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Speaker: The Honourable Hunter Tootoo, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Iqaluit Centre)

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(Iqaluit East)

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Minister responsible for Immigration;
Minister responsible for the Status of
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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, February 23, 2012

Members Present:

Honourable Eva Aariak, Honourable James Arreak, Mr. Moses Aupaluktuq, Mr. Tagak Curley, Ms. Monica Ell, Mr. Ron Elliott, Mr. Joe Enook, Honourable Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Johnny Ningeongan, Mr. Hezakah Oshutapik, Honourable Keith Peterson, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Honourable Fred Schell, Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Mr. Louis Tapardjuk, Honourable Peter Taptuna, Honourable Hunter Tootoo.

>>*House commenced at 13:35*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Hunter Tootoo): *Qujannamiik*, Sergeant-at-Arms. Before we get started, I would like to ask Mr. Curley if he could lead us off with a prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation ends) Moving on in the orders of the day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Kusugak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements**Minister's Statement 113 – 3(3):
Minister Absent from House**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to advise members that Premier Aariak and Minister Shewchuk will be absent from the House to attend the Prime Minister's announcement of funding for adult education in Nunavut at Nunavut Arctic College. Premier

Aariak and Minister Shewchuk will rejoin us later this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Taptuna.

**Minister's Statement 114 – 3(3): John
Graham's Retirement**

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the legislature of the recent retirement of a long-time Government of Nunavut employee.

Mr. Speaker, John Graham, the Director of the Iqaluit International Airport, retired on February 3, 2012, after more than 30 years of outstanding service with both the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut.

>>*Applause*

Mr. Speaker, John started his career as a civil servant in February of 1981 as a finance officer for the Department of Local Government in the NWT and held the positions of regional airports officer and regional airports manager before becoming the director of the Iqaluit International Airport in 1996.

Mr. Speaker, John Graham is very well known and respected in the aviation field both in the north and internationally. Through his efforts, the city of Iqaluit has become a popular cold weather testing site for aircraft manufacturers. He was instrumental in arranging for the world's largest passenger plane, the Airbus A-380, to test its cold weather

capabilities in Iqaluit in 2006 and 2007. He also helped to establish Iqaluit's popular international air show.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Graham is also well known for his long and distinguished service with the Royal Canadian Legion and his tireless work with his beloved 795 Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron. He is largely responsible for the unit's success and its role as a vibrant youth program in Iqaluit. In recognition of his efforts, he was presented with the first ever Northern Region Cadet Lifetime Achievement Award in August of 2011.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Mr. Graham for his many years of government service and service to his community. We all wish him well and a long and happy retirement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Taptuna. I, too, wish Mr. Graham well in his retirement. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Arreak.

**Minister's Statement 115 – 3(3):
Development of Alternative Polar
Bear Research Methods**

Hon. James Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Research methods, on some occasions, require the capture and handling of wildlife. These methodologies provide the only means of gathering very detailed information that is, from time to time, needed to properly monitor the status of our important species.

Some Nunavummiut are opposed to capture and release practices while others express concern. In response to Nunavummiut concerns, we have developed alternative research methods that can provide adequate information to make responsible wildlife management decisions. I am very pleased to inform members on the progress we have made in this initiative.

Over the last five years, we have been developing and testing two alternative methods for assessing polar bear populations in Nunavut. The first method involves using specially designed aerial survey methods. To date, we have successfully conducted assessments of the Foxe Basin and western Hudson Bay polar bear populations. For the Baffin Bay population, where aerial surveying is impractical, we have developed a second method, which is a genetic mark-recapture technique to study the bears. This method involves biopsy darting bears from a helicopter in order to obtain a small piece of skin. The DNA extracted from the skin is used to genetically fingerprint each bear. This genetic tag allows us to identify individual bears, therefore avoiding the need to capture, drug, and place plastic tags on the ears. Our biopsy darting project in Baffin Bay will continue this year and we expect to have preliminary results for review in 2013.

The department will be releasing final results from the aerial surveys in western Hudson Bay and Foxe Basin early in 2012. This will give Nunavummiut a first look at the type of information this method provides. We will be reviewing these results with the communities and will be discussing how this information

can be applied in the management of polar bear populations. Based on the outcome from these community discussions, we will determine the practicality of using these methods in the future.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut is a leader in the circumpolar world in the development and use of alternative methods for polar bear research. Our aerial survey and genetic mark-recapture projects represent the first full-scale application of these research methods in the study of polar bears. Other jurisdictions are now beginning to look at these methods and may adopt them in the future. I believe these methods strike a balance between our need for information and the concerns of Nunavummiut. In addition, we now have new tools for rapidly and cost-effectively monitoring polar bears. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 162 – 3(3): Health Care Delivery in Nunavut

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my optimism for future negotiations in the area of funding and support for health service delivery.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Minister of Health has reached her hand out to provincial and territorial health ministers and has made the commitment to address shared priorities in the renewal of our

health care system. The federal health minister recognizes that the challenges by jurisdiction vary and she has stated that the federal government is willing to work with each jurisdiction to target individual health care challenges.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that one of the primary issues facing Nunavut's health care system is the physical status of our community health centres. We have three health centres which have long been identified as needing replacement but they face delay after delay. I firmly believe that an investment in health infrastructure is critical to providing the appropriate level and quality of health care in Nunavut's communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Medical Association recently issued a report entitled "Principles to Guide Health Care Transformation in Canada." This report has been endorsed by 60 other organizations, including the Northwest Territories Medical Association, of which we are a part. That report discusses the fact that sustainable health care requires universal access to quality health services that are adequately resourced. One of the areas identified is "Infrastructure" and the report's authors stress that "Health care in the 21st century demands a fully functional health care information technology system as well as buildings and capital equipment."

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the federal government's willingness to work towards a renewal of our health care systems across Canada and I call upon Nunavut's Minister of Health and Social Services to take the federal Minister of Health up on her offer and bring

Nunavut's critical health infrastructure needs forward for discussion.

Mr. Speaker, if funds could be accessed to accelerate the replacement projects of our aging health centres, the quality of health service available to our residents would certainly improve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Item 3. Members' Statements. Moving on in the orders of the day. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 240 – 3(3): Nunavut Marine Council

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment, who is my *Annuraaqatik*, Minister James Arreak.

On February 22, 2012, the Nunavut Tunngavik Vice-president, Mr. James Eetoolook, issued a press release that a body called for within the NLCA consisting of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, the Nunavut Water Board, the Nunavut Planning Commission, and the Nunavut Impact Review Board will be set up as the Nunavut Marine Council. This body is called for within the section 15.4.1 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

I want to ask the Minister of Environment whether the Nunavut

government will be included in this council, whether they will have any ties to this body, or whether they will be able to make presentations to the Nunavut Marine Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Minister of Environment, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take his question as notice and respond when I have the information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. The question has been taken as notice. Moving on in Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Question 241 – 3(3): Nunavut Housing Trust Equipment Options

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the Hon. Fred Schell. Mr. Speaker, my questions are concerning the Nunavut Housing Trust and telehandlers that were purchased for the construction of the SIP units.

When the Nunavut Housing Trust construction is completed, what does the Nunavut Housing Corporation plan to do with the telehandlers that were provided to the LHOs for the construction of the SIP units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt, for that question. We're considering selling them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Your first supplementary, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason I'm asking is that these telehandlers are being used by local housing organizations not only for the construction of the units but for other purposes as well, such as snow removal, moving crates around the yard, and replacing fuel tanks. This is a cost savings for the LHOs and probably to the government.

Will local housing organizations have the option of keeping the telehandlers when the Nunavut Housing Trust construction is completed? If not, will the minister commit to working with his officials on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. We are going to be working with the LHOs. If the LHOs that have a positive balance in their budget, that have means of paying for repairs and paying for restoring these units, and that have trained personnel operating, we will definitely look at it. If that's the case and they can prove that to us, then we will be giving them those telehandlers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Ms. Ell.

Question 242 – 3(3): Pilot Treatment Program

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. The hon. member also holds the portfolio for the Department of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask about alcohol and drug abuse, and other addictive practices otherwise known as substance abuse. It is quite important for families in their homes to have an available treatment centre, particularly with the amount of abuse that occurs in Nunavut.

I was pleased to hear during the Budget Address yesterday when the minister announced a pilot project treatment centre in the Kitikmeot for a short 28-day period that will include traditional Inuit methods of healing. I would like a bit more detail on this project and what that statement means. The government, through the *Tamapta* Action Plan, stated that they're going to be utilizing more Inuit customs in addressing the abuse issues amongst their residents.

Could the minister provide more details on the treatment program he announced that would be based in Cambridge Bay? Can the minister clarify exactly what this program is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Ms. Ell for the very important question. As we all know, alcohol issues are a serious matter in Nunavut. When I was the Minister of Justice, we determined that most of the violence in Nunavut is attributed to the irresponsible use of alcohol and it causes a lot of social issues for our territory.

There has been a lot of talk over the years, I recall, ever since the year 2000, to start up an addictions treatment centre and there have been attempts to do that. What we determined that we will try in Cambridge Bay this year is what we call a mobile addictions treatment centre. There is a facility there right now that can be used.

I don't have all the details, but the intention is to use land-based programs, involve elders, and provide some support to the individuals so that they don't just come for 28 days and then go home. When they go back to their communities or back into their homes, they have people whom they will be living with or associating with. I also understand that these folks need their support to overcome their addiction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Your first supplementary, Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the October 2011 session, the government presented the 2012-13 business plan that we reviewed and I didn't recall seeing any funding set aside for the maintenance or operations of a new facility. Can the minister provide information to this House today about the facility? Although he stated that he didn't have much information

about the proposed facility in Cambridge Bay, can the minister tell me if the facility is already owned by our government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Ms. Ell for the question. If I understand her question correctly, I believe there's a facility in Cambridge Bay that's directly across the street from my constituency office. The two-storey facility used to be an old hostel for children coming into Cambridge Bay. That facility has actually been used in the past for a 28-day program by the wellness centre in Cambridge Bay. So there is a facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Your second supplementary, Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify to the House whether or not they took into consideration other communities in the Baffin region or in the Kivalliq region, for example? I'm asking about other pilot projects for addictions treatment since the minister spoke about providing future substance abuse treatment in communities for individuals with alcohol or, in particular, new addictive drugs. My question is whether this pilot program will surface in other communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Ms. Ell for the question. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is it's a pilot project. It's going to be monitored quite closely for results. If it's successful and works in Cambridge Bay and the Kitikmeot, then there would likely be what we call mobile... They will utilize it in other regions and other communities in Nunavut. As I said in my budget speech yesterday, we need this particular project to succeed because it's so important to our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Your final supplementary, Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the program succeeds, it can provide a lot of benefits in the foreseeable future for individuals in the north. If individuals are abusing substances, whether it is alcohol or drugs, these abusers require a facility to provide treatment. Many individuals have to go to extra-territorial facilities to get treatment. Can the government provide an update on whether they have any plans to open up a facility during our current session or shortly in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Ms. Ell for the question. I didn't quite catch the tail end, but the mobile addictions treatment centre, I believe, is part of our business plan, so it will be discussed in COW. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Oral Questions. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Ningeongan.

Question 243 – 3(3): Capital Planning Priorities and Processes

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister is aware, the government's 2012-13 capital estimates included funding for projects to construct new hamlet offices or renovate existing hamlet offices in the communities of Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Clyde River, Gjoa Haven, and Kugluktuk. As a former mayor, the minister is well aware of the need for municipal governments to have adequate facilities.

The Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet has indicated that one of its priorities is a new hamlet office. Can the minister outline the process and criteria by which his department determines whether or not to provide funding for new hamlet offices? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that question. I concur with the member's statement that all hamlets in Nunavut face a big challenge due to the outdated infrastructure existing in their communities. We have many

communities that haven't had replacements for many years.

The communities the member referenced have had some infrastructure replaced or renovated, with some communities getting new municipal offices shortly, and that is good to see developing. However, it is unfortunate that we cannot undertake all of our replacement projects at once, so we have to develop priorities on which projects proceed first and to have an inventory of what is replaced and what is required to be replaced. The hamlets may have to change their capital plans accordingly.

The Nunavut Community Infrastructure Advisory Committee was established to review capital plans and their mandate is to provide direction on which capital projects are the immediate priority and which can be deferred. They have technical personnel and local representatives, including mayors sitting on this committee. This committee is the main body providing feedback on the capital plan priorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Your first supplementary, Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet has identified a number of capital priorities for the community. The government's 2013-14 capital estimates will be introduced in the House later this year during our fall sitting. Can the minister update the House today on how his department is currently consulting with municipalities on their capital planning needs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you for the question. Many communities require a lot of infrastructure to replace their aging infrastructure and we want to assist them in this planning, but every community has different infrastructure priorities with some more urgent projects included.

As I alluded to earlier, NCIAC is our main contact point and this body has representatives from the government and elected representatives. This committee is our main recommender when it comes to prioritizing the projects and we try to deal with projects the communities submit as priorities within the committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Your second supplementary, Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Minister of Finance's Budget Address stated, and I quote, "Having surveyed all communities about their capital needs, the Department of Community and Government Services thinks we would need to spend about \$6 billion over 20 years." Would the minister be willing to table a copy of the results of his department's capital needs survey in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister responsible for Community and

Government Services, Minister
Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for asking that question. Here in Nunavut, there is tremendous need for infrastructure, whether it is for housing or other capital projects. We require a lot of infrastructure to replace the existing infrastructure which is dilapidated and aging, some of which was created prior to the Territory of Nunavut being established.

It is quite noticeable that the buildings are aging quite rapidly. In order to pay for the new infrastructure, we will require a large capital base to fund all of the required projects. Further, once our infrastructure inventory study is completed, it will be quite complicated to try to plan for the entire infrastructure that is required. If and when it becomes possible to table the information the member has requested, we will make it available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Your final supplementary, Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all recognize that the government's budget is tight and that we must be realistic about what we can afford. The next federal budget is expected to be introduced in the House of Commons next month. Can the minister update us today on his department's efforts to work with the federal government to obtain support for important infrastructure investments in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to this issue, it is an ongoing battle to try to locate funding for projects within Nunavut as we have to continually search for funding.

The annual funding that we receive from the federal government continues to barely meet our needs and we expect this funding restriction to continue in the foreseeable future. I'm sure it won't stop in the future years. We continue to hold dialogue with our federal government agencies and departments. We also meet with them to look for additional funding that may be available. We also work cooperatively with our Member of Parliament to try and look for funding.

I know that whenever a meeting is held or if our Premier is having a meeting with the Prime Minister or if ministers are having a meeting, this government and its representatives all reiterate Nunavut's needs and continue to hammer away about our need for funding to meet our needs if Nunavut is to move forward and progress with the proper infrastructure that requires funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Oshutapik.

Question 244 – 3(3): Polar Bear Research Methods

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct

my question to the Minister of Environment. Earlier in his Minister's Statement, he stated that helicopters will be the main instrument in completing their designated polar bear population surveys.

With the fairly long history of aerial surveys for polar bear populations in our lands and with scientific priorities placed on the actual numbers of the bears and not much else, the priority has always been on the population numbers. Although this particular population survey will provide more scientific data, which is welcome, my question will include whether or not there is a community component in these areas that will provide benefits. It would be good to see tangible benefits coming from this project.

Is it true that the surveys will only be using helicopters to conduct their population studies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. Minister responsible for the Department of Environment, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Oshutapik for that question. The population survey that was initiated last year primarily used a helicopter to conduct their surveys in the Baffin Bay sub-region, using the communities of Pond Inlet, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq as their bases, also in the lands south of Qikiqtarjuaq, reaching "*Ittajarilik*." They started the survey across from Pond Inlet on Bylot Island and continued their survey southwards using the helicopter. Ever since they started the survey, they have consulted

with the local HTOs and included local assistants and representatives who partook in all of the flights near their local land use areas.

Whenever the government conducts a survey, whether it is for polar bears or other types of animal population studies, we try to provide local benefits to all of Nunavut. We try to reinforce the fact that Nunavut is being a good steward of its renewable resources, that we manage our populations through scientific and other means, and that we're not just abandoning our stewardship and required surveys. This survey will also provide much needed data we require to this end. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Your first supplementary, Mr. Oshutapik.

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister know when the polar bear surveys will be completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. Minister responsible for the Department of Environment, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This particular polar bear survey has no completion date at this time and we will continue to conduct the survey insofar as we can continue to fund this comprehensive survey. At this time, this study began in the Baffin Bay area and will continue throughout the rest of the management area this calendar year. As per my earlier statement, the results of this survey may be available in 2013. At the very least, the preliminary results should be available.

The survey I was speaking of in the Baffin Bay area may be completed this year and definitely by next year, but the polar bear surveys will be ongoing in the other management areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Your second supplementary, Mr. Oshutapik.

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This survey that you stated will be ongoing will eventually reach other management areas, starting from the area you mentioned. When these management area survey requirement dates are reached and the survey finally reaches their area and the results are in, is that the only way you can change the quota, only when you have all the data?

We are asked to harvest only a few female polar bears, with the majority being male polar bears. Most communities are asked to follow male-centric ratios and I was wondering whether this can be looked at only after this survey team finally completes the surveys in our area since you said this was an ongoing population survey. Do I understand that only after a management area is completed, this can be looked at? Based on your statements, the initial results will be available in the year 2013.

Will we be able to put a more equitable ratio allowing more females to be harvested than our current polar bear quota, which penalizes communities if they go past a certain number of females killed? I was wondering if the minister can respond to this aspect of the current situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. Minister responsible for the Department of Environment, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, although the number of surveys has increased and when the required survey dates for these areas are reached, we will continue to conduct these surveys. Out of the questions the member asked, I will answer the last one.

With respect to the statement about limiting or restricting the female polar bear harvest, that is not a legal restriction. It is a management decision made by the local HTOs within the parameters of the MOU that they have agreed to for their management areas. The particular female and male ratios are set and usually the communities pick the male-centric ratio. At this point, this ratio still stands and there are no restrictions on harvesting females.

However, when this ratio that is agreed to governing the MOU is surpassed, it may affect their quota for the following year or vice versa. If they have harvested more males in a given year or have not reached their quota, these are placed back into the overall quota for that area. That is how things are currently managed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Your final supplementary, Mr. Oshutapik.

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for your answer. Yesterday or another day, you referred to surveys. I believe you said that *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* would be applied in

all the planned population surveys. I don't exactly understand this statement. Perhaps being of a younger generation, I don't know how Inuit conducted surveys on polar bears. I wonder if there is any written statement on how *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit* is to be used in population studies of any animal surveys. I would be happy if you could clarify that.

Furthermore, when speaking about polar bear quotas, I wonder where this ratio includes the penalizing of a community stems from. Where is this allowed in the NLCA? If a community over-harvests females in a particular year where our quotas were already quite limited, we are then penalized. So I wonder where it states in the NLCA that a community shall be penalized. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. Minister of Environment, Minister Arreak

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we refer to the term *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit*, it includes many things, particularly the lessons Inuit have learned over time and through their survival and subsistence on wildlife species. This includes sharing with other clans the lessons learned from our ancestors and passed down since time immemorial. It includes our present amalgamation of knowledge of subsisting on and living with the animals, including polar bears, caribou, and other primary food source species throughout Nunavut. This accumulated knowledge of the behaviour and cycles of these animals of Inuit passed down through generations and is still known

by some today, which forms *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit*.

With respect to the NLCA and wildlife matters, the NWMB has been empowered to manage wildlife matters under Article 5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, which deals with wildlife issues. Further, when they are establishing quotas on particular species under the NLCA, they have to submit their decision to the appropriate minister who can then accept, reject, or vary their decision. These are the powers given to the minister under Article 5 of the NLCA. In following the process laid out therein, that is how we arrive at these MOUs with the various communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 245 – 3(3): Audit of the Nunavut Housing Trust

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed towards the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

I want to follow up on some of the questions that I had asked yesterday. We learned yesterday that the minister was putting forward, through the Deloitte and Touche accounting firm, to do a forensic audit into the Nunavut Housing Trust and Affordable Housing Initiative programs. In his reply, the minister had said, "Basically that's what the federal government is looking for in order to give us some more money for more public housing."

After I was reading the *Hansard* and thought about it, I'm just wondering if the minister could clarify if that's what federal government officials had told you was that they needed to have a forensic audit to be able to give our territory the needed money to build the houses that we need, according to the housing survey. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to correct the wording of forensic audit. It's not a forensic audit, but it is an audit. Basically the federal government is not convinced that we have everything in place in order so that the same event doesn't happen again. They're not convinced that it was just simply an over-commitment. Basically they would like some more details as to exactly what happened.

Like I said yesterday, we're not going to be trying to... . There's no witch hunt here, but we want to know who is responsible for making decisions that created this monstrous overrun and hopefully we can correct it. Like I say, we just want to know who made the decisions, why they made the decisions, and if it was a mistake, we will accept that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Your first supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that clarification. From my understanding, there's a big difference between a forensic audit and

an audit, which then brings me to my next question. The Nunavut Housing Corporation already paid for an audit and now we're doing a second audit. What specific details is the federal government looking for, which obviously is different from the first audit, to be able to release the money or provide us with more funding? Specifically, what details does the federal government want? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. The original audit was basically just on financial issues and it was determined that there was no money missed as far as people didn't take money out of it. It was spent and it was spent on materials and housing, etcetera.

What we're trying to find out is why there were over-expenditures. We're basically looking at both the housing trust and the initiative and find out, on all the different programs, on the SIP units, on the stick built, on the five-plexes, and on the contracting, how it was done. Was it done properly? Were there some irregularities over there? That's basically what we're looking at.

We're not looking at the money issue in general, but we're looking at the procedures that were done to award these contracts, how these SIP units came about, and who decided to build these SIP units which have cost over \$600,000 when you compare that to a stick built at \$400,000. We just want to

find out those issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm a little disappointed because we went through the whole exercise of having the Auditor General of Canada come and went through that exercise with standing committees in trying to find more information. I thought we were told as a committee and as a House that everything was on track and that the mechanisms were put in place to make sure no other overspending occurred and whatnot. So I don't know why the federal government is not happy with the corrective measures that we have done. We have moved things from Arviat. I guess that involves the financial aspect of it.

The next question would be: once this audit is done, will that satisfy the federal government to be able to allow more funding to come through for housing? Obviously, we all know and the Minister of Finance, in his Budget Address, did say that housing is one of the biggest priorities that we have for the government. If we can't satisfy the federal government that we're going to be able handle money properly, then we have wasted another year. So if the minister could answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do understand your concerns on this, but we're just determining the

terms of the audit. I'm convinced that once this audit is done, it will bring up exactly what the federal government is looking for and that we will be getting money for housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Your final supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that answer. I think, again, I want to ask the question. I'm glad that the minister will be happy and convinced that this will allow funding to come through. My question was: is it going to be good enough for the federal government? Can you give us assurance that... ?

Obviously you've had conversations with the federal government. They have instructed you to do other things to make sure that things are in a row, to make sure that everything is set for us to be able to receive more funding. So your assurance is great on a territorial level, but honestly, the money comes from the federal government and I want assurance that the federal government is happy with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. Every time the Premier has met with her federal counterparts, it has always been the first thing that has been brought out is the mismanagement, they call it, of the housing trust and the incentive program and they're not happy with just simply saying it was an over-commitment.

Basically they're looking at why it went wrong in more detail.

I'm convinced that when we can prove to them that this is what happened... I'm not saying anybody did anything illegal, but there obviously have been mistakes made and we want to make sure that all the mistakes that were made, there is something in place to correct it. I'm convinced the federal government will give us money for housing once this report is done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Question 246 – 3(3): Review of the NNI Policy

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, whose department is responsible for the government's NNI Policy.

Yesterday, the Minister of Finance's Budget Address informed us that the government will take steps to "properly apply" the goals of the NNI Policy and "address fairness in government procurement." It begs the question: was NNI not applied properly? Can the Minister of ED&T explain clearly what role his department will have in this process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, the NNI Secretariat is within my department. It's a division within my department. The secretariat's main job is to make sure that the policies are looked at and everyone is agreeing within the means of what the policies are within NNI, and they make sure that some of these things are in place. They also have the NNI appeals board through that. It's an advisory. The NNI Secretariat is an advisory to the appeals board. When there's an appeal, it's a quasi-judicial board. The minister and the government have no influence or say in what they are discussing during an appeal process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Taptuna. Your first supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2010, the NNI Review Committee produced a comprehensive review report on the NNI Policy, which still, I believe, has not been completed. This is what it is and how thick it is, "Produced for the NNI Review Committee, NNI 2008-2009 Comprehensive Review Report." One of the concerns identified in the report was, and I will quote directly to be perfectly clear:

"A majority of participants in the community consultations as well as some key stakeholders indicated that the existence of 'shell companies'..." They are known also as potato companies, brown on the outside, white on the inside, larger. "...is a significant concern. These are firms that are majority Inuit-owned or Nunavut-based (51% or over) but the management of these firms does not rest with Inuit

beneficiaries with Nunavut residents. Similarly, there were significant concerns expressed regarding the fact that a large portion of the revenue and profits associated with the operation of these firms do not make it into the hands of their Inuit or Nunavummiut ownership.”

My question for the minister is clear: what does the government plan to do to address this critical issue and this unfair practice? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank the member for that very important question. Mr. Speaker, he’s absolutely right. There was a comprehensive review in 2008. It was in-depth but mostly administrative. The review was basically on operations and administrations.

For Inuit ownership, this government has no say in who becomes an Inuit owned company. Our partner, NTI, or Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, has only that jurisdiction. We have no authority as a government to say who becomes an Inuit owned company. As a government, we don’t do that. Only NTI has that authority.

As the member is well aware when he was in cabinet, he participated in improving and participated in reviewing the improvements that we wanted to do with NNI. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, there is a process that has already been put in place by the Premier’s Office to speak in more detail on how to improve

the NNI Policy with NTI. NTI has to be on board with this; they manage the article. In partnership with NTI, we intend to further improve NNI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Taptuna. Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Finance confirmed that Article 24 and the NNI Policy had not been properly adhered to and has not been consistent in applying the policy when dealing with the Inuit firm contracts, and so on. I also wanted to indicate to the members here that Article 24.3.4, if you read the article, the obligation specific to the territorial government, obligates the government to take the lead... .

An Hon. Member: A point of order.

Speaker: Alright, Mr. Curley, a point of order has been raised. Minister Kusugak, it’s your point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our friend has said that the finance minister said that that article was not being fairly dealt with. That’s not what the Minister of Finance said, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Mr. Curley, maybe you could just clarify if you were quoting from the Budget Address. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Mr. Speaker, I made it clear earlier that when the Minister of Finance inferred that the article, NNI, had not been properly consistent, I think

the Minister of Finance indicated or stated to the House that it was their government that wasn't applying it consistently. Otherwise, the government won't go ahead with the review. That is on that principle, that issue that I'm referring to in the preamble of my question.

Speaker: Thank you, Members. We will have to review the wording in the Budget Address and the wording in the *Hansard* tomorrow from the member, and then I'll deliver a ruling on that in the near future, as soon as we have an opportunity to do that.

I will allow questioning to continue. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister indicated earlier that only NTI has a certain authority with respect to Article 24. If all the members read Article 24 specifically, which is only about three pages, Article 24.3.4 obligates the territorial government to establish policies in consultation with Inuit DIO. That infers NTI. So the government has the first lead responsibility to creating the policy.

My question to the minister is this: the Department of ED&T supports the operations of the NNI Contracting Appeals Board. Yesterday, I asked how the business community can have confidence in the government's procurement activities given that it appears perfectly willing to ignore the contracting appeals board's recommendations. Will the minister commit to ensuring that the government's review of the NNI Policy gives careful consideration to making the recommendations of the contracting

appeals board's binding on the government, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley. I just want to point out that the question is still valid. It has nothing to do with the point of order that was raised and we will be doing a ruling on it as soon as we can.

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, in the department, we're constantly trying to improve how things are done administratively. We're trying to become more efficient. We created a new position just recently to implement audits and whatnot to streamline whatever we're trying to do within the NNI Policy.

The member referred to potato companies earlier in his line of questioning, and we don't have anything to do with potato companies. We have no authority or jurisdiction to name Inuit owned companies into the registry. Only one entity has that option and has that authority, and that is NTI.

Mr. Speaker, within the department, we're absolutely trying to improve our processes on how we do things. Again, I had mentioned earlier that we're trying to improve that. We're absolutely trying to get our partners to sit down and revisit this. We don't want to wait another five years, like it calls for in the land claims, to do a five-year comprehensive review. We want to deal with this immediately. We're asking our partners to come to the table and make this more efficient and

better for our Nunavut companies.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Taptuna.
Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is essential that all MLAs have the opportunity to review any proposed changes to the NNI Policy before they are approved by the cabinet. Will the minister commit to ensuring that any proposed changes to the NNI Policy are provided to all Members of the Legislative Assembly before they are finalized, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley.
Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation,
Minister Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, before we change any criteria or policy, we have to have approval from NTI. Of course, Mr. Speaker, with this forthcoming, the Legislative Assembly will have an opportunity to take a look at it. It is part of the land claims agreement. I'm pretty sure that we will have to get House approval to make any kind of changes on such things as Article 24. Also, we do have to have approval from our partners within the land claims group, that being Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Taptuna.
Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake,
Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Question 247 – 3(3): Housing Inspections

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To add to my colleague's, Mr. Elliott, questions yesterday and today, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the Hon. Fred Schell.

Mr. Speaker, with shortage of housing, there are a number of incomplete units and some units couldn't pass inspections in my community of Baker Lake. As well, some local contractors have asked how and why inspections didn't pass without being advised of what work needs to be done in order to correct these inspections. Mr. Speaker, many constituents have asked and enquired of whether our local housing needs and demands are met and if the required work for housing needs was done adequately and openly.

My question to the hon. minister is: can the minister ensure Baker Lake housing matters are addressed by including my community of Baker Lake to address access to housing issues and also to be included in any present and any future housing audits, as it would be very much welcomed, and if it were made public as well? These are the questions that have been asked on behalf of constituents.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq.
Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Schell.

Hon. Fred Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. We are having issues with some LHOs. One of them, of course, was Cape Dorset when it was handled by the hamlet. That's why we're forming an LHO there in Cape Dorset because we had the same issue. Money was spent there, but none

of the houses were fixed. I know that's an issue in a lot of communities. We are going to be doing more inspections and more assessments on these units in all the different communities because we do know that they get a certain amount of money and their job is to repair these units. I know that a lot of the times, they're not doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Schell. Your first supplementary, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is quite good to hear since this issue affects many people in Nunavut, particularly related to housing. Some young people are just starting relationships while some families are growing, but in some families, adults are still being looked after by their elderly parents. I wonder if this issue has been looked at when NHC is conducting one of their housing surveys.

I had raised this issue in one of my questions. Whenever any housing survey is being contemplated, Baker Lake should be included along with this issue of adults living with their parents. I will be raising this matter at the appropriate time, but at this time today, I just wanted to raise this matter. I have no other questions. That was just a comment, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. It was just a comment. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Question 248 – 3(3): Uqausivut Implementation

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Minister Arreak, who I call my *Annuraaqatik* from time to time.

When the Minister of Finance was making his Budget Address yesterday, he referenced that the Inuit language is of utmost importance to the government and particular funds were being set aside to that effect and noted that implementation plans were being completed. The Minister of Finance announced that the Minister of Languages had just established *Uqausivut*, which outlines what the government is planning on doing to implement the language laws. The government states that the implementation plans for kick-starting the incorporation of the language legislation requirements may be ready in time for the spring session.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Languages if this will actually occur. The period identified is two years for the completion of the implementation plans for the language legislation enforcement and this is already delayed. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I can ask the minister whether or not the announcement about the implementation schedule is indeed accomplishable and can we truthfully expect it this spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to

thank my *Annuraaqatik*, Mr. Tapardjuk, for raising that question. Yes, the plan is indeed scheduled to occur within this timeframe, with the implementation plan for the *Official Languages Act*, and it is currently being completed.

I have tasked a committee to work on refining the details and this committee will be quite important to this government. This committee will flesh out the *Uqausivut* plan by meeting regularly. At this time, this process was just initiated and the plan is to hold a weekly meeting to discuss the details as required or every other week in order to complete their work and be prepared for the spring session.

Uqausivut was tabled in June of last year and the government requested feedback from the public about the legislation and whether certain parts required revision or reworking. We received 35 responses outlining concerns about the document from the general public. Additionally, we have recommendations from the NTI board to meet with the Languages Commissioner with representatives from our department to discuss the issues related to the implementation of the *Uqausivut* plan.

We will try to complete all of this work prior to the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Your first supplementary, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to thank the minister and our expectations are that these plans can now be tabled in our

spring session. The delay is conspicuous and further, it makes one wonder whether or not this government is indeed serious about incorporating the Inuit language into its operations.

Mr. Speaker, in the same vein, I would like the Minister of Languages to clarify what is meant by the statements in the Budget Address of the Minister of Finance. It states that the government is working to incorporate the language by encouraging and promoting the Inuit languages, as well as trying to include Inuit customs and culture within the government.

“Promote” was meant with respect to government bodies and agencies or “territorial institutions” in English. There are various bodies in that category. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Languages whether he can help me picture exactly what is being accomplished to try and promote the Inuit language and culture within the government operations as well as their institutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank Mr. Tapardjuk for raising those questions. It is obvious at this time that we will never be able to please everyone with respect to the usage and incorporation of the Inuit language or culture within Nunavut. The issue is quite important to this government.

The *Taiguusiliuqtiit* language authority has been established and running for a

while. This fall in September, they distanced themselves from the government and became an arm's-length organization so that it could not be influenced.

We also implemented the official policy on September 19 that any employee could use any of the official languages in their office, particularly within government offices throughout Nunavut. Inuit wanting to speak their language may do so in their workplace. This policy has already been approved.

There is also a committee comprised of senior representatives of departments which is entitled "Tuttarviit" and they generally work on Inuit language issues, including promotion of the Inuit language.

The implementation of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* is slowly progressing. Furthermore, this legislation is also being applied by the Department of Education to promote Inuktitut from kindergarten to grade 3, which is proceeding nicely.

At this time, these programs continue to make improvements ever since they were first developed and after the approval and assent of the legislation in 2008. Progress is continuing to this day as this government considers this matter quite important in protecting the Inuit language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many residents of Nunavut await these developments with

eagerness as many Inuit are unilingual. With the addition of the new positions, the GLOs will provide a great deal of support once they have all been hired, particularly with respect to providing understanding of the various aspects of government operations.

Even though I had some expectations with respect to the implementation of the *Official Languages Act*, I noticed that there was nothing identified. I believe it was enacted by this government in 2009 and later approved in the House of Commons. It had to pass that House and also in the Senate and it became law. Mr. Speaker, my last question is: when is the *Official Languages Act* going to be coming into force? When can we expect this law to come into force? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Minister Arreak.

Hon. James Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are still working under the 1988 *Official Languages Act* that was grandfathered into Nunavut's legislation from the Northwest Territories. The new made-in-Nunavut legislation has yet to be fully enacted.

As per our earlier discussion, if we can complete the implementation plans for the language legislation, we still have plans for tabling that by the spring session. We are still expecting it to be completed by June 11, in time for the anniversary of June 11, 2011, when an official apology was made at the House of Commons, either that or coincide it with July 9, which is Nunavut Day.

The language laws were completed last June and once the revision has been made, Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* will then be able to come into force after all the requirements have been met. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Arreak. Members will note that the allotted time for question period has expired. We will move on in the orders of the day. Item 7. Written Questions. Mr. Elliott.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 011 – 3(3): Government of Nunavut Expenditures on Overtime Pay for Indeterminate, Term, and Casual Employees

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Nunavut now spends almost one-third of its budget on compensation and benefits for its own workforce. It's important that all MLAs have a clear picture of whether these expenditures are under control. It's also important to know whether our workforce is being stretched too thin. This is why I am pleased to ask the following written question to the Minister of Finance on the issue of expenditures on overtime, which is quite brief, so I will read it now.

1. Expressing the data in a comparable format to that which was provided by the Department of Finance in its return to Written Question 15 – 2(2), what were the Government of Nunavut's expenditures on overtime pay for indeterminate, term, and casual employees during the 2009-2010, 2010-11, and 2011-12 (to date)

fiscal years for each of its departments and Crown agencies?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. Mr. Ningeongan.

Item 13: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters

Committee Report 013 – 3(3): Bill 35, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 35, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 35 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. The member is seeking unanimous consent for the report of the standing committee on Bill 35 to be referred immediately to the Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There being none and Bill 35 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills . Item 17. Motions. Mr. Ningeongan.

Item 17: Motions

Motion 022 – 3(3): Extended Sitting Hours and Days

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting days and hours that the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the winter 2012 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour. Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Mr. Rumbolt.

Item 18: First Reading of Bills

Bill 34 – An Act to Amend the Integrity Act – First Reading

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, that Bill 34, *An Act to Amend the Integrity Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in

favour. Any opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 34 has been read for the first time.

Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 24 and Bill 35 with Mr. Tapardjuk in the Chair.

Before we proceed to the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break. Thank you.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 14:59 and Committee resumed at 15:27*

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Tapardjuk) (interpretation): Thank you for returning to your seats. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bill 24 and Bill 35. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would like to begin the clause-by-clause review of Bill 35. Following the review of Bill 35, we would like to commence the review of Bill 24 and the Department of Education. If we have finished this department, then we will proceed with the review of the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Do we agree that we

will consider Bill 35 and Bill 24 in Committee of the Whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 35 – An Act to Amend the
Nunavut Tobacco Tax Act –
Consideration in Committee**

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will be considering Bill 35. Do you have any opening comments on Bill 35? Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do. Do you wish for me to proceed?

Chairman (interpretation): Yes.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to speak about Bill 35, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Tobacco Tax Act*.

Bill 35 will increase the tax on cigarettes from 21 cents per cigarette to 25 cents per cigarette, an increase of \$1 per package. Loose tobacco will rise from 14 cents per gram to 20 cents per gram. Nunavut's tobacco tax rate on cigarettes will become the third highest in Canada, after the Northwest Territories and Prince Edward Island.

The main goal of this tax increase is to reduce tobacco use among Nunavummiut. It will also increase tax revenue. The government intends to utilize some of these funds to contribute to smoking prevention and cessation programs across the territory. Officials from my department will continue to monitor tobacco consumption in Nunavut to determine the effectiveness of this strategy.

Mr. Chairman, I would be pleased to take questions. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Do you have witnesses that you would like to bring to the table? Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms. Minister Peterson, for the record, please introduce your witnesses. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Chris D'Arcy, the Deputy Minister for the Department of Finance, and to my left is Anne Macintosh, Legislative Lawyer from the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Please feel welcome, Mr. D'Arcy and Ms. Macintosh. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation have comments? Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as we begin consideration of Bill 35, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*.

Bill 35 implements an announcement that was made in yesterday's Budget Address. As members will recall, the Minister of Finance announced that the government "will raise the tax by 4 cents per cigarette, or \$1 per pack of 25. The tax on loose tobacco will rise from 14 cents per gram to 20 cents per gram. Based on current consumption, these measures will produce additional revenue next year of \$3 million. We will use a portion of these new revenues for smoking prevention and cessation programs."

Members urge the minister to publicly clarify in detail the government's plans with respect to how it will allocate tobacco tax revenues for these purposes, and to subsequently report annually to the House on its actions. It is also important for the Department of Finance to work with the Department of Health and Social Services to evaluate the impact that increases in tobacco taxes have on reducing consumption of the product.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. The standing committee recommends the passage of Bill 35 to all members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Before we proceed with the line-by-line review, I would like to remind the members that we will be open to anyone who would like to make comments on the opening comments.

I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have 10 minutes to speak, and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may speak more

than once to a matter under discussion but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken. Are there any general comments? Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the questions that I have concerns paragraph 5, where you're talking about the department monitoring tobacco consumption and the effectiveness of the strategy. I'm wondering: for monitoring purposes, how will you determine if the increase in the tax is actually deterring people from purchasing? Are you expecting a decrease in sales? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are expecting a decrease in sales. We monitor it through the reports that retailers provide to the Department of Finance when they submit their reports. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of what the minister has said, the reason why this is being done is to deter people from becoming addicted to the substance and, I guess, also doing it when they're youth.

Are there going to be possibly stiffer penalties on individuals who purchase or retail outlets that provide cigarettes to minors? If we have six-year-olds and eight-year-olds who are smoking and addicted to cigarettes, then obviously

someone is providing that to them. If the legal age for purchasing them is 19 years of age, someone is doing that. If we're going to clamp down on this and if we're serious about not having people addicted, then are these measures that your department will be coming forward with? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. He raises some very good points. It's unfortunate and a sad fact of life that smoking tobacco products is addictive. The earlier you start smoking, even in some cases as young as six, you will become addicted. It is very difficult to kick that addiction. Yes, we will be looking into it. There is the *Tobacco Control Act* that we can utilize. Yes, it's very serious in Nunavut. More than 70 percent of our entire population smoke. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the other things in terms of prevention as well, I know this was discussed at my last hamlet council meeting when I was attending in Arctic Bay, there was a concern of individuals smoking out in front of businesses. I think that's something that needs to be looked at and addressed as well.

I know there are fines that can be levied if people are not smoking a certain distance from the buildings. I don't think that's enforced or probably has ever been enforced. If the government is serious about clamping down on

different things like this, then maybe that needs to be passed on to the minister responsible to have the staff deal with this and follow through.

In terms of the decrease in sales as a deterrent by increasing taxes and having cigarettes go up, the last time that there was a tax increase was 2006. Could the minister confirm that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Yes, the last time there was a tax increase on tobacco and loose tobacco was in 2006.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the main determining factor for effectiveness will be the decrease in sales and there was an increase in 2006 and, as you said, all of the retailers actually report back on sales, I'm just curious: what was the percentage decrease or how many cigarettes less were sold as of 2006, when the taxes were raised? Just as an indication of possibly what we can see happen once this is passed, what type of a percentage decrease there will be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Actually, Mr. Chairman, the

smoking increased after the last tax increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So you're actually asking us to pass a bill that will actually increase smoking in the territory, based on the results of the last go around in terms of raising the prices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Actually, Mr. Chairman, the taxes did not increase the smoking. As I mentioned earlier, smoking tobacco is very addictive. It's a very powerful drug. There are people in Nunavut who will smoke regardless. At the time, there was a tax increase, but there wasn't an effective tobacco reduction and cessation program.

As I said in my opening comments, these taxes would be used to help the tobacco reduction and cessation program that the Department of Health and Social Services has rolled out recently. There has been a lot of publicity. We recently had a community feast. I was up at the Iqaluit Inuksuk High School and there were 300 or 400 people. So there is a growing awareness in Nunavut that smoking is harmful to your health to the extent that it kills you.

When you smoke long enough, you become addicted. Now we are hoping that we can use these taxes to fund programs that will educate people about the dangers of smoking. Don't start

smoking and, if you smoke, try to quit. We're putting supportive mechanisms in place to provide people with programs that will assist them to quit smoking.

So taxes don't cause people to smoke; nicotine causes people to smoke. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for actually bringing up the part about where the funds will go and be directed in terms of the increase in taxes. Again, I think one of the things we have often said is that we don't want to continue to increase taxes and tax individuals in our communities because money is stretched tight already, but at the same time, I think we need to balance it with healthy living and healthy lifestyle choices. So there's always that thin line that I think we walk to try and help our constituents to make healthier lifestyle choices.

I continue to feel, with all the pushing I have for Nutrition North Canada and the idea of a fair program coming out that way, sometimes I want to make sure I make the right decisions when we're passing legislation. So I was wondering, maybe to ease my mind a bit better in terms of proving this tax is effective, if he could commit to maybe coming up with other indicators than just the actual decrease in sales.

When we were having our in-camera meetings, he mentioned something about a toolbox and the increase in tax was one tool that was being used. Perhaps if there are other tools in the toolbox, maybe he could expand on what those tools are so

it could put me at more ease when we're doing this. I don't want to increase taxes that are going to actually be ineffective. I want it to be effective, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question and I appreciate his concern. There was a framework for action tabled in the House on October 28, 2011 entitled "Tobacco Has No Place Here," Nunavut Tobacco Reduction Framework for Action, 2011-2016. Areas for action through this tobacco framework is there's got to be "Strong Leadership," that's right in the centre, "Target Youth and Schools; Strengthen Cessation Activities; Enhance Regulatory Enforcement; Monitor and Adjust Taxation; Research, Monitor and Evaluate; and Increase Community Awareness."

Now, this is a framework for action put out by the Department of Health on behalf of the Government of Nunavut and we can't take these strategies and frameworks lightly. The Department of Health is very committed and very serious about reducing smoking and helping people to not even start because it does have a serious health impact on our communities. People who smoke long enough really suffer. It's costly to communities and to families. Anybody who has had a relative suffering from lung cancer, 90 percent of lung cancer is attributable to smoking. I have seen the horrible effects of smoking.

We're not raising the taxes just to collect taxes. I have indicated that the bulk of this money will go to this tobacco

reduction strategy of the Department of Health. The Department of Health will have mechanisms in place to monitor the impact of the tobacco reduction strategy over the next five years. The Department of Finance will monitor, through our assistance, the increase or decrease in the sales of tobacco products. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we generate about \$13 million right now in taxes off of cigarettes and the sale of tobacco. I think the estimate is about \$2.9 million with the increase in tax. Hopefully, with the increase in tax, that will go down so the amount coming to the government will actually be less.

You did commit in your opening comments about the utilization of funds to work towards smoking prevention and cessation programs. I'm just wondering: what is the government's commitment to that? With the \$13 million plus \$2.9 million or let's say roughly \$3 million, there will be \$16 million that will be generated annually on taxes from cigarettes and tobacco. What's the dollar figure that will be going to cessation programs across the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for his question. It will be an incremental tax, which is around, like you said, \$2.9 million to \$3 million. As everybody here knows, the Department of Health, as I mentioned yesterday in the Budget

Address, gets the largest amount of funding annually of all departments. A portion or perhaps all of the taxes are collected on the other \$13 million or \$14 million. It does go to the Department of Health indirectly to help people with health issues, including health issues attributable to smoking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, when we're actually looking at Bill 35, I'm just wondering if his department is serious about diverting funds to continue to go to cessation programs and smoking prevention programs. How come there is nothing within the bill that actually says a certain percentage will be allocated? To me, that would just make it stronger within what they want to do with the funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott. Apparently Mr. Elliott doesn't trust me. I'm very committed to this and I said \$2.9 million to \$3 million growth in incremental funding. This is not a matter for law, but it will be a policy. So you can rest assured that we're not going to tax people and then use the money for something else. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think it's a matter of trusting the

minister. There is a minister, but there's also a bureaucracy and there are also policies. I know it's a big department and he has a heavy load with both Health and Social Services and Finance, and sometimes things get slipped through.

I still constantly reflect back after three years of doing this and listening to other ministers, especially former ministers responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, telling us, I think the quote was, "delivered on time and within budget." There were policies there. There were regulations there and stuff went awry. I'm not putting into question the minister's trust and I hope he's not taking it that way.

We're talking about taxes and increase in taxes. Is his department also thinking about possibly putting taxes on things like alcohol and other ways of creating revenue to try and deter individuals from becoming addicted to other addictive substances? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the clarification and question. Mr. Chairman, not at this time. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Firstly, I will make general comments with respect to Bill 35, which is the only means of taxing our residents, generally regarded as sin taxes for consumption of alcohol and tobacco products. These are our only means of raising taxes as the Nunavut government. We ought to thank

our residents who smoke and drink alcohol since they provide extra revenues to our government. That is how I understand Bill 35 to mean.

With respect to that, I personally dislike this bill. The reason why I don't like the bill is because it has a hopeful foundation. The government hopes that if it raises the costs of smoking, more residents will be forced to quit. However, this addiction is one of the strongest addictions and most smokers will not be quitting anytime soon.

If we're trying to stop smoking, we have to work on an anti-smoking strategy as a government. The focus should not just be on school age children, as the current strategy is being done right now, but all workplaces in Nunavut ought to be included to outline the dangers of tobacco for all of our residents. This government should not be raising taxes on the backs of our smokers. If we drafted a bill or strategy that promotes the dangers of smoking to all facets of our society and to notify them of the dangers, I think that this would be more effective.

Most smokers are being informed that due to their bad habit, the cost of cigarettes will be raised. On the other hand, to have false expectations that this will lead to more people quitting smoking is, in my opinion, not conducive to making progress in this field. It is quite obvious that the government expects to raise extra revenue, but I cannot agree with raising revenue from our poorest citizens who smoke.

I believe that this government has the option to raise other kinds of taxes to

ensure that we have the needed tax revenue. However, we should be strengthening our public health promotional programs on smoking cessation in order to get our residents to see the health effects and to quit with the assistance of these programs.

At this time, this government seems to be saying that we are trying to keep our people addicted by virtue of drafting this legislation that will become Bill 35. It will be noted that across the board, every package of cigarettes has been increased by \$1. So if you buy a pack, you are paying that extra dollar. With that being enacted, I have some concerns about this initiative because I think our focus should be on anti-smoking campaigns that promote quitting smoking.

Another reason is that tax revenue raised is a limiting factor for our Nunavut government, especially since every dollar we raise in tax revenue is automatically reduced from our federal government operational funding. This annual funding has several contingencies. When our government raises taxes past a certain amount, the federal government deducts the additional funds via a claw back of tax revenue overage.

I want to ask about this aspect of the revenue we have to return. Based on the figures, the extra tax revenue raised will be over \$20 million if Bill 35 is approved, at least close to an additional \$20 million taxes raised for smoking cigarettes. My question is: does the federal government claw back some of the GN's funds if they surpass a certain amount? That is my question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, under the TFF, a certain amount would be clawed back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, one of the other reasons that I would like to state under general comments is I'm hopeful that there will be a reduction in the number of cigarette smokers out there. It is something that would be wonderful, but I'm also concerned that we are applying this only for the cigarette smokers.

There are two main taxes that we apply to the cigarette smokers and alcohol consumers and petroleum. The minister stated that there's a certain percentage that is clawed back by the federal government. What he didn't say was how much of that percentage is clawed back by the federal government. That would be useful information to us.

I do support the idea of setting up a strategy by this government. I'm concerned about the people who are addicted. There should be programs set up for smokers and these monies will be used for treatment programs, support services, and so on, but it also raises the taxes that will be taken by the government. Could the minister indicate to the House if you're going to be setting up a strategy not only focused on one point?

I am very pleased to hear that there's information going on out there about the

harmfulness of cigarettes, but I don't see any improvements or additional cessation with increasing the taxes. I would urge the government to set up a strategic program and I would like to ask the minister: is there's going to be something such as that set up?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Curley for his comments. Mr. Chairman, I'm just reading a couple of reports here.

The recommendation from the chief medical officer of health's 2009 *Tobacco Control Act* Annual Report recommendation is "That the Department of Health and Social Services research the feasibility and effectiveness of increasing taxes on cigarettes and tobacco products in Nunavut, and if appropriate make an application to the Department of Finance for an increase. Similar measures in other jurisdictions have been shown to result in a decrease in smoking rates among [youth]."

The 2010 report talking about smoking, to effectively address this issue, "the forthcoming *Nunavut Tobacco Reduction Framework for Action* must be approved in conjunction with the associated funding and resources to support its implementation. Tobacco use in Nunavut is an enormous drain on the healthcare system. More importantly, it is robbing Nunavummiut of years of healthy living."

As I mentioned earlier, there's a "Tobacco Has No Place Here," Nunavut Tobacco Reduction Framework for

Action, 2011-2016. I appreciate my colleague for asking this question because, in there, one of the recommendations is to “Monitor and Adjust Taxation.” With the department’s priority actions, “With the Department of Finance as the lead determine appropriate taxation rates on tobacco products that support the tobacco reduction framework for action. Key Measurable Outcomes: If adjustments are made to tobacco taxation rates, the impact on sales will be measured.” That’s what the Department of Finance will do.

The Department of Health will work on their areas for action. This is in the framework for action. “Increase Community Awareness; Target Youth and Schools; Strengthen Cessation Activities; Monitor and Adjust Taxation; Enhance Regulatory Enforcement; Research, Monitor and Evaluate.” So it is a very comprehensive framework for action to target tobacco in Nunavut.

It would be impossible to say that we could eliminate it, but we’re going to target it, hopefully there will be a lot of young people, kids who will never smoke and if they do smoke, they will quit smoking, and hopefully there will be adults who will show leadership and they will quit smoking.

I know it’s a very personal matter. I have friends in Cambridge Bay who are trying to quit smoking and they tell me that smoking is very difficult. With the support of this government, I told them that we will do everything we can to help you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I completely believe that statement and support these initiatives. Furthermore, I’m expecting that to change as I agree with the program moniker, “Tobacco Has No Place Here.” I really appreciate that type of program, but I believe that we have to attack it from all angles, with different programs.

Here in Nunavut, we have made great strides in addressing the issue of smoking, especially in the home and workplace. When we were children, our houses would be thick with tobacco smoke. I believe that was the practice at the time and it occurred everywhere.

>>*Laughter*

That is no longer the case today. Many people are aware of the effects of cigarette smoke and of non-smokers’ feelings, so they now go outside to smoke cigarettes. I am thankful and appreciative of their efforts to accommodate us non-smokers.

If we were to concentrate on promotion and have very clear anti-smoking strategies, then it would help, unlike this tobacco tax, which I don’t believe will have any effect on those who smoke in enabling them to quit. Some of these smokers are also the poorest of our citizens who are addicted and will require assistance to quit. We have to provide some sort of assistance, even perhaps visitation by people who have quit.

If this tax is enacted, it will be borne mostly by these invisible smokers who will continue to smoke until the end of their lives. Due to this reason, I would like to see more emphasis on the

initiatives the minister spoke to. Although I believe the words, I think we have to take more action on anti-smoking initiatives and to have funds set aside for this purpose, perhaps not just part of the taxes we raise.

We need to dedicate the \$20 million towards health and anti-smoking programs and initiatives that is raised by our cigarette smokers via taxes to our Nunavut government. That is a large amount. I would prefer if our government backed it up by putting all the tax revenues raised towards these anti-smoking programs. The government's position would become that much more believable if they stated that the \$20 million will be set aside for these programs.

I would like to know if the minister can take this into consideration as the initiatives he spoke to seem complicated and may require a lot of funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Curley for the comments. Mr. Chairman, just to give you an idea of how serious smoking is in Nunavut, I did some calculations the other night based on the 2010-11 numbers. There are only 31,000 people in Nunavut. There's an equivalent of 65 million cigarettes sold and smoked in Nunavut. Now you do the math. That's how serious it is. This is probably the single largest health issue we have in Nunavut.

It's in our interest as leaders of this government and this territory to help

people quit smoking. I agree with Mr. Curley. We've got to come up with programs, we've got to educate people, and we've got to help them. Once you're addicted to nicotine, it's a hard addiction to shake.

And make no mistake, Mr. Chairman, tobacco companies know what they're doing. They are designing and engineering their cigarettes to addict people and addict people very young. Age to them means nothing. It's all about customers. You're addicting your customers to a lifetime of smoking. When you're addicted, eventually you're going to develop tobacco-related diseases and illnesses that are going to make you suffer a very horrible life or it will take your life. So that's how serious this matter is in Nunavut.

I've got the health indicator numbers; I don't need to read them out. In the Nunavut Report on Comparable Health Indicators for 2011, tobacco use in Nunavut among our young people in the population in general is two to three to four times higher than anywhere else in Canada. We know that health care costs are going through the roof up here, so we have to do something. It isn't necessarily about the money. The federal government may claw back some taxes, but we will be saving lives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the previous questions were on matters I had wanted to raise as questions, but I wish to ask the minister about the statement he made in reference to the percentage that would

be set aside for tobacco cessation programs from the proposed tax increase. He stated that once the additional tax has been implemented, certain anti-smoking and tobacco cessation programs will be funded. What is included in this general statement?

Further, there was a statement about existing and future programs for the years 2011 to 2016, which was just last year, and I would like to know how effective this reduction program has been over the last year. I guess that we don't know the results at this time. What new programs will be funded via the expected tobacco taxation dollars? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Ell for the question. As I mentioned earlier, in the framework for action, there are priority actions. There are target audiences.

As I said, we're going to increase community awareness and we're going to target youth, pregnant women and their partners, parents and elders, and groups with higher tobacco use; target youth and schools and again, there are youth, teachers, and recreation coordinators; strengthen cessation activities and we will work with health care providers, community health committees; monitor and adjust taxation and we will work with the groups with higher tobacco use; regulatory enforcement; research, monitor and evaluate. This is what the funds would be used for, specific programs. It's early, but we have to see if we get approval for

this first before we can go too much further.

I met with the young folks who work in the Department of Health. There is a very dedicated core group of individuals, very dedicated and passionate to help young people to quit smoking or not to start. One of the tricks with encouraging young people not to smoke is to make it uncool to smoke. If you think it's cool to smoke, then you're probably going to smoke. There is peer pressure. There are young people who are working hard to make it uncool.

I saw for myself when I went to the opening event at the Inuksuk High School. I said there were 300 or 400 people there, there was a video, a very well done video, and a number of elders spoke on the video, older people. There was one young guy at the end and I don't know his name, but he is in the video and it struck me. If I was the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Health, that's the young guy I would take with me to talk to the big tobacco companies because he pretty much put it as bluntly as anybody that they are killing our people. I am paraphrasing.

We will work on programs and targeting specific audiences. I said 60 to 70 percent of people in Nunavut smoke. So there are going to be different programs for different people, but we absolutely have to do something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't plan on asking a lot of questions, but the number he quoted

with respect to smoking was quite high, as the minister stated 67 percent of our population in Nunavut smokes. We know many people do try and quit smoking.

The programs that he mentioned in his response didn't include any details on exactly how he would work with the cigarette manufacturers to look at ways to warn of the dangers. Can he elaborate on exactly what he will do in that respect? The manufactures put addictive substances and the addictive substance or ingredient is what makes it so hard to quit smoking. Many people truly want to quit smoking, but they're so addicted that they cannot.

I would prefer that the minister respond to that query first before I ask another question I have in mind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Ell for the question. Mr. Chairman, I'm just trying to remember dates here. On November 1, 2010, I believe, this House passed legislation called *Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*. That legislation allows this government to litigate with Big Tobacco for the damages their products have inflicted on smokers.

Now, every province and territory, I believe, with the exception of one jurisdiction, they're working on it now, but just about every province and territory has similar legislation in place to sue Big Tobacco. I don't have the exact numbers. There are four or five

provinces right now that have filed litigation against Big Tobacco and for significant amounts of money. I think Ontario has filed a suit for \$50 billion.

We're not alone here in this battle. It's recognized across Canada that it's a killer and it is killing innocent people. People are innocent in a sense that they smoke for pleasure, but they don't realize that they're smoking a product that has been engineered to addict them to a lifetime of smoking. That's just not right.

I know we passed the legislation and we went to a request for proposals. My colleague from the Department of Justice is working on that right now in terms of selecting a law firm and retaining a law firm to represent us. So when you talk about dialogue with Big Tobacco, our dialogue will be in the court. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister Peterson, for your response. Another matter the minister spoke about in his address was a program for youth specifically to prevent them from smoking in the first place and to stop them from taking that first puff of cigarettes. This program is meant to teach young children in the schools about the dangers of tobacco.

When you see people throwing butts all over the place, particularly in front of the NorthMart, outside the doors of bars, restaurants, residential units, many children or those not in schools regularly pass these places and they can easily

grab the cigarette butts. There are occasionally cigarette bins and these are legally required for commercial facilities, but many of them are unused and ignored due to vandalism and wear and tear. In the future, this is another area that requires improvement, to have proper cigarette butt bins so that people don't throw their leftover cigarettes outside of establishments.

As we all know, many children are quite observant and they practise what they see the adults doing, especially smoking. Children are quick to emulate the adults. I would like to know what the minister's thoughts are on this issue and whether he can respond to this question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms Ell for the comment. Yes, older people should show more responsibility and be good role models. If they are addicted, try to quit, but at the very least, don't butt out and just toss your butt in the street for young children to pick up. Try not to smoke around young people. We all look up to our parents and elders for leadership and guidance. I truly believe that most people who are addicted to smoking would like to quit, but when they're addicted, it's very difficult.

I hope that the older people out there who smoke will be encouraged to reduce their smoking or quit altogether so they're not out there smoking outside their houses or stores or public buildings and butting out. But if they do butt out, dispose of your cigarette in one of those butt-out containers or whatever they call

them, the ash cans. Also, it's incumbent upon owners of buildings to encourage people not to butt out outside of buildings. There are certain distances away from buildings that you can't smoke.

I'm hopeful that people will start to show leadership in their own lives as well. Don't smoke around children and if you see children smoking, encourage them not to smoke and take the cigarettes away from them. Don't leave cigarette packages in areas where kids can get cigarettes. For goodness sake, the people who are selling cigarettes to young children, that's just deplorable. There are people out there doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Ms. Ell.

Ms. Ell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, with respect to cigarette smoking in Nunavut, many people are pathetic in their addiction to smoking and you feel for them. Many people are indeed trying to quit smoking and many have asked for programs to try to quit. However, for some people, it is apparently impossible to quit smoking and other people don't even bother trying to quit smoking at all. Many of us would love to have our children be free from smoking and to never start at all.

Be that as it is, this proposal to increase the tobacco tax doesn't have any details related to assistance programs and the minister's inability to provide details on the exact amounts to be set aside for these services to provide this assistance is not enough. I wonder if an amount can be provided in the future as to how much of the taxes raised are set aside for these

assistance programs. This is of particular interest to some of us as we want to see more funds set aside specifically for smoke cessation programs and to have it funded via this taxation. It wouldn't be very good to hear that any tax revenue generated from the sin tax is used for purposes other than health.

Those are all my comments for the time being. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Ell. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Ell for the comments. I commit to Ms. Ell that these incremental taxes will be used for the purposes intended and that's to support the "Tobacco Has No Place Here" framework for action. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have one more name on my list. Mr. Oshutapik, if you have any comments.

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, have general comments on the proposed Bill 35 based on the tax revenue generated from the tobacco tax.

In my opinion, we have to take very careful consideration of this issue as many of our dearest constituents in our communities are being literally destroyed by tobacco products and they require assistance. Although they require our support and assistance, it seems we are also using this addiction to incur tax revenue from them as well or at least the government taxes them for that. The tobacco cessation program funding from

the tobacco tax revenue that the government collects, according to past statements, states that half of the revenue from the taxes is for these programs. Can these programs use the truth when trying to get people to quit smoking?

We all know that individual communities across Canada have other more addictive substances and many places have alcohol or drug treatment facilities to treat their addicted citizens. If we look at the average amount of tax revenue that will be collected per year and if there was a plan down the road to establish a facility here in Nunavut, then it could state a policy that the government should set funds aside for that purpose.

Pictures, posters, and brochures that are sent out to the public urging people to quit smoking are a good idea, but no one will ever quit their personal addiction by just using written paper. There are facilities that I spoke to that provide assistance. So if we can plan it properly, then we can also have a treatment centre for addictions. We hear from our colleagues when they speak about their constituents who want to quit their addictions but who have no place to turn to. Lots of people require more than just written materials and slogans, such as "Tobacco Has No Place Here," to be able to quit smoking cigarettes.

Some of the funds that we are continually debating, which the government expects to fall into its coffers from this tax, and that have been collected in the past are set aside for cessation and treatment programs to benefit people. Why not dedicate the entire amount collected towards an initiative to construct a treatment facility

here in Nunavut? That is my idea and I would want this considered by the department. I and many of my constituents would be extremely happy to hear that.

Nunavummiut would be much happier to hear that the tax revenue collected from them is used to provide services or a facility that can assist them and their fellow residents to combat their addictions. We know that there are facilities if you really want to get treatment because we have seen shows about addicts abusing substances ranging from crack, heroin, and methamphetamines all getting treatment in a proper facility. Once they are in a proper facility, not immediately but eventually, they are able to quit their addictions to their drugs.

If indeed “Tobacco Has No Place Here” in Nunavut, then we should be focused on providing a treatment centre for addictions from the taxes we pay, with proper attendants, counsellors, medical staff, and let us commit to making one. This is just a comment, Mr. Chairman, and it was not a question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. There was no question. Minister Peterson, if you want to respond or make a comment, please feel free to do so. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no comment.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We can now go to the clause-by-clause review. Do you have a copy of Bill 35? (interpretation ends) Clause 1. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Do you agree to Bill 35 as a whole? I did not hear. Do you agree to Bill 35 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Pursuant to Rule 62(2), do you agree that Bill 35 can immediately be placed on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Minister. If you have any closing remarks, you have the floor.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank yourself and the members of the Committee of the Whole for asking a lot of good questions. We had excellent discussion and conversation. I hope I was able to answer some of your concerns. We're very committed to this endeavour to reduce smoking in Nunavut. I think we have made a tremendous decision today.

I would like to thank the health people who have worked on this tobacco reduction and cessation strategy. In particular, I would like to thank the young folks over there and some of the older folks too, I'm sure they're watching, Alana Kronstal and her team, for the hard work they're doing and working with our young people and

other adults in Nunavut to quit smoking and not start smoking. I'm sure they're going to be very excited to get going on this in the New Year.

I would like to thank my officials at the Department of Finance and also my colleagues at the Department of Justice for working on this Bill 35. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson and your staff. This bill has been considered and can immediately be placed on the orders of the day for third reading. Sergeant-at-Arms, can you please escort the witnesses out. Thank you.

Thank you. Colleagues, we will move on to Bill 24, but before we move on to the bill, we will take a 10-minute break.

>>Committee recessed at 16:28 and resumed at 16:41

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. We will continue on with the Committee of the Whole. We have concluded the review of Bill 35.

Bill 24 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2012-2013 – Education – Consideration in Committee

We were dealing with Bill 24 and the Department of Education with Madam Minister Aariak. We will continue with her department. Do you have witnesses that you would like to bring to the table?

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Do we agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. Minister Aariak, Minister of Education, is at the witness table with her staff. For the record, please introduce your witnesses. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Good evening. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Ms. Okpik and to my right is Ms. Fanjoy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Please feel welcome, Deputy Minister Okpik and Ms. Fanjoy. We were on page G-7 yesterday. K-12 School Operations. Mr. Curley, you had a comment on this page. Please proceed, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday, some of my comments which included questions related to the graduation rates that are hovering around 40 percent for our high schools annually. The majority, about 60 percent, of our youth are not completing their secondary education. I was commenting and asking whether or not we have any ideas or reasons why these youth are not completing their final years.

We have some ideas about certain segments, such as males who prefer to be outside hunting versus attending their classes, especially the later teenage years, when males tend to no longer feel the need to attend school. That is entirely

understandable when food is required at the family table. Inuit prefer to eat the country foods that they grew up on, but this also results in their having problems later on, particularly when they are not entirely literate.

If we knew that they were illiterate, then they will not be able to complete their education. Even without expert assessment, this can be determined. In most cases, if a person has only a grade 3 or 4 literacy level while they are already in high school, they cannot complete their required courses. So what happens? Are we going to abandon this generation of students? Are we going to somehow create jobs for them?

How are we serving the people who have failed or abandoned their education? Will we always just hope for the best without any kind of strategy to provide more assistance to this group of people who are literally stuck? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank our colleague for asking that question. I believe that all of us here as well as most Nunavummiut consider this matter very important, especially with respect to large number of students who don't complete their secondary education here in Nunavut.

Quite a while back, there was a study looking at the reasons for students dropping out, but it is now dated and probably no longer relevant. At this current time, one of the ideas we have for another student dropout survey is to

augment it with a strategy focused on the reasons outlined in the survey so that we can better plan our actions through this more comprehensive study on why people quit.

We already know some of the reasons, as our colleague alluded to one of the reasons for certain segments of our student population's quitting school to pursue harvesting, along with other reasons why students quit school. This includes getting too far behind in their courses, which exacerbates their situation as they cannot catch up, and many tend to just leave school. This is a very important matter to us all.

A new program was created to try to encourage dropouts to return to high school or to get a GED in English, which is called the mature graduation program. As these people are going to school, they also are provided funding assistance through this program. I'm only mentioning these two aspects of the program. However, as my colleague noted and expressed as his concern, it is indeed very important to remember that.

Since this government wants to assist all individuals who want to return to school and if they are committed to their education, we have to provide them with assistance. This is something that can be shared through the Adult Education Branch of Nunavut Arctic College, as well as through our department's programs.

If the comprehensive study proceeds, it will provide much needed data and would be quite beneficial to our work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was the main reason for asking that question.

When we were in Ottawa, I understood it better when Paul Martin, who lobbied for funding for all of Canada, particularly additional funding for aboriginal people, helped to introduce programs, such as additional schooling or training for aboriginal people to enable them to join the workforce in the future, especially for people who are no longer in school. He was speaking about the issue which was quite understandable and which seemed to reach the heart of the problem we face, although he referred only to illiteracy in his speech.

When people are illiterate, they are unable pursue a career. They become ashamed of it, and then they usually quit their schooling. As an example, if we allocate funding to fix this problem, we can teach people to be able to read so that we're not stuck with an individual dependent on the system their entire life because they cannot read and therefore cannot get employment.

If we provide a bit more funds, we are investing in the capacity of the individual to succeed without further assistance. We need to invest in our people because, without a plan, we're just throwing these individuals to the wind, to put it succinctly in English, (interpretation ends) failure for life. (interpretation) That is not the way we ought to be dealing with this problem because 60 percent of our students are

not passing and we have to be very concerned about this number.

Every year, it is costing us over \$200 million and if we don't deal with this, we will be hit with even more demands. It seems that the funding we give to the Department of Education is only for students who are attending and passing schools. If we, as a government, are going to leave that as the status quo, we should be held accountable for our lack of planning.

We have to ensure that we include in any education strategy the students who are dropping out and ensure our system teaches them the skills to succeed in life. We shouldn't just state that as long as we can teach them to hunt, it is enough. So I believe we have to focus on more employment training skills and that is a departmental responsibility.

In closing, please ensure that you keep in consideration this issue that we have a large portion of our population that require more assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the member is totally truthful and I also believe in his comments. That is why we need to deal with this matter continually, particularly today, with the large number of dropouts and students who have left school.

There was an announcement today from the federal government about a new fund that is to provide support for people to attend adult education to enable them to

continue their education. This fund will also provide some invaluable assistance down the road in our attempts to allow dropout students as well as mature students to get their GEDs and this will also include pre-employment training or other job preparation training.

Moreover, for example, currently with the establishment of the *Education Act*, this made-in-Nunavut legislation received Royal Assent and it has been law for two years. We can expect that as the legislation and its details are implemented by the Department of Education that the numbers of graduates will increase. In the future, I have high hopes that this will be the case since this education law was made in Nunavut.

One issue I keep referring back to is the importance of cooperation between parents and schools. At this time, within the schools, we now have employees who deal with student issues, particularly those who are having difficulty or who are falling behind. There is a temporary committee struck to deal with those particular students and to provide assistance. With this type of support, students can be brought back into the fold prior to their having to leave school due to problems or schooling issues, especially if they are caught prior to their reaching that crossroad.

I will stop there, but I'm a firm believer in adult education courses and their ability to provide assistance. Additionally, we have new programs that are being created in Nunavut that will provide more assistance, such as the Rankin Inlet Trades Training Centre under the auspices of Nunavut Arctic College. Within the trade school, there

are pre-employment programs available for mining projects, construction, electricians, plumbers, and various other trades related training. It is obvious that this centre will assist us in providing more skilled workers, especially if we ensure that the people attending have the prerequisite literacy skills and grade levels that can be taught through the adult education stream. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Do you have any more questions, Mr. Curley? Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask questions in regard to K-12 in terms of staffing and staffing allocation for positions. With the changes that are being made to the graduation standards and having different streams, I was just curious to find out... I know we have school community counsellors, which provide counselling and support to students who require help, but specifically, how many of our schools actually have guidance counsellors in the community to provide guidance on which courses to take and which career path they're interested in following? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the member for asking the question. The students that require additional assistance are provided counselling by people who are available within the schools. If I'm not mistaken, he asked about how many guidance counsellors we have on hire. At this time, we have

three and a half positions that are in our schools that provide counselling for students when and if they require assistance. For example, if the student requires help in the school, they provide this assistance.

In the Baffin region, we have one position working at the Inuksuk High School here in Iqaluit and one other position working at the Pond Inlet high school, which is a half-time position. In the Kivalliq region, we have one position in the Arviat high school, one position at the Rankin Inlet high school, and another half-time position in Repulse Bay. In the Kitikmeot region, there is a position in the Cambridge Bay high school, which is also a half-time position. These are the counsellors currently on hire in our department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the three communities that I represent, if one of those schools wanted a guidance counsellor, would they contact the QSO and ask for a specific position or is it up to the principal to decide allocations of teachers and classrooms? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Each school is assessed as to the number of teachers required for that school based on the student population. The student-teacher ratio also figures into the equation and they have to look at the number of teachers prior to qualifying for a

counsellor. Perhaps if I called them a social counsellor and if the school wanted to get a counsellor position, they have to know the number of teachers in the school.

Sometimes a school will prefer to get a counsellor and trade that off with a physical education teacher. I'm just using this as a theoretical situation. Perhaps the school would prefer to get a music teacher. So they have to prioritize which teachers are the absolute minimum required to teach the courses. They can then look at the extra positions to determine what they will include, either a counsellor or another position that the school may prefer.

The overall number of teachers that has been predetermined in the assessment, however, cannot be changed within the school, but most of these issues are determined in collaboration with the local education authorities to look at which positions will be allocated within their school. My Deputy Minister, Kathy Okpik, will elaborate the details on how this determination is made, so I would like to defer it to my deputy minister to speak to the details for the time being. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Please clarify the situation further, if you would. Deputy Minister Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will just add some details to the minister's response. The DEA, along with the school principal, determines how the number of teaching positions will be allocated within the school's operations, which they review annually. This number may change

based on the growth of the student body as this determines the total number of teaching positions that are allocated, along with what kind of teachers they will hire.

It is up to each school to either lower their student-teacher ratio or to try to teach the maximum number of students and courses or to have a physical education teacher or, as the member was asking, a guidance counsellor to assist the students and the teachers in meeting the students' future educational needs. They would have to notify the department about planned changes. The local DEA and schools make these decisions. The majority of communities prefer to have more teachers than counsellors to meet their needs. However, the communities have the authority to deal with these matters.

The Department of Education also has requirements for career and education development planning when students are in grade 9 so as to determine the types of courses they will need to meet their plans prior to their reaching grade 10. As an example, they may wish to concentrate on mathematical courses or sciences, as well as what type of stream they have to be in to meet that requirement in those courses. The plans are developed, signed by the student and teacher, as well as the parents. Although this plan is initiated in grade 9, we are finding that it may be better to start this plan in grade 7 if they wish to pursue their planned courses.

We're currently reviewing this planning initiative to see if we're going to change it and it may take some time to implement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Over the last couple of years, I think there has been a lot of work in getting more elders into the schools and having them work with the students to pass on a lot of traditional knowledge and use that in the school. I think there was an announcement that the minister made last year about the elder certification that was going on for the elders. I'm just wondering if the minister would be able to give us an update as to how that's going, whether it's being successful, whether there is more of a need for elders in the school. I know it has been a short time, but just maybe a background on whether this is being successful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The elders are indeed very important to the school operations. It is also something parents want to see in the schools. Elders are the repositories of the Inuit culture, language, and historical knowledge. Elders' presence at schools may also be another reason why students want to complete high school.

We currently have 25 elders with certification who are working and we have a further 25 elders who are in the final stages of certification. Additionally, the local DEAs are also given training as to what the plans are for the inclusion of elders into school operations. Furthermore, there are elders who have not been certified, but who are working within the schools.

When the elders are going to be certified to work within the schools, the DEA has to approve that via resolution to appoint that elder during their meeting and once the elder has been appointed, the name has to be sent to the Department of Education. This includes the types of courses that the elder is certified to teach within IQ at the school. Once the department has received the resolution, the Minister of Education then issues a certificate with the name of the elder.

I hope that I answered the question properly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, you did answer the question, so thank you very much. I know one of the discussions that some of the members brought up when the elders were being talked about being put in the school was to make sure that they were fairly paid and paid in the same respect as what teachers from the south were.

Part of the increase in the budget for the Department of Education of \$8 million, a huge chunk of that, is going for compensation and benefits. Is some of that going to help pay our elders? Are they part of the Nunavut Teachers Association and the collective agreement there or are they separate from that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also wish to thank the member for asking that question. The Nunavut Teachers

Association is responsible for that program and the elders are staff of the schools, which are the employees of the local DEAs. Perhaps my deputy minister can clarify the actual organization chart as she was able to completely make it understandable and I want this to be as clear as the previous answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The elders are not part of the public service as they are not members of the teachers association, but they are the staff of the local DEAs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister yesterday talked about the ASSIST workshops that had happened or have been happening in the schools and the training that has been going on in terms of helping with embracing life and working within the suicide prevention implementation plan.

I know, in some of the questioning that I had asked the minister in the past, she had talked about, during the teachers' conference that just finished, during their professional development, that there was going to be a group of teachers who were trained in the ASIST workshop. I'm just wondering if she could report back and let us know how many teachers have been trained with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Without a doubt, this is very important and has to be included in all workplaces as frontline training. It is currently being taken and this is pleasing to see. This program is called “*Uqaqatigiigluk!* Talk About It!” This program deals with recognizing and preventing people from committing suicide and how they can try to intervene to provide assistance. Whenever there is time available, the subject is usually included in our training sessions and regional meetings.

For example, in November 2011, the Nunavut Teachers Association, along with the officials from the Department of Health and Social Services, taught this program to over 60 participants. They also included this subject for their meeting in February for the teachers’ conference but the trainers were unavailable during that time and that was unfortunate. However, the fact that it didn’t proceed is now being reviewed, along with planning for a replacement date to undertake the training.

We will keep the members informed as to what the status is with respect to the number of teachers being trained in this area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is actually taken from the implementation plan, so I’ll read. By April 2012, so next month, there should be, between Health and Social Services and the GN Department of Education, the development and implementation of a memorandum of understanding and related protocols to mandate

collaboration between Education and Health and Social Services that “will support a proactive case conferencing approach at the community level for children demonstrating indicators of behaviour that put them at risk.” I’m just wondering: has that been completed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This program is being developed by the Department of Health and Social Services in collaboration with the Department of Education. It is a pilot project in the schools. I will have my deputy minister provide clarification on the actual details. It is here in Iqaluit as it has been started in Iqaluit.

Once we see the outcome of the pilot project, we will make modifications as required after the comprehensive review, but this project was initiated here in Iqaluit. Once it has been completed and the report has been submitted after the review, it may become a program we offer in our schools, but all I can say is that it is in the initial stages. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of January 2012, there was to be an agreement “on a referral process that maintains confidentiality and addresses the needs of children demonstrating indicators of behaviours that put them at risk.” The intended or anticipated result was to establish a referral process for Health and Social Services workers and

educators. This was supposed to be completed last month. I'm just wondering if that referral process has been refined and is being used. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is currently still under development. I want to take this opportunity to express my immense gratitude to the assistant deputy minister, who has been instrumental in its development. It is still under development, but as progress is made, I will try to ensure that we keep the members in the loop. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott, do you have another question?

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of September 2011, high school level youth were to have "regular and ongoing access to training in mental health, addictions, and suicide intervention as well as support from trained school staff and community trainers." Since that was last year in September, I'm wondering if we could get an update on what's happening with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very good question. We don't have any recent updates on this matter that we can divulge. Once we have received this information, we will return to the

member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Do you have another question? Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also, for April 2012, the co-leads on this were the GN Department of Education, NTI, with other stakeholders to "Prepare or commission a research paper which summarizes (A) the evidence based on the benefits that well-designed and implemented Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs can provide to individuals and communities; (B) best practice in implementing ECD programs; and (C) options for funding ECD programs in all communities." I'm wondering if that's being taken care of as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will have to look at different components as to what is happening or what its status is or what is occurring. So once we have that information available, we will release that information to the member. We don't have that information in front of us at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So is some company or someone within the Department of Education being commissioned or tasked to do this research? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): This work is currently being developed and the ADM is the lead official in charge of the planning and is trying to complete it. I will provide that information once it has been submitted for release. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's my understanding too that with all the training that's happening with the ASIST workshops, I think the intent was to have people trained in the ASIST, but then also go on to have "train the trainers" so that it sort of perpetuates itself.

At the same time, there was a commitment through Health and Social Services and the Department of Education to compile a database of all instructors, teachers, and support staff who have taken the training, and then to compile a database to have on file the number of people who could react to different things like this. I'm wondering: is that database being compiled?

The second part of that, just to save asking another question: is this the Department of Education that's having this or is it Health and Social Services that's housing this database? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank our colleague for raising that issue. This

matter is more or less an administrative issue within operations and is the responsibility of the health and social services department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. I have one more name on my list. We are on page G-7. K-12 School Operations. G-7. Mr. Oshutapik.

Mr. Oshutapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for returning to the House and I am glad that the Prime Minister did not kidnap you.

I would like to ask my question on this issue, which is a short one. We all know that within many communities, the number of our students graduating is increasing and I am quite pleased to see this happening. I, too, am happy to see our youth passing their schooling as I never graduated and the generations behind us are having success passing high school.

With respect to the graduates we are producing and with the large number of post-secondary institutions available in our southern neighbours' jurisdictions, many of our students attending these institutions are taken aback by the demands placed on them. This is primarily due to our coursework not being at the same level as those offered in southern high schools. Therefore, our students have a harder time with post-secondary institutions.

I wonder if your department has reviewed this to determine the reasons why we're not even on par with the Alberta curriculum that we are trying to follow. At least the schools are trying to

teach the Alberta curriculum to our students. Many of our Nunavut graduates don't meet the entry requirements for attending post-secondary institutions in the south. I wonder if Alberta's high school graduates also have issues attending post-secondary institutions due to not meeting entry requirements. Does your department understand the cause for this situation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Oshutapik. Minister Aariak, I'll leave it at your discretion to answer that question, which is under G-10, or we can wait until we get to that page. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I can try to answer the question at this time. This question is frequently raised whenever we discuss education. There are various reasons as to why this occurs. Part of the reason may be that the exam is entirely in English and you have to write it in English.

There is also the math aspect; you need a number of math credits. Perhaps this is not understandable in Inuktitut. What I am referring to is credits. When students are completing their courses, they need to have a number of different subjects and minimum credits for each. The subjects increase their credits and there are certain requirements needed for each stream.

To look at another aspect, students may also run into problems unrelated to their schooling, such as those they face at home. Although the student may be studious and have a desire to succeed in school, the student still needs a proper

space for their homework and studies at home. So the parents have to offer their support to their child by providing space, breakfast in particular, and to assist them as they grow into young adults. When they are given support in this way, the student is usually successful in their studies and this really is a foundation for students to be able to complete their high school studies.

Another thing is that they have to meet all of the subject requirements as they work their way up to the higher grades and graduation. This includes the fact that parents have to work with the teachers and staff of the schools. One issue I tend to reiterate, which I shall once again state, is the absolute importance of daily attendance for every student. When students are not attending daily, it can result in them becoming left behind.

Within the schools themselves, it is also very important to assess every student that is moving up to the higher grades so as to determine what level they are at in their education. This is important since students will know what level they are at by the time they reach grade 12 and they can make adjustments as required or be able to declare that the student has indeed passed all of their requirements.

Another factor to consider is that the higher grades have math requirements, starting from grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, which they have to complete as part of their education or career plan. If they want to pursue post-secondary education after graduating from grade 12 and they have an idea and a plan, it is a lot easier to accomplish their goals. An example is students have to choose a stream that they will pursue throughout high school

when they are in the higher grades. There are many courses to choose from when they have reached high school. All of the courses don't have to be taken as long as their credits reach the required level for completing high school.

It also depends on what the student wants to learn. Hypothetically, if they want to pursue a career in the medical field, such as a nurse or doctor, and if that choice is made prior to their reaching the higher levels, then they can choose the appropriate courses to take to be able to take further steps after high school. Alternatively, if they want to get into the trades field, let's say plumbing or construction or electrician careers, and they have an education plan that lays out the required courses, it is much easier to plan what courses they ought to take to be able to pursue that career.

I understand, though, the difficulty because I have a son who is almost completing his high school education and he still regrets that he didn't make a plan as he didn't know what he wanted to be. It is obvious that due to that indecision on their part, the other factor is that many students have lots of choices to ponder as they're not always sure what they want to be at that age. There are many different components to include here.

I also have expectations that as the made-in-Nunavut *Education Act* starts to become implemented in our future, many more graduates will have a plan on what they want to pursue and that more students will follow on this option in school.

If I didn't answer his question, my colleague is free to ask further questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. I wish to remind all members that we are on K-12 School Operations. The questions being raised are on matters that are forthcoming in the page-by-page review. If I could also ask the minister if she can shorten her answers so that we can understand where we are and to ensure that we follow our protocol.

If I can ask members to hold off on their questions until we reach the appropriate section or page we are reviewing, it would be much easier. If you wait until we step to the next page or if your question is related to the page we are reviewing, please ensure your question is related to our review. When questions are all over the place, it becomes quite confusing when you are trying to direct the meeting. This is a gentle reminder to the committee members.

We are on K-12 School Operations. Mr. Oshutapik, do you have any more questions? You are done? I have no further names. We are on page G-7. K-12 School Operations. Education. Branch Summary. \$152,254. Are you agreed?

I couldn't see the figure. I wish to apologize as I deleted some zeros for the amount. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$152,254,000. Are you agreed?

>> *Laughter*

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): I am sorry. I left my glasses behind. Turn the page to Curriculum and School Services on page G-8. Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm also thankful for this opportunity as my constituents in Coral Harbour and Chesterfield Inlet have had concerns about education in general. I have some questions to ask on their behalf. Perhaps it would be best if I read my questions in English, both to be clear and as we have interpreters who will convert my words into Inuktitut.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will be aware, I have expressed concerns about the standard of education that Nunavut's grade 12 graduates have when they receive their diploma and whether this standard is on equal footing with grade 12 graduation standards across the country.

In September 2013, the Department of Education will be introducing six new multiple option programs in the high school curriculum. On page 107 of the business plan, one of the department's priorities for 2012-13 will be to hold information sessions for students and parents about the new graduation requirements. One of the reasons given for offering the multiple option programs to students is the hope that it will keep more students in school.

The graduation diploma will indicate which multiple options major they chose. Will the graduation diploma of the multiple option majors be considered equivalent to grade 12 graduation diplomas in other jurisdictions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will also answer in English.

(interpretation ends) The multiple options program will provide grade 12 graduation opportunities for every student based on an area of specialization and interest. The multiple options program will consist of both core subjects required of all students; let's say for example, Inuktitut and mathematics, and optional courses of students' choice. The example for that would be entrepreneurship or firearm safety. For each of the options, the department established an advisory group of stakeholders with expertise related to those optional areas.

Proposed multiple options programs include introduction to trades and engineering, and that is becoming more and more of a very popular course, looking at the economic development situation that we are in now. Another option is history, heritage, and culture. Another one is community caregiving and family studies. Another one is fine arts and crafts. Information technology is another one that will go a long way, especially with students who are inclined with information technology. Another very important one in our society today is the option of taking entrepreneurship and small business studies. The small business studies are, of course, very important in the smaller communities. This is over and above the core subject areas, such as English, math, science, and Inuktitut. (interpretation) Those subjects are mandatory.

(interpretation ends) Nunavut belongs to the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, a partnership of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. Together, these jurisdictions developed a curriculum framework that outlines skills and knowledge to teach major subject areas for all grades. Nunavut uses these curriculum frameworks to ensure we meet the same standards as these jurisdictions.

(interpretation) I hope that was understandable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Minister Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. One of the reasons why I wanted to ask that question is that when I looked at the options here, I got concerned about the new multiple options major graduation diploma will, in fact, be watered down versions of a regular grade 12 graduation diploma. What assurances can the minister provide that these multiple options diplomas will ensure that students have the same level and standard of education achievement as other grade 12 graduates? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank the member for his question. The items I spoke about are not mandatory, but they're optional courses that they add to their regular curriculum requirements. The actual methodology to

determine their grade level is the departmental exam everyone has to take to pass grade 12 and the results of the exams are a good measure of their levels. These optional courses will not detract them from their credit requirements as they are not part of the mandatory accreditation for passing high school, but they're optional courses that are meant to teach them about the real world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recognize that the multiple options program will emphasize practical skills that will hopefully lead to employment opportunities in the types of jobs that are available in Nunavut. This is a commendable approach. However, it is equally important that all of our youth who graduate from our education system have a standard level of knowledge and education, regardless of the field they wish to work in immediately after graduation or in their future. They should have the essential knowledge and skills that grade 12 graduates across Canada have. Can the minister confirm that this will be the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To use our Chairman's dialect, absolutely, this is indeed a very important issue that we have to deal with. To ensure that our students are able to read and write in English and to be able to use mathematics and sciences, those types of curricula will remain mandatory and

important. This is particularly so if our students want to pursue post-secondary education, they require advanced English, mathematics, and sciences in order to be able to grasp the university courses and make it easier for them to succeed.

This issue will remain a high priority with our department to ensure that students who are on the cusp of graduating from grade 12 have the required credits and are passing their classes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last statement and it's not a question. We've had quite a number of students who have graduated from grade 12 for a number of years, but many of these students have had to upgrade certain areas when trying to enter a course. Perhaps I'm ahead of myself, but I had wanted to ask this question for a while.

In September 2013, this legislation will start to be implemented within the school system. Nunavummiut will have to be convinced that our education system is producing graduates who will not have to upgrade in order to enter post-secondary institutions. That is what we want to see in our future. For example, many graduates who have gone for further education are told that their grade 12 courses are not up to par and that they have to upgrade prior to undertaking the courses they wanted.

Parents who would have rejoiced along with the graduates all of a sudden are halted in their celebrations. That is not

the fault of the student because they have attended school devotedly, but since they haven't taken the right courses, they fall into that situation. It is obvious, based on the minister's comments, that this is also due to being behind in their studies where it is incumbent on the student to complete all of their courses.

However, I don't want to just be concerned about our system; I also don't want to have concerns about our students' ability. That is why I wanted to get more information on this, Mr. Chairman. I know that the legislation that will be implemented in 2013 will be more relevant to our students and we will see graduates who are able to take post-secondary courses. That is the future we want to see. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was just a comment.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. That was just a comment, but I'll give you an opportunity to respond to that, Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do want to respond to that. As per my earlier statements about students nearing completion of their high school courses, they have to decide on what stream they will take to complete their credits. In English, this is called course selection.

The student chooses the courses that will fulfill the 100-credit requirement, but this selection is among the most important and we, the parents, have to pay attention if we want our children to pursue post-secondary education. Sometimes the student may pick certain courses that are not conducive to this,

especially if they require mathematics for a chosen career. To make this mathematic course requirement clearer, the choices available to the students are put into three categories. Perhaps I will ask my deputy minister to elaborate further on what the differences are in these three categories.

For example, the student may choose the lowest level of mathematic courses. That student has perfect attendance and has completed and passed all their mathematical credit requirements based on the plan. Even though that is the case, they still have to upgrade if they want to pursue a career that has a lot of mathematics because they didn't take the more difficult streams during high school, such as the academic level, which is the third level.

What the student chooses as their stream is very important to their future plans. To cite this example, a student will take the easiest courses all the way up to grade 12. This allows a student to not have as much work. So many students choose the less difficult courses and when they do that, the courses that are required for post-secondary education are still lacking and they have to take these courses.

Perhaps to ensure what I said is understandable, I would like to ask that my deputy minister explain what this means, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. We're on Curriculum and School Services. I don't think you have any other questions. Ms. Okpik, supplementary, very briefly. Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to clarify the difference. When students are preparing to enter grade 10, they have to choose which math, English, and science stream they will take to complete their high school credits. As the minister stated earlier, there are three different streams they can choose: the lowest, which is the essential stream, the middle stream, and the hardest stream, which is what we call the academic stream. These streams all have different levels of requirements for English, math, and basic science.

What we call science has different levels, such as basic science, and then more advanced courses, such as biology, chemistry, and different courses they can choose, especially if they want to pursue a career in nursing or doctoral categories. These are the choices they have to make, especially if the student wants to pursue post-secondary education, and they have already planned it out with those courses.

We are currently reviewing the minimum requirements for the accreditation. Students are required to have 15 credits in math and they need to take science courses for grades 10 and 11. In grade 12, the student has the option to discontinue their science courses and it is at their discretion. These are the different types of subjects and streams students can currently choose at their pleasure. We are reviewing the discretionary choice and pondering whether to make these courses mandatory so as to prepare them for graduation. That is the subject of our review.

There are also different subjects currently available which are called

optional courses and these are part of our review to look at decreasing the number of optional courses and to concentrate on math, English, Inuktitut, and science courses. These are all currently under consideration at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Yes, that is clear. We are on Curriculum and School Services. Education. G-8. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions, although not that many. With respect to the curriculum for K-12 here in Nunavut, do we have a bilingual curriculum? Is this compulsory?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been two years since the *Education Act* was passed. One of the sections of the legislation states that graduates will be required to be fully bilingual when they complete high school. Within the first two years since this legislation was passed, students have started to be given classes in both Inuktitut and English. In 2019, when we have the first graduates under this law, they will have to be fully bilingual. That is looking at today's students. The final details have yet to be fleshed out, but I believe that the courses from kindergarten to grade 3 are currently being offered in two languages. This will eventually include all classes all the way to grade 12.

I want to state, Mr. Chairman, at this time that prior to the end of this session, the Department of Education will have a

display outlining the proposed curriculum out in the foyer. This is to allow members to fully view the display. So I'm giving you advance notice since this will help to explain the process further based on the questions we have gotten so far. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I'm quite ecstatic to hear that and I like that idea. However, I have another question. So when Inuit students are first attending kindergarten, are the first classes in Inuktitut? When they reach grade 3, do I understand that is when the full bilingual courses commence? I seem to understand it that way. Now what about a non-Inuk student? Will the Inuktitut subjects be compulsory as well for these non-Inuit students? I imagine that they will also have to pass the Inuktitut subjects in order to be bilingual when they graduate.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In looking at the requirements of the *Education Act*, the answer in this case would be yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. I have no other names. Curriculum and School Services. Education. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. (interpretation) Operations and Maintenance. \$18,675,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will move on to Career and Early Childhood Services. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. (interpretation) Education. Operations and Maintenance. \$44,569,000. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had some questions around the early childhood education programs. In the minister's opening comments, she had mentioned having it be critical to instill the idea of lifelong learning. I know, in the Budget Address, that Minister Peterson spoke about the push for education and specifically targeting our youth. In the opening comments, it mentioned that district education authorities are responsible for working on providing early childhood education programs. I'm just wondering: is this distinction different than the kindergarten program?

In all three of my communities, daycare is definitely an issue, which, to me, is the start of early childhood education, but there is also Aboriginal Head Start programs, which are funded through the federal government, that do great work across the territory, and then the transition would be into kindergarten. So I was wondering: what specifically are the early childhood education programs that the minister is talking about enhancing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The things that have to be taught to the youngest classes, particularly the pre-school classes where they teach the students in Inuktitut in these early childhood

programs, they teach them the Inuktitut language and culture in their area. Within these early childhood programs that the member was asking about just now, the pre-school attendees are to be taught about their language and culture. In early childhood programs, the students are required to be taught the Inuit language and culture. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the \$1.6 million that's being provided or being asked to be voted on, that would go to district education authorities for early childhood programming. Is that for kindergarten programs or is that for daycare programs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak: It is for early childhood programs, not kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of the reason I'm asking the question is we are talking about early childhood programs, which, to me, partially is daycares, which not every community has a daycare.

I know there have been other members that raised the concerns about daycares in their communities. I represent three communities, one of which has a daycare program, which, to me, is running very well from what I have been

told, but two of them are having a lot of difficulty. One is because of facilities and also partially because of training in terms of early childhood education certification.

So I guess the question is: what will the Department of Education be doing to work with the district education authorities that have communities that do not have daycares to help get them going? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. He was speaking about different subjects, so I'm not sure which he is referring to. Can the member please clarify as to what exactly he is referring to in his question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott, if you would clarify your question.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go back to the start then. There's \$1.6 million that's going to district education authorities and the Premier said it's not for kindergarten. Could she elaborate on what it is for? Are these programs inside the school that are not kindergarten aged students? Are they for daycare programs? Are they supplementing the Aboriginal Head Start programs? I don't have clarification into what the \$1.6 million is going to, but the minister has said that it's not for kindergarten programs, so that leaves it open to quite a few other places that it could go. If she could specify where it's going. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the requirements for early childhood programs for pre-school children, there are various components that can be taught in those classes. The local DEAs are usually the ones that determine these requirements for pre-school students. (interpretation ends) The department recommends that the district education authorities work closely with the early childhood education program staff to offer programs together.

In terms of specific areas, I will have my deputy minister provide you with more information. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Deputy Minister Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$1.6 million provided to the local DEAs are for school operations. The business planning requirements mean that they have to complete an application for the extra program funding to our department while the regulations are being completed. This outlines what the purpose is for the funding, including which organizations are going to be involved in the community.

In the case of a pre-existing daycare facility, this can be supplemented to those programs already provided or they can create brand new programs within those facilities. That is at the discretion of the DEA. We currently have two employees who are focusing on an outline that communities can follow for planning for this new requirement and

who are also working on strategic plans that the DEAs can utilize in the communities to assist them in programming.

However, at this time, we are currently using the application process to fund these programs with a clear outline of the purpose of the funds and accounting for the funds' use. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these programs that DEAs put in funding for run on school property and with the staff that are paid by the district education authority or paid for at a teacher's salary? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In those cases, the DEA has the sole discretion as to where these programs will be run and they make those decisions locally. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Next I want to ask questions about the breakfast program. Again, within the budget speech, there was talk about breakfast programs and possibly lunch programs. I'm assuming this is within the school and it's provided, whether they're K-12 or whether they're early childhood education programs. Is there

money set aside for operating the breakfast program?

I know, again in all three of my communities, there is a breakfast program. There are a lot of volunteers who help make the program work, but with the increase in the cost of food, they're finding it hard providing funding. They don't actually receive money in terms of allocation; they receive it from Brighter Futures, which is actually a Health and Social Services program, not a Department of Education program. So if I could get some clarification on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is under kindergarten to grade 12 and it is different in every community, ranging from breakfast programs to snack programs inside the schools. They apply for various funds from other agencies for these programs. An example that my colleague mentioned was the program that gets funded through Brighter Futures, along with various funding agencies.

(interpretation ends) We support programs run by the communities, but involving Education and Health and Social Services to ensure that the programs provide proper nutrition and are coordinated with the education programming. The breakfast and snack program funding is mostly from third party sources. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So again, it sounds like almost, with the \$1.6 million in the Early Childhood Education program and with what's happening with the breakfast programs, I guess the minister is working towards the *Tamapta* Mandate of self-reliance, where DEAs actually sit down and come up with a proposal to say, "This is what we want for early childhood education," and then present it to QSO and the same thing happens with the breakfast program. So the community actually takes ownership of the program. Is that what's happening? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I would say yes. There is also a contribution agreement sent to the district education authority for their signature. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aariak. I have no more names on my list. We're on Career and Early Childhood Services. \$44,569,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Go to page G-10. I will recognize the clock at this time and report progress. We will start off with page G-10 when we resume our committee meeting. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

Speaker: *Qujannamiik*, Sergeant-at-Arms. Moving on in our orders of the day. Item 21. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Tapardjuk.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 24 and Bill 25. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 35 can immediately be placed on the orders of the day for third reading. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: There's a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Shewchuk. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Moving on to Third Reading of Bills.
Minister of Finance, Minister Peterson.

Item 22: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 35 – An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act – Third Reading

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, that Bill 35, *An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Peterson. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour. Any opposed? Two opposed.

The motion is carried and Bill 35 is now ready for assent.

Item 23. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for February 24:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 34

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

- Bill 21
- Bill 24

21. Report of the Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 24, at 9:00 a.m., bright and early. We will see you tomorrow morning.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:08*

