

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. David Joanasié

(South Baffin)

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. David Akeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

Hannah Angootealuk
(Aivilik)

Edward Attagutaluk
(Aggu)

Hon. Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Hon. George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Premier of Nunavut; Minister of Justice; Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut; Minister responsible for the Labour Standards Board; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal

Jamie Kablutsiak
(Arviat South)

Gordon Kautuk
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Brian Koonoo
(Tununiq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Simon Kuliktana
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall
(Netsilik)

Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board

Johnny Mike
(Pangnirtung)

Fred Pedersen
(Cambridge Bay)

David Porter
(Gjoa Haven)

Abraham Qammanié
(Amittuq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade

Hon. Annie Tattuineé
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Members Present:

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk, Mr. Edward Attagutaluk, Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Gordon Kautuk, Hon. Brian Koonoo, Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak, Mr. Simon Kuliktana, Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall, Hon. John Main, Mr. Johnny Mike, Mr. Fred Pedersen, Mr. David Porter, Mr. Abraham Qammaniq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Steven Taqtu, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Deputy Speaker (Mr. Fred Pedersen): Good afternoon, all. Speaker Joanasie is not here at the moment, so as Deputy Speaker I will be commencing at today's proceedings. I will ask Mr. Attagutaluk to say the opening prayer. Thank you.

>>*Prayer*

Deputy Speaker: Just as a note, today there will be a national alarm system on our system, so please ensure your cell phones are on mute today as that will happen at 2 p.m. Please make sure all phones are on mute. Thank you.

Ministers' Statements. Minister absent from the House. Government House Leader, Minister Hickes.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 24 – 7(1): Minister Absent from the House

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome to the chair. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise members that the Hon. Craig Simailak will be absent from the House today, due to weather. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Ministers' Statements. Acting Nunavut Arctic College minister, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 25 – 7(1): Legal Modules Certificate

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I stand today to recognize the most recent recipients of the Legal Module Certificates. Six students were recognized at a small ceremony held at the Nunatta Campus on January 23, 2026.

Legal Modules are a group of four courses specializing in court and justice matters, held within the College's Interpreter/Translator program. Students who successfully complete all courses receive a certificate that demonstrates to the Department of Justice that this learning has been achieved.

We can all appreciate that the courtroom can be an intense setting. The responsibility of translating in a court room requires calmness, focus and precision. The legal modules aim to prepare students for this responsibility.

To support some of this learning, the classroom is transformed into a mock courtroom where students are required to act in all the roles found in the courtroom. This learning provides students with the necessary context of the players and processes in these proceedings, grounding the students in the environment where many vital conversations occur.

Please join me in recognizing the following students:

- Christie Akearok
- Lydia Angutiqjuaq
- Elisapee Avingaq
- Norman Kilabuk
- Mona Milton
- Horizon Willie

I would also like to recognize the instructor for these modules, Maaki Kakkee.
(interpretation) Thank you, Minister Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Minister's Statement 26 – 7(1): Accredited Human Resources Certification Program

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight concrete steps my department is taking to advance goals of the Government of Nunavut Master Inuit Employment Plan, specifically our commitment to provide meaningful education, training, and career development opportunities that strengthen Inuit employment and build a strong, representative public service.

Mr. Speaker, in November 2024, the Department of Human Resources launched the Accredited Human Resources Certificate Program. The program is delivered in partnership with Red River College and is formally recognized by the Manitoba division of the National Chartered Professionals in Human Resources.

Over the past year and a half, the first cohort of participants—all of whom are Inuit employees of the Government of Nunavut—completed this rigorous program while continuing to work in their Government of Nunavut roles. Their learning extended beyond the classroom. Participants took part in study tours to Winnipeg, where they visited the Red River College campus and engaged directly with professionals, building valuable connections to the broader human resource community.

Mr. Speaker, on January 23, 2026, I extended my sincere congratulations to 17 Nunavut Inuit graduates representing 10 Government of Nunavut departments and agencies. These graduates are eligible for a waiver of the National Knowledge Exam requirement toward the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources designation, placing them well on the path of nationally recognized professional standing.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform my colleagues that the second cohort, that includes 10 Nunavut Inuit employees, started the program in September 2025 and we look forward to celebrating their graduation.

Of those 17 graduates that graduated in January, many of them are here: Tracy Aqatsiaq, Louisa Barrieau, Theresa Fox-Mansell, Amanda Holland, Donna Kenneally, Steve Nattaq, Laura Nowdluk, Mary Aningmiuq. I would like to acknowledge that Deputy Minister Alma Power, Elaine Uppahuak, Stephanie Bernard, and Clarisse Toa. I apologize if I have mispronounced that last name.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Tattuinee. Ministers' Statements. Minister for Family Services, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 27 – 7(1): Scholarship Recipients

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the recipients of the Rebekah Uqi Williams Scholarship, specifically tailored for Nunavummiut pursuing careers in social work, counseling, or psychology. The scholarship is dedicated to supporting the

educational aspirations of individuals committed to making a significant impact in their communities.

The recipients include:

- Tanesha Dean from Iqaluit, who is studying psychology at the University of Ottawa and plans to become a child psychologist;
- Shantel Qirngnuq from Kugaaruk, who is enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Work program through Nunavut Arctic College and Memorial University, and plans to become a social worker;
- Charlotte Siksik from Rankin Inlet, who is studying psychology at Acadia University, with a minor in criminology and criminal justice, and plans to become a clinical psychologist;
- Faith Voisey from Rankin Inlet, who is in her second year of Nunavut Arctic College's Social Service Worker Program, and plans to become a social service worker; and
- Katrina Anderson from Rankin Inlet, who is also in her second year of Nunavut Arctic College's Social Service Worker Program, and plans to become a social service worker.

Family Services launched the scholarship in 2023 in recognition of Ms. Williams' remarkable career that spanned nursing, social work, bureaucracy, politics, the National Parole Board of Canada, and Deputy Commissioner of Nunavut. This scholarship honours her life, her legacy of service, and her commitment to social justice.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasié) (interpretation): Item number 3, Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 37 – 7(1): Proud of the Arctic Winter Games Athletes

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say I'm proud of our athletes from my constituency. We've got six people, five from Clyde River. I'll say their names out: Doug Sakavak (ph), Troy Jonas (ph), Jillian Palituq (ph), Nadia Kautuk, from Clyde River; and from Qikiqtarjuaq, Tina Kudlualik (ph). (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Member's Statement 38 – 7(1): Appreciation of Qulliq Energy Corporation Staff in Kugluktuk

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the community of Kugluktuk and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Qulliq Energy Corporation staff of Kugluktuk Sheldon Klengenber, Peter Carpenter, and Billy McWilliam. Their commitment and knowledge has contributed in maintaining reliable power without interruptions, while maintaining one of the oldest power plants in the north. And it's always a challenge with aging equipment. For that reason kudos to Sheldon, Billy, and Peter for your commitment and dedication. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. (interpretation ends) Next on my list is MLA for Cambridge Bay. Thank you for filling in while I arrived slightly late. Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 39 – 7(1): Community Volunteers

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to give recognition to the many volunteers in our communities. Without these volunteers our communities would not have the available programs and sports available to the residents.

In my community of Cambridge Bay we have volunteers that run such programs as basketball, cadets, fitness classes, both minor and senior hockey, drum dancing and seasonal events, as well as numerous other activities.

Mr. Speaker, these various activities keep our residents fit and healthy and give them options on what they can do to enhance their lives and our communities. Some of these volunteers are long-term residents, and some are only in our communities for short periods of time; but all make a positive impact.

I can think of two long-term volunteers that have made a significant contribution. They are Daisy Eyegetok and Terry Aknavigak. Since 1999 they have been running a very successful basketball program under the name of the Wolverines.

The high school gymnasium in Cambridge Bay is filled with regional and territorial banners, and players have played in tournaments across the north and southern Canada, and even such faraway places as Europe and Cuba.

Many past and current Wolverines have and are representing Nunavut at the Arctic Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to rise and pay tribute to these special volunteers, as well as to all of the other volunteers in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Yes, we are very proud, too. Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Member's Statement 40 – 7(1): Turbot Fishing in Pangnirtung

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Nunavut, everybody watching and people of Pangnirtung, I say good afternoon. And everyone visiting here, please feel welcome in the House.

I would like to make a statement about something that is not new. Something that is always useful to the people of Pangnirtung of time winter comes. Right now halibut fishing is running, and it opened this winter. And the turbot fisheries are trying to get 1,100,000 pounds of turbot in their quota. The licensed fishermen, if you're going to be commercially fishing you need to have a licence. And we have given out 19 licences so far, and they usually have one helper each. So there's 180 turbot fishermen now.

These are men and women that go fishing, and the fish plant workers are around 15 workers, and there are nine students that work at the fish plant.

Up to today the weight of the turbot that has been caught so far, yesterday I was notified that they had fished 635,995 pounds. All the turbot has gone through the fish plant now. The total catch has contributed approximately \$840,000 to the fish plant workers and the turbot fishermen.

This has been happening since 1994, annually. It was created by the Inuit people with the help of the government, and now they have been operating for 32 years now. With the turbot fishery, it really supports the Inuit. It really helps the Inuit who usually generally don't have jobs. The fishing season will end after they catch 1,100,000 pounds in the quota. when the quota is filled.

All the fishermen who took part, if they sold at least 5,000 pounds, at the end of the fishing season, they get paid extra money at the end of the season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. According to the list of names I have, Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Member's Statement 41 – 7(1): Local Housing

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are new members that have been elected to local housing authority. I would like to congratulate these individuals. Their term will be three years. Emily Etok (ph), Gina Nakulak (ph), William Pannu (ph) and Mary Pudlat (ph).

I congratulate you. I know that you deal with heavy issues as a member of the local housing authority, and I was a previous member of the board, so I would like to congratulate the newly elected members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statement. Member for Aggu, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Member's Statement 42 – 7(1): Constituency Assistant Being Sent Out on Medical Evacuation

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to mention that my constituency assistant Lucassie Qautuq (ph) had to go to the hospital, and he was sent to Iqaluit this morning. Our thoughts will be with him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Koonoo.

Member's Statement 43 – 7(1): VHF Radio System Improvement

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member for Tununiq, I would like to rise and announce the VHF radios have not been able to work. They had to fix the antenna on top of the hill, and it was worked on for two years.

These radios are very important in emergency rescues, and search and rescues. Also, hunters usually inform other members in the community through the radio, the VHF radio.

It took a while to fix the antenna, and now they are working on that. The HTO is working with Parks, NTI, and Baffinland. I will work hard to make sure that they resolve this issue this coming year, this coming summer or spring time.

I just want to do announce that, as we are preparing to work on that antenna. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you as well. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list.

Item number 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item number 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Speaker: I would like to welcome each and of visitors in the gallery, but first of all there is an individual from Kimmirut, Leesa Akidluaq. Welcome. I acknowledge her and welcome to the Legislative Assembly as well.

Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I stand today to recognize the most recent recipients of the Legal Module Certificates. Legal Modules are a group of four courses specializing in court and justice matters held within the college's interpreter-translator program. This learning provides students with the necessary context of the players and processes in legal proceedings, grounding the students in the environment where many vital conversations occur.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the following students, and you can stand when I say your name: Lydia Angutiqjuaq, Elisapee Avingaq, Norman Kilabuk, Mona Milton, Horizon Willie, and instructor Letia Qiatsuk. And a special recognition for my sister-in-law Christie Akearok as well. I'm very proud of you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome. Again I thank Ms. Healey Akearok. I'm sure you want to supplement, so therefore I recognize you.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker. I wasn't quite finished.

I also rise today to recognize two exceptional public servants who are with us in the gallery: Ms. Sarah Attungala of Baker Lake and Ms. Peah Sowdluapik, regional manager of income assistance for the North Baffin region.

Mr. Speaker, both Sarah and Peah began their service in June 1999, just after the creation of Nunavut. At that time, income support was delivered through hamlets, and their years of service were not captured in the Government of Nunavut's recent long-term service awards.

Sarah began her work with the Hamlet of Baker Lake and Peah with the Hamlet of Pangnirtung. Both continued to deliver income support in their communities until program delivery was brought under the Government of Nunavut, and later transferred to the Department of Family Services.

Today Sarah continues to serve the people of Baker Lake and regularly travels to the Rankin Inlet regional office to support her colleagues across the Kivalliq region. Peah has served for many years as the regional manager for North Baffin, supporting communities and income assistance staff across the region with dedication and steady leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the work of an income assistance professional is far more than the administration of benefits; it requires deep knowledge of community realities, careful assessment of individual and family needs, and the ability to support clients through moments of crisis, transition, and hardship. It demands patience, compassion, and the skill to balance policy with humanity.

Every day, income assistance workers help ensure that families have food on the table, that elders and single parents are supported, and that individuals facing difficult circumstances are treated with dignity.

For more than 25 years, Sarah and Peah have carried out this work with unwavering commitment. Their service reflects the core Inuit societal values that guide us as a territory. They embody *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, through their respect and kindness towards clients; *Pijitsirniq*, through their dedication to serving their communities; and *Aajiiqatigiinni*, through their collaborative approach with families, colleagues, and partner organizations.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing Ms. Sarah Attungala and Ms. Peah Sadluapik for their outstanding service and steadfast commitment to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, Member for Rankin Inlet North, Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the individuals that are here that have graduated from the Accredited Human Resource Certificate Program offered by Red River College. If you can stand when I say your name:

Tracy Aqatsiaq, Louisa Barrieau, Theresa Fox-Mansell, Amanda Holland, Donna Kenneally, Steve Nattaq, Laura Nowdluk, Mary Aningmiuq.

Those that are joining remotely, I have asked them to come. I said I would acknowledge them at this time: Janice Simailak, Patricia Tapatai, Miali Dimtruk, Monica Mala, Monica Qattalik, Theresa Adamache, Lucy Nivingalok, Molly Ayaruak, and of course staff from the Human Resource department, Alma Power, Elaine Uppahuak, Stephanie Bernard, and Clarisse Toa.

Thank you very much for being here. I congratulate each and every of one of you on your achievement, and look forward to your continued service to the Government of Nunavut. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize the two most of the important people in my life, Rhoda Porter, and my baby Iqalu (ph), to the Assembly. Unfortunately they couldn't make it here during the swearing ceremony, due to weather. I would like to welcome them to the House. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: (interpretation) Welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize some really important people who are here today and I'll start with Kathy Hanson (ph). It's always nice to see you here. My family relative, Leesa Akidluaq. I was so happy to meet your mother Peah Sowdluapik for the first time today.

My friend Kristie Akearok. It's always nice to see you. And Louisa Barrieau is not only a friend but she's a former colleague. I know she has done work for many, many years with the Department of Human Resources to help us hire really good people, and it's nice to see you here, Louisa.

My good friend Stephanie Bernard is here as well. We were connected through Black History Society. Its always nice to see Stephanie.

Mr. Speaker, I have a very, very dear friend here, Elisapee Avingaq, and I'm so proud of her for taking the leap to go back to school. I know that she's going to be an incredible interpreter-translator. She has such a wealth of knowledge about traditional activities and stories, and most of all she's one of my favourite artists to collaborate with.

Welcome to your House, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize and welcome these individuals from my community. Peah Sowdluapik, welcome to the Legislative Assembly. I also would like to mention Norman Kilabuk, originally from Pangnirtung, and as well Peah's daughter, Leesa. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. It's very good to see Nunavummiut visiting the Legislative Assembly, even though they are two individuals I went to school with, Nunavut Sivuniksavut. They know who they are. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names on my list.

Oral Questions, Item number 6. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 24 – 7(1): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked the Minister of Transportation some questions about airport infrastructure. Today I will ask some questions about marine infrastructure.

As the minister will recall, the government's 2025-2026 capital estimate included approximately \$5 million in funding for the new Qikiqtarjuaq Marine Infrastructure Project. On September 18, 2025, the Government of Nunavut announced that responsibility for the project will be transferred to the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation. The announcement indicated that "the Government of Nunavut continues to advance the project design phase of the Qikiqtarjuaq port, which is expected to conclude this fall."

Mr. Speaker, it is almost spring. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the design of the facility and the transfer to the new proponents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member is correct. We, the previous government transferred that project back to Qikiqtani Inuit Association, so we are no longer involved in that project at all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. Although this project will now be led by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, there will still be a need for the Government of Nunavut to be involved with respect to such impacts on the community as new power requirements, housing and airport improvements.

Can the minister confirm which department of the government will have the main responsibility of working with the new project proponents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would be across the various different government departments. If there is going to be an increase in a community of that size, there's going to be power infrastructure challenges; there's going to be housing challenges; water, waste water infrastructure would be potentially needed to be improved, so there is a number of different departments that would be involved. But that would all take part as part of the scoping of the project, and to my knowledge that level of detail hasn't been brought to our attention. But I will check with my colleague at Community Services to see if there's an update. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the department is aware the Department of Infrastructure has taken on the responsibility for administering the government's community...

Speaker (interpretation): I apologize. There was going to be some testing done, via cellphone so that you will know what to do in case of an emergency. Mr. Kautuk, please proceed.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure has taken on the responsibility for administering the

government's Community Transportation Initiatives Program, which provides funding to municipalities for community access roads and small scale marine infrastructure.

The 2022-2023 annual report on this program was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 11, 2025.

Can the Minister confirm when he will be tabling the outstanding annual reports for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 fiscal years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I will have to check with my officials on how much progress has been made on those annual reports. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Chesterfield Inlet-Rankin Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 25 – 7(1): Activities of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, in August of last year, the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a request for proposal to conduct assessments of power plants in a number of Nunavut communities, including Rankin Inlet. In November 2025...

Speaker (interpretation): I apologize. I think we're getting a little... so if you could start with your paragraph once again without any obstructions. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, in August of last year, the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a request for proposal to conduct assessments of power plants in a number of Nunavut communities, including Rankin Inlet. In November 2025, Qulliq Energy Corporation awarded a contract to undertake the assessments.

Can the new Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation provide an update today on the status of the assessment of the Rankin Inlet power plant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the member is correct that the contract was awarded in November 2025 and the site visits that are part of this assessment are now complete. We expect the report in June 2026. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: As the Minister will be aware, Chesterfield Inlet's power plant was originally constructed in 1975, over 50 years ago.

In December 2021, the Qulliq Energy Corporation submitted an application to construct a new power plant, but that project did not go forward.

Can the minister provide an update today on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's plans for the Chesterfield Inlet power plant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the follow-up question.

Qulliq Energy Corporation currently has four power plants in production, and a further six we recognize are of advanced age. One of them is the Chesterfield Inlet power plant. It is one of the six that we have recognized as being toward the end of its life cycle.

At this time we don't have more to say than that. We continue to identify funds. We continue to advocate for these six power plants, which include Chesterfield Inlet and I do hope to continue the conversation with the member as plans move forward in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) During last year's winter sitting in the Legislative Assembly, the previous minister made a statement in which he informed the House that he had requested that the federal government "take over the Qulliq Energy Corporation's historical debt in order to alleviate financial strain."

Can the new minister update the House today on the status of these discussions with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The question was historical debt, yes. Thank you. I thank the member for the question.

Those conversations are continuing. I'm happy to report that during our visit, the Nunavut on the Hill visit at the end of January, we continued those conversations with our counterparts in Ottawa and with Minister Chartrand. Specifically we do continue to advocate on that topic of historical debt. Thank you so much for the question to the member and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Question 26 – 7(1): Nunavut Land Use Plan

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have more questions today for the Minister of Environment concerning the Nunavut Planning Commission's recommended Nunavut Land Use Plan, which was submitted to the federal government, the territorial government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated almost three years ago.

Mr. Speaker, when I raised this issue during Monday's sitting of the House, the minister stated that (interpretation ends) "significant effort is underway to complete the internal review as effectively as possible."

(interpretation) Can the minister describe how this "internal review" is being conducted and can he confirm who is leading this internal review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for his question. In regards to your question, we haven't finalized the details yet and they will need approval or rejection. But I can say that the Nunavut government and the Department of Environment and my colleagues and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the federal government are going to be reaching a final agreement in order to progress this forward. We haven't made the paper public, and there will be another meeting on this subject at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the minister. When I raised this issue during Monday's sitting of the House, the minister stated that "there are still quite a number of Nunavut government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated issues that need to be changed in the Nunavut Land Use Plan."

Can the Minister clearly explain what specific issues have been identified. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): We were going to discuss the issue this morning as we had planned, but due to the blizzard we couldn't get the presentation. These are the details that we were going to present, and unfortunately we weren't able to. But we do plan to pay a visit and give you a brief of the content, and when we are ready we will inform you thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and last supplementary, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Mr. Minister. (interpretation ends) I'll try and say, during Monday's sitting of the House, the minister stated that "the Government of Nunavut is seeking to align its position wherever possible with the other signatories like Nunavut Tunngavik and the Government of Canada."

Can the minister clearly indicate what concerns have been expressed by the federal government regarding the recommended Land Use Plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. The questions are issues that should be addressed, but I cannot state what actually has been put in place to date, but it's in the planning stages and when it's ready, you'll be informed. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Aivilik MLA, Ms. Angootealuk.

Question 27 – 7(1): Airport Infrastructure

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

As the minister will recall, letters were tabled in the House during the previous Legislative Assembly concerning the urgent need to extend the runway at the Naujaat airport. The municipal council of Naujaat and Calm Air have expressed concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to note that the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's 2026-2027 capital estimates include \$160,000 to develop "engineered drawings design" for the runway extension. Can the Minister indicate when work to extend the runway will begin; can the minister indicate the approximate cost.

Speaker (interpretation): First to the question, minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. With regards to the runway in Naujaat, we realize that it is the shortest runway in the territory, which limits the type of aircraft that can land there. We do have a rough estimate, a class D estimate on what the cost would be from that original planning dollars, and we're working to get it included in a future capital plan, but as of now there's no definite date. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate the approximate cost to extend the runway at Naujaat's airport and can he clarify if the project will be eligible for federal funding. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Mr. Speaker, our numbers are rough numbers that we have now, but it would depend on the length of the extension that would be done. We're talking 30 to 40 million dollars as a rough estimate.

But that being said, Mr. Speaker what I have been lobbying with, with the federal Department of Transportation this is one of the projects that I've been lobbying for, to get federal support on. It's definitely in my top three, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Second and final supplementary, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was also pleased to note that the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's 2026-2027 capital estimates include \$300,000 for the construction of an airside access ramp at Coral Harbour's airport.

Can the Minister provide an update today on the status of the procurement process for this equipment. (interpretation) Thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is yet to be approved, but it is in our list to do the airside ramp in Coral Harbour. So as soon as that money can be approved we can proceed with the scope of work. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Kugluktuk MLA, Mr. Kuliktana.

Question 28 – 7(1): Nunavut Housing Corporation Action Plan

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. As the minister is aware, the Auditor General of Canada submitted a report last year to the Legislative Assembly concerning the Nunavut Housing Corporation. A number of the minister's colleagues subsequently held a televised committee hearing on the Auditor General's report. And I would like to say, I actually watched some of those hearings.

Mr. Speaker, one of the specific issues identified in the Nunavut Housing Corporation's action plan is to "review the point-rating system used to prioritize public housing allocations, and improve the system and process for rating public housing applications."

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the corporation's work in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Nunavut Housing, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

The point rating system varies across the territory. Each of the LHOs, there's a set guideline of what needs to be within that point rating system, but there are areas where a local housing association or authority can add weight to different aspects of it. In some communities we see the LHO adding a weight for the amount of time an application has been within the wait list, and in other communities we see weight added on to the point-rating system for accessibility needs.

We are looking at a system where we can standardize how this may be done, while also not taking autonomy away from each of our community local housing organizations. We have been exploring different ways to ensure that we are addressing the issues that we

may be seeing across communities with the wait lists, while still ensuring that the community housing boards have that autonomy in deciding what weight that specific community would like to see. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. First supplementary, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your comments. Another issue identified in the Auditor General's report was the need for improved management of public housing waitlists. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the corporation's work in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and *quana* to the member for the question.

A part of the capital ask that we reviewed on Monday – Was it Monday? Yes, Monday – A part of that capital ask was updating our information and technology systems across the territory, and in doing so we're hoping to utilize new programming in how we're managing these specific community wait lists and allocations within that.

Before, each of the LHOs were on their own network, and having them come in to the Government of Nunavut network through a cloud-based application program ensures that data integrity and security for the information of each of the people who may be on that wait list. Modernizing how we're not just storing this information but assessing the information that we do have access to is going to ensure that going forward we would have a clearer picture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your answer.

Another issue identified in the report was oversight of local housing organizations. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the board members and employees of Kugluktuk's local housing association. As the minister is aware, some local housing organizations in Nunavut are authorities. Their board members are appointed by the minister. Other local housing organizations, their board members are elected through the democratic process.

Can the minister indicate if the government is considering introducing amendments to the *Nunavut Housing Corporation Act* which would result in all local housing organizations being either appointed authorities or elected associations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Madam Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. Yes, I do recognize the importance that each member on each of our local housing organizations that they play in each of our communities, and the hard work and dedication that goes into that. And it is recognized.

Prior to this government, NHC had explored the idea of how the local housing organizations could be restructured to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of local housing programs within them. More work would need to be done, and more engagement with each of our communities and our local housing authorities or associations would need to be had.

I think the idea behind the local housing organizations was really to ensure that there is some of that autonomy within our community's on how the public housing program is applied in those communities; also we need to have that accountability, in ensuring that this work is being done and some of that will be addressed in the new technology that we are implementing at the local level. But there would still need to be further engagement with our communities and our local housing organizations to ensure that if this is the path that we see going forward, that this would be done in a way that's both economical but also respects that autonomy that we currently have at the local level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. (interpretation ends) Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Question 29 – 7(1): Air Ambulance Services in Nunavut

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and they are in regards to air ambulance services in Nunavut.

The department issued a request for proposals on April 7, 2025 and, as per public records, they only received one bid by the closing date. That bid was from Sakku Exchange Group operating as Keewatin Air, who I believe is also the current medevac provider.

Again as per publicly available information, the go-live date for that request for proposals is April 1, 2026, which is three weeks away from today.

My first question for the minister is: Has the contract been awarded and does it start on April 1, 2026. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just searching through my notes for this, and I have pulled it up and hopefully the response is here. I don't see it right off the top here, so I will look for that answer in my briefing notes and listen to the member's second question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my community of Cambridge Bay, the information from the department shows that in 2022 the community had 122 or 120 medevacs for that year. The information, what it does not show is wait times for those flights. I'm wondering if the department has updated information on how many medevacs the community of Cambridge Bay now receives on an annual basis, and what the average wait times may be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Madam Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The wait times are tracked very closely, because they inform our entire system. I don't have those numbers in front of me, though I can commit to bringing them to the member as soon as possible.

Just regarding the first question, the contract, the RFP is still going through the process. I can let the member know as well once that process is complete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we can all recall the time when medevacs services in Nunavut had regional operators with companies based in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, and Iqaluit. When it was like that, the wait times were much lower than having a service provider from one region covering all three regions of Nunavut.

In the department's request for proposals for the new air ambulance contract there is information included on preferred base locations and aircraft requirements. For the Kitikmeot region it shows Yellowknife and/or Cambridge Bay for the preferred location, with two-fixed wing turbo aircraft being available.

Can the minister confirm that when this new air ambulance contract commences in three weeks' time, the successful bidder will have two aircraft with crew based in either Yellowknife and/or Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Health, Madam Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, to the member. I don't have that detail in front of me; however, I am willing to get that information back to him as soon as I can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. I have no more names.

Item number 7, Written Questions. Item number 8, Return to Written Questions; 9, Replies to Opening Address; Number 10, Petitions; Number 11, Responses to Petitions; Number 12, Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Number 13, Tabling of Documents. Member for Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Sammurtok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 5 – 7(1): Resolutions Passed at 2026 Meeting of Kivalliq Mayors

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table copies of the formal resolutions that were passed at the recent meeting of Kivalliq mayors. I will take this opportunity to pay tribute to all our region's mayors for their dedication.

I encourage all members to read this document with care, and I will have questions for the appropriate ministers during our winter sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item number 14, Notices of Motions. Number 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Number 16, Motions; 17, First Reading of Bills; 18, Second Reading of Bills. Item number 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters, Bill 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Before we get into the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 14:41 and Committee commenced at 15:14

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

Chairman (Mr. Fred Pedersen): Thank you. I'll call the meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 1, 2, 3 and 4. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue to review of the Department of Education 2026-2027 capital budgets; and if time permits, the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Are we in agreement, then, that we deal with Bill 2?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 2 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-2027 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask Acting Minister Main if he will be having officials appearing with you before the committee.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yes, I do.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. And just for the record, Acting Minister Main, if you can please introduce your officials again.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu here today, to my left, your right; and to my right, your left, we have Barry Cornthwaite, who is Manager of Capital Planning. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Department of Education Corporate Services. Total capital expenditures of \$32,180,000. Yesterday we left off with questions and Mr. Qammaniq was asking questions, so we'll return to Mr. Qammaniq. Thank you.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you. When I was asking this question yesterday, we suddenly stopped.

The Sanirajak school got a bus, but it has never been used. It has been kept outside. We're requesting an indoor parking space for it when we suddenly stopped yesterday. Has this been considered? Has there been any consideration done on this matter? Thank you, Mr. Chair Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The issue around storage of busses and the need to protect them from the elements as well as protect them from vandalism is something that is a concern in multiple communities. Mr. Cornthwaite is prepared to offer some details around the approach if you will allow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite, go ahead.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. Basically what we're doing in your community is we're working very closely with the DEA and the hamlet to see if we can find an acceptable facility for the bus to be stored into. We're also working with other DEAs and other hamlets with our communities that no longer have inside storage for their busses, so we are doing our best with regards to that. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Yes, thank you, and thank you. Yeah, you're working with the local DEAs and the hamlets. The hamlet has no more space. They received a new water truck and a sewage truck, and what else did they get... and the coast guard auxiliary received a boat, and it's completely equipped out with all sorts of electronics, and it's being kept outside when it shouldn't be kept outside.

Every day the water trucks and the sewage trucks are operating, and they need to have proper space and they don't have any more space. There is absolutely no garage space right now.

We should not just talk about it and do something with the \$32.8 million that had been planned for this purpose. It would be good, I would appreciate it if you could consider my request. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, it's completely understandable why this is a concern. It sounds like the local district education authority is working within the community. The budget is \$500,000 annually for purchases of school busses, and the money is for the vehicles, but the budget is not for garages.

It would be good if we tried to find private businesses that can provide that service, in efforts to find storage space for the busses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Mr. Qammaniq, any follow-up questions?

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, thank you. No, I don't.

Chairman: I'll remind the members that if you have any questions, please let me know. Next on my list I have Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the officials as well. (interpretation ends) Your capital plan indicates that the next school to be replaced will be the Inuujaq School in Arctic Bay. The substantiation sheet for this project indicates that “The business case is being updated due to change in student count methodologies, and should be completed in September-October of 2025.”

What were the conclusions of the updated business case?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. That work has been completed, and the recommendation that came out of that is that the community, the approach to be taken is for a new school to be constructed. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Acting Minister Main. Mr. Taqtu, you’re done? Next on my list, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Report of renovations of the three schools in Rankin Inlet, Maani Ulujuk, Simon Alaittuq, and Leo Ussak School, have those renovations been completed? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Mr. Cornthwaite is prepared to speak on that detailed question, if you’ll allow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite, go ahead.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thanks, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the question. For the middle school in Rankin Inlet we have to replace the roof, and that has been completed. It is fully solid and the school is operating fine.

We replaced the siding on Manni Ulujuk School in Rankin Inlet.

What we’re dealing with now is the foundation in Leo Ussak. There’s a tender going out for foundation review. Basically the school is sinking, so we have to correct the foundation before we can do any internal renovations, and that is the plan, to do something with regarding that this summer. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Cornthwaite. Minister Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: New title.

>>*Laughter*

My next question is regarding what Mr. Qammaniq asked regarding the storage, and the answers that I have been hearing from the officials was they have been in talks with the DEA and the hamlet, or private companies. As everybody is aware, smaller communities have got no storage place whatsoever, whether you talk to DEA or the hamlet, so what I'm suggesting is that you should be using part of the bus funding to build storage in communities, in the case of Chesterfield Inlet, Because half the time the bus doesn't, they don't use it for operational purposes, what it was intended for.

I would like to know if the Acting Minister of Education would agree with me, or their officials, to use part of the funding for buying busses to use in the storage fund. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We can certainly take that suggestion or that idea under advisement. I think this is one of the important functions of Committee of the Whole, and the budget consideration that we're involved in, is that this is an opportunity for members to provide suggestions to the department.

We know that storage is an issue, and there are various variations of solutions that have been found in different communities. And whether it's working with the hamlet, whether it's working with a private business approach, there are a number of different ways to solve the problem.

But I appreciate the member's suggestion. In terms of next year's capital ask, I'm sure the department will take it under consideration. *Mat'na.*

Chairman: Thank you, Acting Minister Main. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm happy to hear that they will make the consideration in the next year's budget cycle. If that's going to be the case, I would like to suggest also that Chesterfield Inlet be the first one to build something like that. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I appreciate the member's suggestion on that.

In terms of how the bussing budget is allocated, it's \$500,000 a year, and so there is a ranking that the department works on in terms of the vehicles, in terms of which communities need vehicles first. And so it involves a number of students, the presence of wildlife, amount of daylight, temperature in the community, terrain in the community, as well as the age of the existing bus.

I realize that doesn't necessarily speak to the storage, but I just wanted to share that on the bussing side. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next on my list, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Chair. There are ten schools in need of replacement or major renovation. Quluuq School in Clyde River is a 56-year-old building with deteriorating accessibility features and rising enrolment pressure. Do you know if there is a new plan to build a new school for Clyde River? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of Clyde River there are no plans laid out that specifically speak to a timeline or a project around a new school in that community. Arctic Bay has been identified as the next community in line for a new school, and the department is making best efforts to keep up with the aging facilities across the territory.

It is a case of needing access to resources, funding resources to move more projects forward, so there's a number of proposed planning projects that the department has identified as being a priority. At this point Clyde River is not on that list. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that response, Acting Minister Main. Next on my list is Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regard to Sakku School renovation project. What's the status? Is it being completed? Although I see that outer part of the school, but I've never been inside. What is the status of the renovation of the old school? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angootealuk. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank you for the question. First of all, I think in terms of the member and the ongoing construction, the members will be welcome to tour the construction site, and I'm sure that could be arranged with the Department of Education and the contractor. So I wanted to offer that.

It's great to see this project moving ahead. There had been some delays that have been encountered around contaminated soil, as well as relocating the power poles, but the work is ongoing and the current timeline would have that project completed sometime in 2028.

We know the community needs this updated infrastructure, and Education is working closely with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut to manage the contract, which is ongoing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Acting Minister Main. Next on my list is Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to ask the Acting Minister in regards to the \$500,000 bus budget for school busses.

The community of Gjoa Haven has a small school bus, and we do have proper storage contract with the local Co-op store. But the DEA is in desperate need of a larger school bus, as we have about 253 elementary school students and over 240 high school students, almost 500 students in the community and we are divided in two communities, one subdivision and one main community base. It's about a one-mile walk from the subdivision out to the school. The school at times has to take two trips in a short time to take the students to school, I'm asking Acting Education Minister if Gjoa Haven is considered for a new school bus. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Porter. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department has just put out the call to the DEAs, district education authorities, for them to express interest in and need for a new bus. That has just gone out from the department very recently. The district education authority in Gjoa Haven would have an opportunity to identify the need.

I thank the member for raising this; when you look at the weather and the distance to school, the department wants to eliminate barriers that might cause children to not attend school, and so if the distance between a child's home and school is one of those, then the department wants to be part of removing that barrier, in this case through bussing service. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Acting Minister Main. Mr. Porter, any other questions?

Mr. Porter: Thank you.

Chairman: Next name on my list, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) My question is, the Ataguttaaluk elementary school is in need of renovation. How soon will the renovation take place? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) there is a number of different components with regards to that facility, in terms of ongoing lifecycle work as well as the larger need for a major renovation. If you'll allow Mr. Cornthwaite to reply. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question. We work close by with the Department of TIN to identify needs that the schools have with regard to renovations and fix-ups that they might require, being from a generator to boiler to windows to siding to flooring. When these are identified, we try to use our ongoing lifecycle that address the issues that are brought to our attention. Unfortunately, our funds are limited, so we have to prioritize them. We understand the question has been asked, and we'll review the school closer with TIN. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you for that reply. Next on my list, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is with regards to a previous member's question with respect to bussing storage. I do note that it is a big challenge for capital funding for storage for communities that don't have access to available storage. Has the department considered temporary, short-term solutions for storage, known as tarps, a temporary tarp buildings that you can build up in within a day? Any protection against the elements is beneficial to an existing school bus that don't have the current storage space. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Acting Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) To my knowledge, that hasn't been put into action or put into practice yet at the community level, but, again, I appreciate the suggestion from the member. I think when we look at a shared challenge that has been encountered in multiple communities, I think flexibility and creativity is our friend, in terms of ways to solve the problem. It's not rocket science, it's a case of a vehicle that is needing to be protected from the elements, protected from

vandalism. The department is keen to work with district education authorities to try and find ways to solve this issue.

One trend that I wanted to mention in terms of the bussing issue, there is a trend towards more privately operated busses, as opposed to owned and operated through the DEAs. That's a trend that has been observed over the recent years. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Acting Minister Main. Mr. Kuliktana? No, okay. Any more questions? I don't have any other names on my list. Do members agree that we've now concluded with the Department of Education?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Acting Minister Main, do you have any brief closing comments?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to thank members for their questions and for their suggestions. I would like to thank the excellent staff with me here today, as well as those from Department of Education that worked tirelessly to prepare these estimates.

Finally, I just wanted to send a shout-out to Minister Akeeagok, who we're all thinking of. Like I mentioned at the outset of this, if he was here, he would have done a much better job than myself in terms of Department of Education. Just to him and his family, we're thinking of you all. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for your closing comments, Acting Minister Main. If members are okay, you can please remain in your seats and we'll start with Department of Health shortly. Sergeant-at-Arms, you can escort the witnesses out. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 15:40 and resumed at 15:41

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Brewster: do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Yes, I do. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. For the record, Minister Brewster, please introduce your official and please proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. It has been a while since I sat in this seat. I sat at this seat in the 6th Assembly, when we were all doing our orientation, so it's actually nice to be here today.

Chairperson, members, I am here to present to you today the 2026-27 Capital Estimates for the Department of Health. I would like to introduce my officials from Health: Deputy Minister, Megan Hunt; and Executive Director Corporate Services, Rene Tanga.

Health is requesting \$17.3 million for fiscal year 2026-27 to go towards the following projects:

- The development of long-term care facilities in Cambridge Bay;
- Investments in ongoing life cycle projects and minor capital procurements; and
- The replacement and the modernization of x-ray machines across all 25 communities.

Chair, before outlining the specific projects, I want to acknowledge and share a fundamental challenge facing our health care system: a significant and increasing gap in health infrastructure across the territory. Much of our existing infrastructure is aging and is under increased pressure from population growth. Our infrastructure was not designed to support today's level of service demand. This gap is not abstract; it has real, direct consequences for the people we serve. Aging facilities and equipment increase the risks of service disruptions, and limit our ability to expand or modernize programs when communities need them most.

In some cases, these infrastructure limitations force us into difficult trade-offs: deferred care, increased reliance on medical travel, and higher long-term operating costs that ultimately divert resources from patient care.

I raise this to provide necessary context for the investments we are making and the work that still lies ahead.

Chair, I'll now move on to discuss the specific funding requests we're putting forward today.

Health continues to make progress toward addressing the long-term care needs of Nunavummiut. The first new territorial 24-bed long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet is fully completed and operational.

The design of the second territorial 24-bed long-term care facility in Cambridge Bay is underway. The construction was anticipated to begin in the upcoming summer. Progression to the construction tendering phase will depend on the outcome of the ongoing discussions with the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay regarding the initially selected site. An interim appropriation of \$744,000 was presented and approved during the last session to advance the project and ensure construction readiness.

Long-term care capacity remains a critical gap in our health care system, and this funding supports preparedness to move forward with construction in response to the growing needs of seniors in the Kitikmeot region.

I am happy to confirm to members that federal funding has been secured for the construction of this new facility, reflecting strong federal–territorial collaboration and a shared commitment to expanding long-term care capacity in the territory. This investment will help ensure seniors can receive appropriate care closer to home.

I also want to acknowledge another critical partnership with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated for the Aqqusariaq project, which continues to progress toward completion of its construction phase. This project represents an innovative tripartite approach to health infrastructure in Nunavut, bringing together federal, territorial, and Inuit partners in a shared commitment to improving access to care. The facility is expected to reach substantial completion in summer 2026, marking a significant milestone for this important investment in the health system.

Health is requesting \$8 million for 2026-27 for the ongoing lifecycle capital projects. These investments are essential to maintaining hospitals and community health centres, addressing deferred maintenance, and mitigating risks associated with aging infrastructure. Without sustained lifecycle funding, the infrastructure gap would continue to widen, increasing pressure on service delivery and future budgets.

Additionally, \$2.5 million is requested for small capital items such as medical equipment, vehicles, and other essential health care assets at the community level.

The funding required in 2026-27 for small capital and ongoing life cycle projects has been approved through the last Interim Capital Appropriation.

Finally, \$6.1 million is requested for the replacement and modernization of x-ray machines across the territory. The current inventory has reached end of life. Replacing them is critical to maintaining diagnostic capacity, supporting timely clinical decisions, and reducing avoidable medical travel.

In the face of a significant infrastructure deficit, these investments do not close the infrastructure gap facing our health care system. They represent targeted and necessary

steps to protect access to care, support frontline health workers, and strengthen the system overall.

Chairperson and members, thank you for your time. I look forward to your questions and comments.

Quana, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Does a member of the Regular Members' Caucus have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Regular Members' Caucus on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates of the Department of Health.

The department's proposed capital budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is \$17.344 million. \$16.6 million is allocated for minor capital projects, ongoing lifecycle projects, and the replacement and modernization of x-Ray machines in health care facilities.

The department's 2025-2026 capital estimates included \$1.5 million in funding for the planning and design of a new health centre in Qikiqtarjuaq. In April 2025, the department issued a request for proposals for design and construction services for the facility.

During its winter 2025 sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$700,000 in capital carryover funding for the Qikiqtarjuaq Health Centre Replacement Project. The department's five-year capital plan indicates that construction of the new facility will not begin until the 2028-2029 fiscal year. Members encourage the department to provide regular updates to the community on the status of this project.

During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of October 31, 2024, the Minister of Health stated that "Baker Lake is the next community health centre that Health has approved for planning... following Baker Lake, our replacement plan would see a new health centre in Kugluktuk, we would see an expansion of the existing health centre in Arviat, and we would also see a new health centre in Kugaaruk... the next one past that, at the end, is the expansion of the Rankin Inlet regional health centre."

Members look forward to ongoing updates on the department's plans in this area.

During its winter 2025 sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$22.0 million in capital carryover funding for the Nunavut Recovery Centre project. No new capital funding is being requested for the upcoming 2026-2027 fiscal year. Members look

forward to ongoing updates on the status of the new facility and a clear timeline for its opening.

During its winter 2025 sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$8.0 million in capital carryover funding for the planned new long-term care facilities in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay. Members were pleased to note the government's recent announcement of December 19, 2025, which indicated that the Cambridge Bay facility will be "fully funded by the federal government through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program."

Members support the minister in efforts to secure federal funding for the Iqaluit facility.

Community-based residential elder care continues to be an important issue. Members encourage the minister to work with her officials to identify infrastructure options, including assisted living accommodations to enable elders to remain active and supported in their home community as they age.

Recognizing that the new long-term care facilities in the three regional centres will be operated by third-party contractors, members urge the Department of Health to take the appropriate steps to ensure that culturally relevant care will be provided. Members support the government in its efforts to recruit, train, and certify Nunavummiut to work as staff in long-term care facilities.

In February 2025, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated announced \$5.0 million in funding for the "renewal of the Arviat Andy Aulatjut Elders' Home." The same announcement also indicated that the organization would be "contributing \$500,000 for the purpose of conducting building condition assessments of the more recent continuing care centres in Gjoa Haven and Igloolik, taking a proactive approach to identify items that need replacement. The funding will also be used to conduct a feasibility study on potential expansions for these facilities. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Nunavut will oversee these analyses together, then jointly create a spending plan for the remaining \$9.5 million."

Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this work.

The needs of medical travellers in the Kivalliq continue to be a concern. During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of October 25, 2024, the Minister of Health indicated that the department had been undertaking a feasibility study regarding the establishment of a new medical travel boarding home in Rankin Inlet. Members urge the department to be transparent in reporting the results of this work to regional leaders and the public.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates of the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Do members have any general questions before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, we'll now proceed to a page-by-page review of the capital estimates starting in page H3. Department of Health, Directorate, total capital expenditures, \$17,344,000. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The question I've got is for the Chesterfield Inlet health centre. The client rooms, or they used to be client rooms, are being used as offices for different departments. Has the health department considered looking for new office spaces for these clients? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. The department has agreements in place with other departments to use a space within that community health centre, and rooms for visiting medical practitioners required to do their work are in use by other providers. There are some challenges that are created by that. Sometimes health staff have to be moved from a clinical space temporarily to accommodate that.

We acknowledge that it is important to have adequate clinical space to support health care needs of all Nunavummiut, and we're committed to working with the Department of Family Services to determine how to better balance health requirements for clinical space and to meet the forced growth expansion while also supporting the Department of Family Services' important work in communities.

We are really hopeful that we can ensure that everybody has space to provide services to members of the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the minister indicated, there's visiting doctors that need to use the regular nurses' offices, which is not convenient for both.

I'm wondering if you have talked to the other departments to see if they would find an office space somewhere else besides the health centre. They need those spaces for the patients in that community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. There's an associate deputy minister committee on health that are looking, or not just health, but there's a committee of associate or assistant deputy ministers that get together on a regular basis, and this is one of the issues that they are discussing and trying to find solutions towards. It is not just Health that is

running into some problems ensuring that there's enough space for programming and for care.

That committee is working together in order to address space planning, or planning for space on, you know, for the whole of the government. It is my hopes in a short period of time that they will be able to come up with solutions that can support all programming, and in the meantime, department officials work together interdepartmentally in order to ensure that there's as little disruption of clinical care as possible.

What I know about the committee's work on looking at space is that they will be reporting to the deputy ministers' committee with an analysis of their discussions regarding space. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know and realize that after the expansion of the existing centres in Arviat and the others, Kugluktuk and all those other places, there's plans indicated that expansion of Rankin Inlet regional health centre.

Can you take a time or a date when you guys plan to expand the new or the existing Kivalliq health centre, due to the simple reason that the surrounding communities are sent to Rankin Inlet for a specialized doctor to see them. So they are also running short of examination rooms. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. I don't have an exact timeline on when that will be taking place; it will depend on the planning approval. We really do hope to ensure that those expansions happen as soon as possible, to improve health care for everybody in the region. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Next on my list, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair. What discussions is your department having with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Nunavut Housing Corporation regarding elders housing in smaller Nunavut communities? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. If possible through you would like Deputy Minister Hunt to respond. Thank you, Chair.

Speaker: Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the member for the question. So the Department of Health in relation to conversations with partners such as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as well as the housing corporation is really around roles and functions and opportunities.

The role of Health is to provide things like home care, long term care, continuing care, and where there are opportunities where partners are building a purpose-built housing for elders, and the role Health can play in being able to provide necessary services like home care within those home environments. Because there's a difference between facility-based care and housing for elders, and so our role is around what can we provide to elders in their homes that help them stay longer. And to be able to support that as part of the important work that NTI and housing corp and other partners are doing around looking at investments and purpose-built housing for elders. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you Ms. Hunt. Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair, and thank you for the response. The next one is: As of today, how many residents of the territory are on the waiting list for the department's existing care facilities for elders in Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Igloodik, Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. The number fluctuates, sometimes on a daily basis. The numbers I have before me as of February 27 are that there are 22 individuals on the wait list. In Kitikmeot there are 12, in the Kivalliq, five; and Qikiqtani, there are also five on the wait list.

Deputy Minister Hunt has also whispered in my ear that there are 20 people on the wait list, so it seems that there are two people who have recently been moved off that wait list. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Taqtu? No; I have Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister, and your officials. My question is -- how shall I put it? -- The department of CGS announced some finishing dates or the scheduled completion dates, and from May 25 to December there was something late. They were late in doing something. During the session there was \$22 million in capital carryover during the 2025 winter sitting. These were for the Nunavut Recovery Centre Project.

As of today, what is the status of the construction of the new facility, the status of the construction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member. The most recent update that I have is that substantial completion is anticipated to be in the summer 2026. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister. The completion date that you mentioned, before we get to that date of the practical completion, do you expect to make more requests for more funding for capital money before the completion of the project? Do you anticipate that you'll have to request for more money to complete it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mike. Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. No. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike: So apparently it's going to open this summertime. That's great to hear. Can you tell me what date? I will be very aware of the opening, because I know I won't be in Pangnirtung during the summertime. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Member, the substantial completion date is scheduled for summer this year; however, following construction completion, there will be a transition period for inspections, equipment installation, and operational readiness before being open to clients and to employees. We want to ensure services are safe and fully prepared before welcoming employees and Nunavummiut. Though we know that the aim is for construction completion in summer 2026, the opening date is going to be a little bit later than that. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Mike, any more questions? Thank you. Next name I have on my list, I have Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Chair. I know that the new health centre for Qikiqtarjuaq was delayed for a year, due to lack of funding, I guess. But the Legislative Assembly approved \$700,000 in capital carryover funding for the Qikiqtarjuaq health centre replacement project during its winter 2025 sitting.

However, your department's current five-year capital plan indicates that early funding for the design and construction of the project will not be requested until 2028-2029 fiscal

year. Why is no funding being requested for the project during the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 fiscal year? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. The design phase is, importantly, taking place, and is expected to be completed in fall 2026. Once that design phase is completed, the department will come forward with an ask related to construction phase. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Next on my list, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is in terms of long term care facilities, and you mentioned that to ensure that seniors receive appropriate care closer to home. Does the department have any consideration, plans once the aged health centres have been replaced with a new health centre, does the department have any plans in regards to the old health centres that have been replaced by new ones? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. That's a really important question, what we do with facilities when we have been able to build new facilities. I know that my officials will be much better answering this question than I would be, so if it's okay, through you, Chair, I would like to ask Mr. Tanga to respond to that question. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that, Minister Brewster. Go ahead, Mr. Tanga.

Mr. Tanga: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The departments are working closely with Nunavut Tunngavik corporation, NTI, to advance the project of the extension of the existing long-term continuing care facility in the territory to increase the capacity, literally to have more space for elders, along with advancing the completion of the long-term care facility, we are, like the minister mentioned, in Cambridge Bay and also continue it can lead to having more capacity in the territory to serve elders. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tanga. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. During my campaign during elections, I sat down with the Elders Group Society, and they were quite persistent. I know Kugluktuk is second in line to receive a new health centre, and they would like to ask the Department of Health, once that aged health centre -- once we receive our new health centre, they would like to see renovations done to the old health centre to consider for long term care facilities for elders. Has the Department of Health discussed this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. We are always considering what to do with surplus buildings. I'm just going to ask through you, Chair, for Deputy Hunt to respond to this question, as well as the previous question. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hunt, go ahead.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. When we have surplus buildings we look at planning cycles and opportunities, as well as the condition and requirements of those buildings for future opportunities.

Your question specifically to have we looked at where a new health centre will be built, and will those old health centres be planned for an elders residence or continuing care centres, that has not currently been part of the plan or design. However, as we go through the planning process and we look at those opportunities, where there's funding and in the capital planning process and partnerships, that may be part of considerations in the future. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you for that reply, Ms. Hunt. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Ms. Hunt, for the response. I would certainly like to see Department of Health put those considerations into their plans, because it's clear, as we receive new health centres, they might have different priorities. But I know for my community of Kugluktuk, the elders were quite persistent that they would like to see the old health centre be renovated into a long-term care facility, or a continuing care. I would like to see the department consider those options in their future planning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Kuliktana. Minister Brewster, any reply to that comment?

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. As I mentioned earlier, it is really important for us to consider what we can do with buildings when we move on, and what state they're in and how useful they might be to the community as a new space or renovated space. We always keep that in mind, and will be sure to keep that in mind in the future for that Kugluktuk health centre. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I don't have any other names on my list. Oh, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I should have asked this question earlier, but it just came back to my mind. The old children's group home in Rankin Inlet, they had been

working on the renovation. From my understanding, it was supposed to be turning into an addictions centre. Is that still the plan? Or do you have any other plans for that building? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair, and thanks for bringing that up. It is now being used for mental health programming. I couldn't say how long in the future it will be used for that programming; however, that space is being put to good use at the moment. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: You indicated that it's being used for mental health. Is it staffed? Because I haven't seen anybody there yet, so I'm just wondering what kind of staff; how many staff. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. We do have staff there under Inuusivut. I don't have the numbers here in front of me; however, I can bring those numbers back to the member. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, I live in Rankin Inlet, and I pass through that going to the airport or going to the Northern Store on daily basis, and I've never seen any staffs there, except the people from the Community and Government Services checking into that building to see if it's still running or whatnot. That's why I'm asking how many staff there were. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. It's my understanding that they are mainly paraprofessionals working out of that building at the moment. As I mentioned earlier, I'm happy to come back to the member with more information about how many staff there are and a little bit more about the programming that's being run through that work.

It's important to know as well that sometimes when we have employees who are supporting people in their mental health that they have the option of going to the person to help them. So it may not be necessarily that people are going into that building to access their services.

As I said, I will come back with more information on that. I think it's important for the community to know if there's a service being provided and how they can access it. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Next on my list, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) Your department's proposed 2026-2027 capital estimate includes \$6.1 million in one-time funding for replacement of x-ray machines in all 25 Nunavut communities. The capital project substantiation sheet indicates that a risk of non-approving their project is a perception of utilization of tobacco settlement funds for priority health system needs.

Is this project being funded entirely from the funds received by the Government of Nunavut from the recently approved tobacco settlement? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. No, the funds received through the tobacco settlement are going into general revenues. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) What other capital projects are being considered for approval using funds from the tobacco settlement? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Just to correct myself, there are funds being leveraged through the tobacco settlement fund for this project. I apologize for that.

The correct "no" answer was that we don't have any other projects that are currently under way that will access, or that will be focused on accessing those settlement funds. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is, I just heard you answer that the money received from the tobacco settlement goes to the general funds. That doesn't sit well with me, as a member in this House. The settlement that was with the tobacco company, as you know, was to ensure that people that got sick from cigarettes, that got cancer, to me, that should be a priority, instead of going to the general funds.

Would the department consider the settlement fund that a lot of that funding should be going towards cancer screening and mammograms? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Though those funds are going to general revenue, what's most important for accountability for public funds is to ensure that we are following good financial processes, such as creating business plans and coming forward with dollar amounts that are well informed so that there's a high level of accountability in how we spend funding, whether it's funding that comes from outside or from within.

I can understand why it may seem like a good idea to choose a bunch of projects. I would love to just be able to fund all of Health's projects with a big pot of money. However, when we consider the importance of accountability and to ensure that we are making good decisions about program spending and capital expenditures, we do have to go through that process of coming with well-informed asks for specific funding.

Health is committed to ensuring that we do a good business planning cycle in order to account for everything, all of the funding that we're asking for. But thanks for that suggestion. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister, for your answer. The reason why I say that is that, without proper screening, there are still too many patients before they get sent down they're already in stage 4 cancer. To me, and to our residents of Nunavut, that is not acceptable.

I look forward to -- I know it's a big challenge, but with the settlement from the tobacco company, I'm pretty sure that the Department of Health can ensure that we can get some testing equipment for cancer, mammograms in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for supporting cancer screening in Nunavut, and with the acknowledgement that there are a number of different types of cancer that need to be screened for. Health is working towards doing better at that every day, and I appreciate your comments. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I have no other names on my list. Oh, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to ask a further question with regard to (interpretation ends) long term care facility. There seems to be an indication that your department will be negotiating with Qikiqtaaluk Corporation to complete the design. What is the status of that today? (interpretation) I just want to get clarification what the status of it is. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. We're still in the discussion phase about the design of that facility, and we're making some progress. Chair, sorry, my deputy is just writing a quick note here. Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut's capital projects division has received a proposal for architectural and engineering services covering design and construction documentation and contract administration for the 48-bed senior long term care facility in Iqaluit. There has been a detailed terms of reference issued to the proponent, outlining the specific requirements related to experienced team composition and technical capacity.

All that to say there is an independent technical review being requested based on legal recommendation to ensure the evaluation process and resulting findings are objective, defensible, and free from bias. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Minister Brewster. Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Minister. I would also like to ask what is the current estimate cost to construct the Iqaluit long term facility, in regards to the issue we're discussing now. Do you have any idea on the current estimated cost to construct that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. The department does have an estimated cost; however, we can't say that cost publicly, because we want to ensure that we don't give anybody a heads-up that might be bidding on building such a facility. Thanks, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I have no other names on my list. Do members agree we have concluded the Department of Health total capital expenditures \$17,344,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have concluded the Department of Health?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Brewster, do you have brief closing comments?

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. I really appreciate the questions from the members and your patience with me. This is a new process for me, and I always strive to do my best at everything, and it helps to know that you have some patience.

I would just like to extend my appreciation to the Department of Health staff that works so hard every day to provide really, really excellent care to our people and to make people like me look smart with all the work that they do to help us make good decisions together. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Sergeant-at-Arms, you can escort the witnesses out. Thank you.

What is the wish of the committee, Mr. Taqtu?

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: We have a motion to report progress, and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The Motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

>>Committee adjourned and House resumed at 16:39

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

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 2. I would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There's a motion on the floor. Seconder? Mr. Taqtu. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Third Reading of Bills. Oh, item number 22, *Orders of the Day*, Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) There will be a meeting of the Regular Members' Caucus meeting at 9 a.m. tomorrow morning. It will be what was supposed to happen this morning it is moved over to tomorrow morning starting at nine.

(interpretation) March 12, Thursday:

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: Bills 1, 2, 3, and 4
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thursday, March 12 at 1:30 p.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:42*

