at perhaps doing a baseline study to see how much dental work is needed in a different community as a way to use the data for Indigenous Services Canada? Usually whether there's institutions, they need a baseline study to meet a minimum target minimum quote of some sort. Has the department looked at doing something like that and used Baker Lake as a pilot project to see how much dental work is needed in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. We do have information from the community level under the currently structured contract that does indicate what the member is referencing, that community members are asking to see the dentist and they are submitting complaints to us and they are communicating quite clearly that they would like to have more access in their community.

We also have information from the Inuit Oral Health Survey that provides us with strong justification in terms of why we need more services.

Mr. Speaker, we were happy to see a private clinic open its doors in Rankin Inlet over the last couple of years, and that has helped to provide access. That's one way that in some of the Nunavut's larger communities it would be great to see more private practices open up, because those also provide needed services. So we have continued to advocate for more days to be allocated to communities like Baker Lake, and we'll keep advocating for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 1420 – 6(2): Banking Services for the Smaller Communities**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me the second time. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Finance and they concern the issue of banking services in smaller communities. This was one of my very first questions in my rookie MLA times, back in 2022.

Mr. Speaker, about nine years ago the Government of Nunavut issued in 2016 a request for proposal for banking services as potential service providers to outline the details of a community banking program that would expand and maximize the level of banking services available to residents of Nunavut, especially in communities where physical banking operations do not exist.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Royal Bank, which provides services to the Government of Nunavut, has opened three new agency outlets in Kinngait, Pangnirtung, and Arviat in recent years. I might be missing other communities. I would like to ask the minister if he can describe whether his department has been having any discussions with the bank to open additional facilities in our smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from my colleague. Mr. Speaker, in fact, the Royal Bank of Canada has been in conversation with our department, and we've been working with each other.

Up to date, Mr. Speaker, of the 25 communities, nine communities in Nunavut have banking services in their communities, and that number continues to grow, Mr. Speaker, and we do have conversations with the Royal Bank when there is interest amongst communities that wish to open banking services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 16 more communities to go. That is a long run, but eventually in the near future they will come.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister whether his department has discussions with entities such as Canada Post to explore the possibility of expanding their presence in Nunavut to include basic financial services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not that long ago when we were creating sticks for flour, and now we have banking services in the communities. And I think, well, the day is coming when we will have banking services provided in all the communities.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are different kind of services that are being combined on top of banking services in communities. I'm not familiar or know of combining the Canada Post at this time with the banking services, but our department can take a look at what kind of services would be adequate for a community like Sanikiluaq, and maybe we could have a conversation with the banking service providers in Nunavut, one of which is Royal Bank, and I know there's First Nation Bank and CIBC.

Maybe we could have that conversation to see what kind of services the community of Sanikiluaq would require, and which service provider would be able to follow suit with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I would like to take this opportunity on this date to raise the very important issue that when it comes to when a bank detects a fraud within a person's personal banking account, they tend to close the account, and a lot of times they always say you have to fly down to a nearest branch, but we have to fly down to a nearest branch, in most communities – that's just being a comment that banking services in small communities is much needed. We'll get there, 16 more to go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Just a comment. Oral Questions. I have no more names. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Return to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Petitions. Item 11, Responses to Petitions. Item 12, Reports of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 57, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation, and that the Bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 57 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member has asked for unanimous consent to have Bill 57 immediately go into Committee of the Whole. Do members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** It is agreed and the Bill has been moved into Committee of the Whole.

Item 12, Reports of Standing Committee on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the chair of Standing Committee on Legislation, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 73, Planning Act, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation, and that the Bill, as amended and reprinted, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 73 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member has asked for unanimous consent to have Bill 73 ready to go into Committee of the Whole. Do members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** It's agreed and Bill 73 has been moved into Committee of the Whole. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 78, An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation, and that the Bill, as amended and reprinted, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Do members agree that Bill 78 is reported back to the House?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 84, Write-Off of Assets Act, 2024-2025, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation, and that the Bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Do members agree that Bill 84 is reported back to the House?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** Agreed. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Deputy Premier, Ms. Gross.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 444 – 6(2): Response to SCOGOPA Review of Privacy Commissioner Annual Report**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Government of Nunavut Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts' Report on the Review of the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

#### **Tabled Document 445 – 6(2): Response to SCOGOPA Review of RYC Annual Report**

#### **Tabled Document 446 – 6(2): Response to SCOGOPA Review of Child and Family Services Annual Report (Nakashuk)**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I have two reports, first the Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts report on the review of the report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut 2025, Follow-Up on Child and Family Services in Nunavut;

And two, the Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts' Report on the Review of the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Representative For Children and Youth.

Mr. Speaker, once the Inuktitut translations are complete, I will be providing copies to the clerk for distribution to the members. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Tabled Document 447 – 6(2): Response to SCOGOPA Review of Public Accounts Annual Report**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Government of Nunavut's Response to the Report of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on the Review of the 2023-2024 Public Accounts of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Deputy Premier, Ms. Gross.

**Tabled Document 448 – 6(2): Response to SCOGOPA Review of Language Commissioner Annual Reports**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Government of Nunavut Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts report on the review of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 and the 2023-2024 Consolidated Annual Reports of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, once the Inuktitut translation is complete, I will provide copies to the clerk to be distributed to members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Tabled Document 449 – 6(2): Minister of Health's 2024 Public Health Act Annual Report**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm pleased to table the 2024 Public Health Act Annual Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeagok.

**Tabled Document 450 – 6(2): 2024 Traffic Safety Act Annual Report**

**Hon. David Akeagok** (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table 2024 *Traffic Safety Act* Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

**Tabled Document 451 – 6(2): 2023-2024 Petroleum Products Division Annual Report**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Petroleum Products Division 2023-2024 Annual Report. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of Motions. Item 15, Notice of Motion For First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Item 17, First Reading of Bills. Item 18, Second Reading of Bills. Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters, Bills 57, 73, 83 and 85 with Mr. Hickes in the chair. Before we proceed with Committee of the Whole we'll take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

*>>House recessed at 16:11 and Committee commenced at 16:39*

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following matters to deal with: Bills 57, 73, 83 and 85. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue to review Bill 83, followed by review of Bill 85 and 57. Thank you. Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does the committee agree we deal first with Bill 83?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Kusugak. Do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

**Bill 83 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 3,  
2024-2025 – Consideration in Committee**



**Chairman:** Just to remind everyone we left off on Friday morning at item number 8, Department of Health, operations and maintenance, total health care service delivery, \$48 million. Minister Kusugak, if you could introduce your officials. Then I'll proceed with my list of names. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Mr. Matthew Hough, Assistant Deputy Minister of Infrastructure Transportation and Infrastructure, and to my right, Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Speaker:** Thank you. Just to confirm with members, I did not have any more names on my list on Friday. We are on item 8, Department of Health, \$48 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please turn to page 5. Item number 10, Community and Government Services, Operations and Maintenance Local Government Services total amount not previously authorized \$7.3 million. Questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On our briefing binders on page 1 of 1, on this \$7,300,000, one of the bullets is insurance premiums on lease-to-own assets, resulting in a \$1 million unrecorded liability for last year's insurance costs, and it goes on and on.

My question is the fire that happened for lease-to-own in Gjoa Haven, is that part of the reason why it went up? Can we get an explanation on how the government had to pay or not had to pay with that? Because it was lease-to-own, but the government did not own it yet at the time. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I believe that that would be part of the reason why there was an increase in insurance on that. And if I could have through you Mr. Chairman, Mr. Hough elaborate in a bit more detail on that. Thank you Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Hough.

**Mr. Hough:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to the member. That property in Gjoa Haven that burned down was one of the portfolio that we leased from NCC.

The entire portfolio's insurance rates increased during fiscal year 2024-2025. And one of the other reasons was pressures from elsewhere insurance rates have been going up for many, who privately insure. The way that that lease is structured is that the lease costs are

flowed throw. So the Government of Nunavut pays for the insurance rates that NCC can attain.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that the Government of Nunavut was paying for leases for a building that did not exist anymore, plus paying for the insurance for that building that did not exist any more? Just a clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** As it's follow-up to specific project, I'll go to Mr. Hough.

**Mr. Hough:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member's question, yes, the property is part of a 10-building portfolio that one insurance policy applies. So in essence, yes, the building is still insured through its rebuilding period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This next question or update I want is beyond the scope of the Bill, but if we can just get an update to the members whether that building has been replaced, is under construction to be replaced, and when it will be completed if it's being constructed. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I will allow it, it will have an impact on the insurance rates, which is the topic of discussion. I'll go right to Mr. Hough again.

**Mr. Hough:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The building is nearing the end of its reconstruction. There was a delay in the purchasing of some mechanical components for that building. I haven't received a recent briefing, but my understanding was that that building will be back in operation during this particular fiscal year, 2025-2026. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Sorry, just to confirm, so June 2026 would be the next fiscal year, just to confirm? You're nodding your head. I'll take that as an agreement. Mr. Savikataaq? Taima. Any other questions? Community Services, \$73.3 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page 6, Economic Development and Transportation Operations and Maintenance.

Item 1, corporate management not previously authorized, \$853,000. Questions? Once again, corporate management, item 1, total corporate management \$853,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Same page, Transportation. Item 1, total transportation, \$947,000. Any questions? Seeing none, again, total transportation amount not previously authorized, \$947,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to item 12, page 7, Family Services, Operations and Maintenance. Item 1, corporate management not previously authorized, \$2,618,000. Questions? Again, corporate management, total corporate management not previously authorized, \$2,816,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Family Wellness, item 1, total family wellness, not previously authorized, \$8,275,000. Questions? Once again, Family Wellness Total Family Wellness not previously authorized, \$8,275,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Income assistance. Total income assistance not previously authorized, \$1,616,000. Questions? Once again, income assistance, total amount not previously authorized, \$1.616 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Next item, career development. Total career development not previously authorized, \$573,000. Questions? Not seeing any. Total career development, \$573,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next one, poverty reduction as a credit. Total poverty reduction, credit, \$729,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Oh, Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask when there's so much poverty and you have a \$729,000 surplus that's there, if we can just get an explanation on why there's such a surplus. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if you would allow, I would like to change one of my witnesses, please.

**Speaker:** Committee members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Please proceed. Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you. Our law clerk pointed out an error I made in the previous one. I'm going to back up for a moment so everyone can get to the total amount. Economic development and transportation, operations and maintenance, total department not previously authorized, \$1.8 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Just to get that record on the books.

Again we were at total poverty reduction, a credit of \$729,000.

Minister Kusugak, I'm assuming with your change of witnesses that you want me to direct the question to your new witness after you introduce him. Go ahead, Minister.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once I introduce him I will ask him to respond to that question, to speed up the process, if that's okay with you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Jonathan Ellsworth is the Deputy Minister of Family Services and he will respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Like minded. Mr. Ellsworth, please proceed.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you Mr. Chair, and thank you for that excellent question and the opportunity to appear before you today.

As I understand it, this surplus is troubling, obviously, because we know the level of poverty in our communities, but it results directly from grants and contributions that were set to be allocated or that had been allocated that didn't meet deadlines or meet the criteria, is my understanding, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Once again, total poverty reduction a credit of \$729,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Total department. Family Services operations and maintenance, amount not previously authorized, \$12,558,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go back to schedule clause 3. Total operations and maintenance not previously authorized \$69,453,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 3, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 4, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 5, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 6, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 7, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded with Bill 83?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister do you have any brief closing comments?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the departments for providing us with witnesses today and I thank my colleagues for their thorough questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I will ask members to remain in your seats. We'll take a two-minute break while we switch out, in case the minister needs any new witnesses and our clerks table can get our documents as well. Stay in your seats please, and we'll break.

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 85 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would like to call the meeting back to order. Now we have I will Bill 85, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*. The committee has already allowed the minister to have witnesses, so they are already at the table.

I will ask Minister Kusugak to introduce his witnesses and proceed directly to your opening comments, please.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me this afternoon to my left is Megan Hunt, Deputy Minister of Health, and to my right, Mr. Daniel Young, Deputy Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman, I appear before you today to present Bill 85, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-26*.

Through this Bill, the Government is seeking to increase its overall 2025-26 O&M appropriation by \$5 million for the Department of Health.

On June 25, 2025, the Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for Suicide Prevention, alongside Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Vice-President Paul Inngaut, declared that suicide remains a crisis in Nunavut.

This funding is required to advance the Inuusivut Annirnaqtut 2024–2029 Action Plan. The plan represents the collaborative work of the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Department of Health's Inuusivut Mental Health and Addictions Division, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police RCMP "V" Division and the Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjikaatigiit, Embrace Life Council.

If approved, this will increase the Department of Health's approved 2025-26 O&M appropriation from \$580.367 million to \$585.367 million.

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

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does any committee members have any general comments? Seeing none, Bill 85, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*. Clause 1. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 2, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 3, please go to page 2. Total operations and maintenance requested \$5 million. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I have a straightforward question. On our briefing binders here on page 2 of 2, under financial implications, it states there O&M starting September 2025. The request was made through the 2025-2026 three-year forecast process and was not supported, and I believe that would have come from Financial Management Board.

I'm just wondering, do you only have a one-page document and FMB probably had a whole lot more info. If we can get an explanation why – I'm not against it but why should we support this when it appears to have been declined? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a difficult question to answer, as I believe we cannot discuss FMB discussions in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Maybe if it can be clarified then, Minister, whether this item actually made it to the FMB table. I don't think that would break any confidentiality, if it was stopped at the departmental level during the budgeting process, or was it actually brought forward to FMB for the government to vote on. Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't recall what the process was for this particular item and I'm not comfortable to be discussing it at this table. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Young, maybe if you can tilt your laptop a little bit away from the microphone. I'm getting some feedback from something. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can't get any more information, so I don't think I can ask any more questions. I just wanted, very simple, if

it was not supported by Financial Management Board why it's even here, but that is neither here nor there so I'm done.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, all. Looking for a couple of quick clarifications. With this new Inuusivut Annirnaqtut 2024-2029 Action Plan, is it quite different from the old plan that was being worked on with regards to suicide prevention? Or are they kind of continuing on with what was being worked on before? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** It's a good question. Maybe just to rephrase it maybe, is there any significant changes or amendments to the previous plan to the most recent one? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there are some changes to the current one. If I could have through you have Deputy Minister Hunt respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Hunt.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. The Nunavut Suicide Action Plan has several areas of action items that are lead by key departments or partners with a number of areas of focus for planning and implementation. So there's significant partnership and government work to advance areas around prevention promotion programming and services. *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question is what will be used as a baseline or a guideline to see if this new Inuusivut Annirnaqtut 2024–2029 Action Plan is working. Is there some sort of gauge or baseline that will be used? And how frequently? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** As it's again a direct question related to the strategy I'll go right to Ms. Hunt.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. Measurements are really important. And most recently in July the partners came together to discuss suicide in the territory, as well as to do a progress report on the current action plan and the work of the partners.

Some of those areas that we're looking at is moving action items from conception to planning to implementation, so how many of those action items are already in progress, are in planning or have been implemented.



Ultimately one of the key indicators that we're looking at is an increase in access to services for Nunavummiut to help prevent mental health and issues around wellness that may lead to suicide. And of course we want to see a reduction in completed suicides across the territory. *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chair thank you for calling on me. I just thought about something here. It seems like I was venturing to confidentiality issues, so I'll go on the same page on the briefing binder, page 2 of 2. There's a bullet, and the question is to Deputy Minister of Health. It says:

"Health will submit a further request outlining additional human resources requirements to ensure a whole-of-government approach to suicide prevention in fulfilling the Inuusivut Annirnaqtut Action Plan."

Has that been done? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. It's a different line of questioning Minister Kusugak. I have to go through you first. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that there has been some work towards that. If I could, through you, have the Deputy Minister of Health respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Hunt.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. So in short, yes. This is one part of a phased approach to enhancing and addressing resource and programming and capacity to support this important area for Nunavummiut. *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would just like to chime in here with a question.

We all know that a report was tabled back last year in June. Oftentimes these reports do take a little while to get translations done and everything, so the report would have been completed itself significantly prior to that.

Why wasn't there more foresight in bringing this request in earlier. Or even through the normal budgetary process, to avoid these exact same scenarios that we're looking at, again, where we are mere hours away from caretaker mode for this government, and then

we're looking at increasing Health's budget significantly. Overall it may seem like a blip in the radar, but \$5 million is a lot of money.

Why, especially after some of the commitments were made right in the first year of this government, why are we dealing with this in the last week of this government? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that question could be addressed by Deputy Minister of Health, through you, Mr. Chairman, please.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Hunt.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) thank you for the question.

It's important that we acknowledge that over a 26-year period, Nunavut has had a rate of over 10 times higher the national average in suicides. We know that recently we've also had a number of young deaths in this territory, and to ensure that we don't lose traction in time to get those much needed services and supports to community members, we felt it was important to bring this forward, maybe not, as you mentioned the ideal timing, but to ensure that we have the opportunity to prevent as many potential losses of life as possible as quickly as possible. *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you. While I do appreciate those comments, Ms. Hunt, still, I know from my previous lives that there are a lot of people working behind the scenes on a lot of different initiatives related to suicide prevention, and a lot of these initiatives were identified in previous years. And to look at ramping up some of the programs or staffing levels, it was obviously well thought out. We're a few years in since a lot of some significant commitments were made by this government.

It doesn't really answer my question on why it wasn't brought in sooner, and why we're dealing with it in the last week. I understand some of that may stem from political momentum, as you just mentioned, but I would like to get a little bit clearer response, and maybe the chair of the Financial Management Board would be able to enlighten us on where some of the delays were in moving forward with some of these projects.

I'm not talking about the how the decision came about, but on how this ought to have been discussed at numerous tables, not just cabinet and FMB throughout different colleagues working together on highlighting some of these.

There has been a lot of talk in here on pushing the government to move faster and to move some of these programs better, and I still don't really see a clear indication of why it took three- plus years to get to this point. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that question could go to every government since the start. We've had a very high suicide rate across Nunavut, and I appreciate how much urgency and push there has been from this government to make suicide prevention a priority. Suicide is painful, Mr. Chairman, I assure you.

But you know, I think in the case of FMB, there was not a business case brought to FMB until this time. There was a request to increase funding for the Atii Angutiit program, and the other program but it was not high on Health's priority list at that time, and this comes before us now, and so we've brought it forth this week. It's unfortunate that it's at the end of this government, but if it's at the end of this government and we don't approve it now, then it will be delayed another year.

Yes, it's inconvenient that it is at the end of the cycle of this government, but governments go on and we have to keep moving forward and suicide prevention is high on the priority of this government, and I assure you it will most likely be with the next government and governments going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Department of Health Operations and Maintenance \$5 million. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Looking at page 1 of 2 of the briefing note, there's a list of requirements for meaningful action, and some were just mentioned now, the enhanced funding for mental health programs, for Atii Angutiit Men's Wellness program, integrated youth services and on-the-land programs. I'm just wondering if these are the only ones that are being considered and being funded at the moment, or if there are others. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. As again it's related directly to the strategy, Minister if you're okay with me going directly to Ms. Hunt? Go ahead.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. So enhancing the Atii Angutiit men's program and on-the-land, and of course around the integrated youth services, but also reducing common means is another area that this funding will support to ensure that we're leveraging community support around education, around means restriction, so things like lock boxes, education around safe storage of medication, alcohol, and those kinds of things as well as training and education. So that is another area specific to supporting the reduction of access to a means that may assist in reducing suicide.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My plan was to go block by block on this briefing note. I'm just curious about whether or not, so we heard recently that in Nunavik there are crisis response teams that are pulled together with social workers and RCMP

members – not RCMP, members of their local police in order to respond together to calls related to crisis or possible suicidal ideation.

I'm just wondering whether or not this is part of a plan forward under this plan. Given that so many families and community members are currently the people that are the first responders to people who are in crisis, and that in a lot of communities the only people to call in response to a current suicidal ideation crisis or mental health breakdown are the police, and that there are trust issues, often, with people who are in crisis with the police, and that sometimes having police involvement escalates the situation where a community-based response might be able to alleviate that issue.

And that is 100 per cent taking into account the fact that sometimes the safest responders are the police, because of the fact that there's a lot of work to be done on means restriction, especially when it comes to firearms and firearms safety.

Sorry, that was really long, but I would like to know whether or not there is a way forward in either enhancing communities' capacity to have a community-based response in partnership with mental health workers, social workers, and the police, as well as those natural helpers in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for that question. Mr. Chairman, the department is taking all those into account, Mr. Chairman. We have resources and those resources are continuing to grow throughout the territory. There are cases, and it is on a case-by-case basis, where they take advantage of a program from different communities and/or regions to go in and work with and help the families that are in need, to help them through whatever the crisis that they may be in, if it's a successful suicide or a suicide attempt. The department works with many other departments and other agencies across Nunavut to go in and help whatever the situation may be.

There are cases where for example we've had the support group from Rankin Inlet travel to communities in the Qikiqtaaluk to go help in crisis situations. So, yes, it is all-encompassing, and depending on the situation there are help lines that are working together to make sure that the best care is being given, given the situation, whatever the situation may be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Earlier training was mentioned as part of this plan, and I wonder if we can get more information on whether that's strictly training for current employees that are responding to these crises, or whether or not there's training being developed or available to the community at large in relation to crisis intervention,

again given that often the first responders are community members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the training that's being provided is for all of the above, in situations where they are training those that need different counselling services and/or training. They are always bringing in a new resources and new people to work in different crisis situations, so it would be all of the above. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you. Again on page 1 of the briefing note, under staffing there's a bullet that states "youth representation across government departments." And I wonder if somebody can elaborate on what that means in terms of the action plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the particulars on that issue, if I could have the Deputy Minister of Health respond, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Go ahead, Ms. Hunt.

**Ms. Hunt** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. Youth who have been engaged in the development of the Suicide Action Plan as well as the partners gathering on suicide in July, there has been a consistent theme from youth across the territory identifying more meaningful and specific roles and functions within Nunavut, within the government, and with partners for roles that they have the opportunity to speak to youth, to develop messaging, training, communications and those kinds of things. So that's what that refers to specifically. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you for that. I would like to go down to the bullet that centres around reducing access to common methods to complete suicide. The bullets listed are firearm safety and trigger lock distribution, increase Canadian firearm safety instructors, increase lock boxes, and increase household means restrictions.

I would just like to focus on that one first and ask why, whether or not there's only a focus on household means restrictions, so are these household means restrictions related

to new builds? Private housing and accommodations, does that mean there's a focus on changing building codes so that there's the ability to retrofit specifically anti-ligature fixtures? And why just household, and not public buildings, such as community health centres, hospitals, and arenas and other places where people gather in the public? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of this particular question, Mr. Chairman, the housing corporation is actually helping take a lead on this in terms of making it harder to access things like firearms by creating maybe locker rooms or areas where you could lock things like firearms and those kind of things.

They are also looking at seeing if we could lessen the means of being able to use things other than firearms to commit suicide. The housing corporation is looking at that.

In terms of whether it's going to go to other departments and seeing where we can do better in terms of limiting ways to commit suicide in public buildings and those facilities, I think we're not there yet, but I'm hopeful they will be at that point. Currently the concentration is in housing sector. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you for that. I know it's definitely a rare occurrence where somebody takes their own life in a public building. However, it is not completely out of the realm of possibility. It's not a zero factor, so I think it's really important to ensure that we do everything that we can to ensure every building is safe.

On the commitment to increase lock boxes, I know that often a person who is experiencing suicidal ideation can be the person who does have a key or the code to the lock box in a household. I wonder if there is, I don't know if it's possible, but whether or not there's a possibility of looking into a two factor process of being able to open a lock box where one person has the code to open a lock, or in some way to reduce a person's access to that lock box, just so that there's an extra level of safety.

I know from experience and from communicating with Nunavummiut that some families have gone through this very issue, where a person who is experiencing suicidal ideation is the person who has a code to be unable to unlock their firearms and have access to them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's something that we could look at with the Department of Justice or other agencies, because what if you have two people and they both decide they are going to do this. So at some point it gets very difficult and very, very difficult to proceed.

And I think what the aim of this currently is to see what we could do now to get where we need to get, and we definitely could have discussions with Department of Justice to see if there are systems out there where we need to have maybe two or three codes. That's something that definitely is something that is worth talking about, because it is real. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the opening comments, what disturbs me is on page 1 is on June 25, 2025 the Minister of Health and Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention, alongside Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Vice President Paul Irngaut that suicide remains a crisis in Nunavut.

So that being said, Mr. Chairman, I have to ask some questions here. If this Bill is passed, Mr. Chairman, my question is, Mr. Chair would Health department as soon as possible submit a further request as soon as possible, now that we only have three sitting bills left, if this bill is passed, will the health department request as soon as possible in the 7th Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'm sorry, Mr. Quqqiaq, the minister wouldn't be able to respond to that. That goes into the next government. Mr. Quqqiaq, do you have another question?

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. When it comes to this firearms safety and trigger lock distributions, prior to becoming a Legislative Assembly, if I'm not mistaken, it was the previous government or the government before that. What I used to see in the past was a lot of these lock boxes were being made with the help of the RCMP, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and it's a known factor and many Nunavummiut who don't have firearms licence to purchase ammunition.

However, I'm worried about all those Nunavummiut who don't have a firearms licence and certificates to access firearms in your own homes. I just want assurance, can the health department alongside with the justice department, for anyone who doesn't have lock boxes, make it easier for them to go to the RCMP and ask for all of firearms safety and trigger lock distributions.

Would the health department assure that the justice department at least publish a public service announcement to those who do not have firearms licence and certificates.

The reason why I say this, Mr. Chairman, a lot of Nunavummiut are probably scared of the justice department and RCMP, that they do not want to go ask for these trigger locks and the safety boxes.

That's my last one. I just want assurance that nobody gets into trouble, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** It thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's important that those of us who own firearms ensure that they are locked in a secure place, and if you don't have a secure place to lock them, then these programs that we are talking about today, this money will be available for those who require it across Nunavut, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. One final question. What is the anticipated impact on the surplus or deficit in the 2025-2026 if this money is approved? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Just one moment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you heard part of the answer, it's \$5 million to what we are currently adding, and we'll know those figures much better than by the end of September. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** If I could get a little bit of clarification. I just can't recall from even just going back to budget address and what we've approved and any additional supplemental appropriations under this fiscal year, what the impact would be on what is anticipated deficit or surplus of this current fiscal year. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** If you could bear with us, Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to pull those numbers out. This is the new software you paid for at work here. At this point, looking at the deficit, it's 124.116 million plus this 5 million on top of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Just to confirm, about \$130 million deficit is anticipated before the end of the fiscal year? Minister.

Hon. David Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, that would be assuming all capital is being spent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. We're on page 2, Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance, \$5 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.



**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go back to page 1. Clause 3, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 4, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 5, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 6, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 7, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree we've concluded with Bill 85?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree to the Bill as a whole?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree we have concluded Bill 85?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister, closing comments.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This is always a very difficult discussion to have, Mr. Chairman, but I do appreciate the frank and honest discussion we have around it. I only wish that there would be more discussion around this at everybody's coffee tables, because this is real, and it affects every single one of us.

I appreciate this government for taking this full on, and I hope to see some positive impact come out of this funding that you have approved today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the witnesses I have with me today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would just like to ask members remain in your seat for one minute. I just need to confirm something with the staff back here. But for now the witnesses may be excused. Thank you.

I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. Minister Akeeagok, do you have witnesses you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does committee members agree to allow the minister's witnesses to appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. Thank you.

Before us we have government bill, Bill 57, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act. Minister Akeeagok, if you could introduce your officials and go directly to your opening comments, please.

**Bill 57 – An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act – Consideration in Committee**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me here today to speak about Bill 57, *An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act*.

Today I'm joined by Rick Hunt, on my left, President and CEO of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, and to my right is Patrick Bruce, the General Counsel of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

The purpose of the Bill is to modernize the pension-related provisions in the *Workers' Compensation Act*, aiming to create a fairer and more equitable compensation system for permanently injured workers in Nunavut.

The proposed legislative amendments replace lifetime pensions, based solely on medical impairment, with a system more in line with the approach used by the rest of Canada. The proposed approach more fairly distributes compensation by better considering how the same injury may affect different people depending on their employment and their ability to return to similar work.

The Workers' Safety Compensation Commission undertook research that led to the release of a discussion paper in 2020, which served as the basis for two rounds of public engagement. The feedback and findings from this process informed the development of Bill 57.

This concludes my opening remarks, Mr. Chair, thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you does Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation have opening comments to provide? Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 57, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the Bill, which the Minister described in his opening comments. The standing committee notes that this legislative initiative was originally launched in August 2020, when the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission announced that it would be "seeking feedback on proposed changes to the pension system for workplace injuries or illness."

As Members are aware, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission is shared between the governments of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Bill 57 received First Reading in our Legislative Assembly on February 24, 2025. A parallel initiative, Bill 21, received First Reading in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories on February 27, 2025.

Over the past several months, the standing committee has been in close communication with its counterpart committee in the Northwest Territories to ensure that the statutes in both territories continue to mirror one another to the greatest practicable extent.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does any committee members have general comments to provide? We'll start going clause by clause. Bill 57, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act. Clause 1, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 2, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 3, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 4, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 5, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 6, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 7, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 8, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 9, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 10, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 11, Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 12, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 13, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 14, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 15, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 16, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 17, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 18, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 19, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 20, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 21, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 22, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 23, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 24, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Clause 25, agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree to Bill 57 as a whole?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree that bill is ready for third reading?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Closing comments, Minister?

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair and colleagues. This is, as we mentioned, it's a joint NWT and Nunavut, and so we're both in compliance with this act now. And I really appreciate all the feedback that has been taken over the last few years on this. And it's good progress and it's a win for our workers. Our workers are the ones that we need to look after, so I really appreciate it.

I appreciate the work that was done by our staff, so thank you very much all the staff that put the work towards this.

I really appreciate your input, Mr. Chair, and your committee. Thank you very much. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Witnesses may be excused. And as we've concluded our business for today, I'll rise to report progress to the speaker.

>>*Committee adjourned at 17:44 and House resumed at 17:45*

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

### **Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bills 57, 83, and 85. I would like to report that Bills 57, 83 and 85 are immediately ready for third reading, pursuant to rule 73. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Joanasie. Item 21, Third Reading of Bills, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Item 21: Third Reading of Bills**

#### **Bill 57 – An Act to Amend the Workers’ Compensation Act – Third Reading**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin South, that Bill 57, *An Act to Amend the Workers’ Compensation Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 57 has been read for the third time and is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Mr. Kusugak.

#### **Bill 83 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act No. 3, 2024-2025 – Third Reading**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 83, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act No. 3, 2024-2025*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 83 has been read for the third time and is ready for assent. Third reading of bills, Mr. Kusugak.

#### **Bill 85 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026 – Third Reading**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 85, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2025-2026*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried and Bill 85 has been read for the third time and is ready for assent. Item 22, Orders of the Day, Mr. Clerk.

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

Mr. Clerk: Thank you. There’s a meeting of the standing committee on legislation at 10:30 tomorrow morning. (No interpretation)

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 the Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, September 16, at 1:30 p.m.  
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:50*



