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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Simeon Mikkungwak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Baker Lake)

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(Quttiktuq)
*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation*

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(Amittuq)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Mila Kamingoak
(Kugluktuk)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

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Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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Government Services; Minister of
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*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the
Committee of the Whole*

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)
*Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for
Labour; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Premier; Minister of Executive and
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Minister responsible for Aboriginal
Affairs; Minister responsible for the
Utility Rates Review Council*

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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)
*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
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Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
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(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)
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Arctic College; Minister responsible
for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation*

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responsible for Homelessness; Minister
responsible for Immigration; Minister
responsible for the Status of Women*

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(South Baffin)
*Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister
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Iqaluit, Nunavut**Wednesday, November 6, 2019****Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeegok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Simeon Mikkungwak, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Patterk Netser, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Mr. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:31*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Simeon Mikkungwak) (interpretation): Before we proceed, I ask Member Keyootak to say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Going to the orders of the day. Thank you very much, Member Keyootak. Continuing on. Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 337 – 5(2): 2019
Council of the Federation Literacy
Award Winner**

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say "good day" to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today and speak about the

accomplishments and commitment of Nunavut's 2019 Council of the Federation Literacy Award recipient Monica Ittusardjuat. Monica's dedication to literacy development in our territory is truly inspiring, and she encourages everyone around her to use Inuktitut every day.

Mr. Speaker, Monica has worked in Inuktitut education for over 50 years. She has been a teacher at every level, from early childhood education through the Interpreter/Translator Program at Nunavut Arctic College. She served for two years as the National Inuit Language Coordinator at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, leading a working group to study to make recommendations to the orthography standards that could accommodate all dialects of Inuktitut.

In her current role as Senior Inuktitut Editor at Inhabit Education, Monica oversees all Inuktitut language materials for an Inuktitut first-language literacy program for Nunavut. She plays an indispensable role in creating materials that will help young Nunavummiut learn and practise their language.

Mr. Speaker, since 2004 the Council of the Federation celebrates achievements, innovative practices and excellence in literacy. This annual award is presented to educators, volunteers, learners, community organizations, non-government organizations, and businesses in every province and territory, celebrating the valuable contributions made by Canadians in the field of literacy.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues of the Legislative Assembly, Monica is here in the gallery today. As I speak she's there.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, I will recognize her later on.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues of the Legislative Assembly, Monica is here at the gallery today, so please join me in congratulating her, which we did. Thank you, Monica, for your work. Thank you. I did present her with a medallion and a cheque yesterday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Minister's Statement 338 – 5(2): Inuit Employment and Training on the Port Projects

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The training and employment of Inuit on Government of Nunavut projects is a high priority for this government.

The marine infrastructure projects based in Iqaluit and Pond Inlet require at least 15 percent Inuit labour. Results from our last analysis show that this employment requirement has been met, with employment in Pond Inlet slightly higher.

The Government of Nunavut is building a (interpretation ends) small craft harbour (interpretation) in Pond Inlet and improving small craft facilities and building a deep sea port in Iqaluit.

Our department will start another

employment analysis in the near future. (interpretation ends) Onsite inspections by our staff and representatives from the Department of Family Services indicate that Inuit are employed project-wide and work in every position, from welders and heavy equipment operators to marine mammal observers and housekeepers.

>> *Applause*

The Department of Family Services is participating to ensure that every resource is available to assist Inuit employees with career development. Training and employment for Inuit is critical to enhance the well-being of Nunavummiut. We are committed to improving economic opportunities to encourage self-reliance and provide local employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends) Acting Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Minister Ehaloak.

Minister's Statement 339 – 5(2): The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) November 25 is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence.

Mr. Speaker, during the 16 days of activism we are reminded that we all play a role now and throughout the year to eliminate violence against women and

girls in all forms.

The 16 days of activism also include the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women on December 6. This day marks the anniversary of the murders in 1989 of 14 young women at L'École Polytechnique de Montréal. They died because they were women.

December 6 gives us the opportunity to honour the women and girls we have lost to violence in Nunavut. This is an opportunity as a territory and within our communities to honour our murdered and missing women.

In Iqaluit there will be a memorial on December 6 organized by the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council. This year the council would like to encourage all communities to mark this day by engaging in actions that eliminate family violence. I encourage other communities to honour this day, [be] it through organizing an event, spending time with the women and girls you love, through prayer, or reflection.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I call on all Nunavummiut to take action to end violence against women. We all have a role to play. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasié.

**Minister's Statement 340 – 5(2):
Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial
Library**

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Good day, people of Nunavut and members.

Mr. Speaker, since its establishment in 1968, the Iqaluit Centennial Library has been a valued part of the Iqaluit community. Each day the library serves hundreds of Iqalummiut, providing books, programs, and Internet access.

Mr. Speaker, a critical part of these services is a small group of volunteers, the Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library. The Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library organization's volunteers work with library staff to help promote and support library services for Iqaluit residents by planning and presenting literacy programs, raising community awareness, fundraising, and providing community input regarding library services.

Mr. Speaker, the "Friends" board is made up of eight volunteer members who collectively commit more than 2,000 hours annually to the library. During the past year the Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library obtained funding from my department totalling just over \$13,500, which supported the delivery of more than 150 literacy programs in all three of Nunavut's official languages.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the impact of the Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library extends beyond their support for literacy programming:

- The group supports a "Purchase Program" which allows patrons to request or recommend titles for the library collection. Hundreds of books have been purchased through this

program, which is supported with funds generated by the Iqaluit Centennial Library book sales.

- The group also administers the Community Access Program site at the library which provides computer and Internet access for the public. Last year the Iqaluit Centennial Library Community Access Program site was used a total of 18,091 times by library patrons. Many Iqalumiit go to the library solely to use the computers there.
- For the past ten years Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library volunteers have supported literacy in our community and made layovers in the Iqaluit airport less tiring by stocking a free book rack with donated books in the departures lounge. Over 3,000 books annually are distributed to travellers through this service.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Friends of the Iqaluit Centennial Library for their ongoing efforts and dedication to supporting the Iqaluit Centennial Library, a valuable community institution, and for their commitment to building the Iqaluit community. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Ehaloak.

**Minister's Statement 341 – 5(2):
Power Plant Operator Training**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I am pleased to rise today to share with my colleagues some training that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has recently facilitated.

At the end of October the power plant operator training program took place here in Iqaluit. The operator training program is an eight-day program that provides both theory and hands-on instruction to our plant superintendents and assistant operators annually. I am especially proud to inform you that 90 percent of those in attendance at the 2019 training session were Nunavut Inuit.

>> *Applause*

Our valued operators are key in keeping the lights on across the territory. They work hard to provide our communities a safe, reliable and efficient energy supply and are essential to the Qulliq Energy Corporation in providing this vital service.

Power plant operators from each community met in Iqaluit for comprehensive training in health and safety best practices, health hazards, environmental procedures and protocols, human resources support, and operational reporting and processes. In addition to our in-house training, third party instructors from Infrastructure Canada and Safety Association of Canada training group provided valuable and specialized information on electrical safety. The operators also met with the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Nunavut Employees Union to engage in conversation on union membership.

The annual training program not only provided the operations staff with a

unified approach for knowledge improvement, but it provided a networking opportunity for operators to discuss difficult common issues, share ideas, and develop cohesive solutions to their work. Internal relationships were strengthened with open discussions between operators, managers, and the corporation's executive office.

Through group evaluations, operators provided feedback to the organizers and voiced that the content of the sessions provided helpful information on how to perform daily tasks and emphasized the importance of safety on the job.

The health and safety of our workers in the communities is a top priority for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and I look forward to hearing more about the corporation's assistant operator training program in 2020. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 521 – 5(2): Representing Nunavut, Not Regions

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people who are listening to and watching the proceedings in my constituency communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, and good day to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a subject and we know that we're all representing Nunavummiut. There is one thing I'm concerned about and one that we are seeing more frequently. We are all representing the people of Nunavut, and I'm a bit concerned about the territory being split into the regions called the Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot. We all know that we represent all of Nunavut.

>> *Applause*

Having different regions is becoming more of a concern to some people. We shouldn't be doing that as Nunavummiut, as we represent all of Nunavut. We shouldn't be focusing on the fact that we are divided by regions. It's not something that we brought up as Inuit.

>> *Applause*

Inuit have a culture of togetherness, to cooperate and not to divide. It seems like the decisions we make are becoming more regional. Let's remember that we represent Nunavut as a whole, never mind the regions. I would like to get rid of the regional divisions. We should be looking at representing Nunavut as a whole instead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Tawtongie.

Member's Statement 522 – 5(2): Table Tennis Participants from Rankin Inlet

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank our caucus chairman, John Main, for doing a very good job. I say “good day” to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

I rise today to announce the recent completion of regional trials in preparation for the Arctic Winter Games. There were several athletes from Rankin Inlet. The girls' team won gold and the junior boys got silver, and one athlete will be going to the Arctic Winter Games to participate. I will announce their names. The coach was Olusoga Tomolouj, whose nickname is Mr. Tom.

- Gregory Wiseman, one of the coaches
- Sandy Tattuinee
- Wayne Pilakapsi
- Gholam Dareshoripour

This athlete will be going directly to Whitehorse to compete and I am proud of him.

- Mark Squire, who is the coach
- Atuat Aliyak
- Bailey Green
- Natasha Kadjuk-Mosbeck
- Ramona Niviatsiak

These athletes won eight medals and we are extremely proud of you, our youth of Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members'

Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Member's Statement 523 – 5(2): Wrestling Participants from Pangnirtung

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and the people of Pangnirtung.

I wanted to proudly announce the following young people who competed recently in Cambridge Bay in wrestling. The Pangnirtung athletes were Joanasi Mike, Grace Metuq, Allan Alivaktuk, and Kaaju Arreak. He was representing Pangnirtung, although he is from Iqaluit, and was one of the athletes to win a gold medal. Their coach was Barrett Mason, who is a teacher in Pangnirtung.

The communities of Pangnirtung, Igloolik, Arviat, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay had regional trials in Cambridge Bay and I wanted to rise to pay tribute to them. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Member's Statement 524 – 5(2): Youth with Disabilities

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my colleagues and my fellow residents of Netsilik.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern regarding the lack of opportunity for young Nunavummiut

with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of young people in our territory who have disabilities and many do not have jobs and are unemployed.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that we as a government should do more to assist these young people who are idle at home with nothing to do.

Mr. Speaker, many of these young people have received some education, but as they grow older, they can no longer go to school due to their age. Because of their disability, their options to work and be productive are limited.

Mr. Speaker, some disabilities cannot be cured, but we can still find solutions to help these individuals improve their lives. Just because they face challenges does not mean we should stop trying to meet certain needs as they grow older.

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

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

**Member's Statement 525 – 5(2):
Plebiscite on Direct Election of the
Premier**

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the residents of my community and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today once again to

make a statement concerning the issue of holding a territory-wide plebiscite on the direct election of the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, I made a statement on this matter during our recent spring sitting, in which I noted that many people have told me they support this idea, as they believe that the time has come for a clear choice of visions to be put before the people at election time.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, over the past few months I have continued to hold discussions on this subject with constituents and colleagues, and I am pleased to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the many thoughtful comments that I have received.

Mr. Speaker, although the basic question of whether or not the Premier should be elected is straightforward, the implementation issues involved are complex. Although a significant amount of study... . As you can see, this is the study that has been done. A significant amount of study and work on this idea was undertaken by the Nunavut Implementation Commission in the years leading up to division in 1999. I recognize that not everyone is necessarily familiar with it.

Consequently I wish to announce today that I am providing more time for my colleagues to consider the issue involved and to state that I look forward to revisiting this before the end of our term of office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements.

Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

**Member's Statement 526 – 5(2):
Suicide Prevention in Nunavut**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. (interpretation ends) First of all, I would like to be the very first MLA to rise in this House to wish congratulations to our colleague, Adam Lightstone, and his beautiful wife Hilary on the birth of their baby. (interpretation) I congratulate you.

>> *Applause*

We also congratulate you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue I wish I didn't have to talk about and that is suicide and suicide prevention in Nunavut.

I think we have all been touched by suicide, some of us more recently than others. I mean, we all know that feeling and it's a horrible feeling. It's one that leaves you feeling helpless and asking "What can I do? What could I have done? What should I have done?"

It's really important that we as a government focus on action because words are not enough and we all know that. That's where I come to the *Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan*, and I did ask a written question on this to the government and I thank the government for their response. The response was 173 pages long. There is a long list of actions, things that we as a government can do with our partners to help to change this in the territory.

At the appropriate time I will be asking questions to the minister responsible on this important topic, but I just want to say that as regular MLAs, we have to keep pushing the government, the government has to keep pushing their partners and their employees to do more, and we need our constituents to push us as MLAs to do more on this subject. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

**Member's Statement 527 – 5(2):
Recent Municipal and District
Education Authority Elections**

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my fellow residents of Amittuq.

Mr. Speaker, it was unfortunate that I was unable to attend the session whilst the elections took place. Nonetheless, I wanted to speak about the elections.

They elected a mayor in Hall Beach and Jayko Simonie will now be our mayor. The council members will be:

- Peter Siakuluk
- Roger Beaudry
- Timothy Kuppaq
- Valerie Curley

These individuals put their names forward for the municipal election and they were acclaimed. They will join the other hamlet council members who were previously elected. Once they begin their business, there may be additional council members.

Also, there were several acclaimed members for the district education authority:

- Elizabeth Ikeperiar
- Eunice Tungilik
- Nagleen Innuksuk
- Roger Beaudry
- Solomon Nasook
- Valerie Curley

These are the persons who will be serving as the district education authority members in the community.

I further inform all Nunavummiut and Canadians that a plebiscite also took place in the community that was known as Hall Beach but will now be reverting to the traditional name chosen by the residents as Sanirajak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

**Member's Statement 528 – 5(2):
Baffinland Phase 2 Project
Proposal**

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the residents of my community, my constituents, as well as my colleagues and all the visitors in the gallery.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the representatives of Pond Inlet who have been participating in the recent Nunavut Impact Review Board public hearings on Baffinland corporation's phase 2 proposal.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Impact Review Board's hearing was held over the past weekend here in Iqaluit. I am glad that I had the opportunity to attend some of the hearings to show my support for the community whose representatives have been vigorously advocating on behalf of our people and our environment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pay special tribute to the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization, which has been strongly engaged throughout this process.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to the Legislative Assembly, I expressed my support for responsible development. I want to take a few moments today to explain why my community has been expressing concerns regarding the corporation's phase 2 project.

Mr. Speaker, I recall very clearly the early days of the Mary River project and the first community meetings that were held. Even at that time, questions were being asked about the manner in which the company would steadily seek approval after approval after approval to incrementally increase the scope of the mining project. Mr. Speaker, I believe that this approach has undermined the community's trust.

Mr. Speaker, rather than providing a complete picture of the full scope of the project and its ultimate impact on the region, the incremental or "phased" approach to requesting change after change after change has only served to cause confusion and frustration.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, time does not permit me to get into all the details today of how specific elements of this project have changed so frequently and dramatically over the years.

As you likely know, there have been many concerns expressed by the community about such issues as the impact that rail and sea shipping are having on the environment, our marine life, and the caribou.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to make it clear that I do support responsible natural resources development. Mr. Speaker, I also want to make it clear that the community fully recognizes the economic benefits that the project has brought to the region. However, it is essential that the company significantly change its approach.

Mr. Speaker, when we hear that the company sends one message to investors but a different message to the community, it undermines our confidence. In order for the community to find common ground, we need the full picture so that we can have greater confidence that decisions are being made based on a complete set of facts.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that I need to convey to this House the frustrations that people of Pond Inlet have expressed about their government and their

regional Inuit organization. Mr. Speaker, people have felt that their concerns have been ignored and that these organizations have been too focused on the bottom line of tax and IIBA revenues.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the support that the Qikiqtani Inuit Association has recently provided to us in respect to the current proposal that is before the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

In the Qikiqtani Inuit Association president's recent letter to the Nunavut Impact Review Board in which he stated that the QIA does not support the phase 2 project proposal, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association president stated that "QIA's board of directors is specifically sensitive to the feedback it received from Pond Inlet as the most impacted community...in making this decision, QIA took the input of the community very seriously."

Mr. Speaker, I again want to clearly state that we want Mary River to succeed, but its success depends on obtaining the support and trust of the community, which is in very serious jeopardy.

Mr. Speaker, the positions of the community and our regional Inuit association are now clear. At the appropriate time I will be asking the government to clarify its position. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Member Akeegok.

Member's Statement 529 – 5(2): The Impacts of Suicide

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for his poignant statement about the fact that we are all Nunavummiut, as that was quite impactful.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to express today relates to what is seemingly far too many people whom we have lost in my constituency community of Arctic Bay. We're even starting to ask one another who will pass away next.

When people commit suicide, it is doubly hard and stressful as it impacts you deeply. When a suicide occurs, the entire community feels the painful loss and it also impacts all Nunavummiut. When a person passes away in our smaller communities, many volunteers start fundraising to assist with the travel costs for relatives.

This year is especially tiring for the volunteers who try to fundraise to assist the family, and sometimes as the MLA, I seem to be thankless since I don't mention them. Sometimes it seems we are thankless as a community due to the ongoing losses we see. Nonetheless, right now in this House I want to voice my immense appreciation to the volunteers who are always providing assistance to their fellow citizens, all in the background, working tirelessly to ensure the relatives are able to gather to grieve.

We also have volunteers who assist the family with donations and fundraising, as well as other forms of support, such as cooking meals or providing food to

the grieving families. They are the ones I especially want to thank as well.

I really want to acknowledge and voice my gratitude. There are too many volunteers to name, but let us show respect to them and let us empathize and voice our thanks for their selflessness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Member Ehaloak.

Member's Statement 530 – 5(2): Alice Ehaloak, Junior Plant Operator

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Congratulations, Adam, on your son.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise today to inform you that my niece, who is named after my mother, Alice Iris Kaiyogana Ehaloak, is a junior plant operator at the Qulliq Energy Corporation. She participated last week in the power plant training program that they held, and I'm happy and very proud to say she was the only female in that program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Continuing on with the orders of the day. Returns to Oral Questions. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

**Return to Oral Question 701 – 5(2):
Staffing in Nunavut Schools**

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to reply to a question asked by the Member for Netsilik, Question 701 – 5(2), on November 4 regarding staffing in Nunavut schools.

Mr. Speaker, the return is quite lengthy and I have provided it to the Clerk. I ask that it be entered into the record as read, Mr. Speaker, with your permission.

Mr. Speaker, on November 4 my colleague, Mr. Qirngnuq, asked me about educator vacancies in our schools. I now have more up-to-date information that I can share with members.

When I last updated members, I had school vacancy rates as of October 11, 2019. At that time there were 38.5 teacher vacancies: 26.5 in the Qikiqtani, 3 in the Kivalliq, and 9 in the Kitikmeot.

As of November 4, 2019, the number of vacancies in the Kivalliq has remained at three. Hiring in the Kitikmeot has brought the vacancies in that region down from nine to five. In the Qikiqtani, however, our vacant positions have increased from 26.5 to 34. This increase in vacancies is attributed to recent resignations in the region.

The overall educator vacancies in schools across the territory as of November 4, 2019 are 43. The department continues to actively work to fill these vacant positions to keep the effect on students minimal. Wherever possible, vacant educator positions are dealt with through strategic staff scheduling and the use of substitute

instructors.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague also asked about what specific strategies are being considered to hire more teachers in the territory. As I stated, the Department of Education is developing a 10-year retention and recruitment strategy which will include a variety of communications means and activities to recruit new staff both from within Nunavut and, where necessary, from outside the territory. Our main focus as the Department of Education is to support our educators so they stay in our schools teaching youth of Nunavut. As the strategy is developed, initiatives are already underway, including a national social media campaign, a website, ads, participating in career fairs, and direct contact to retired teachers associations across the country.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, my colleague asked about the Department of Education's collaboration with Nunavut Arctic College to recruit and develop more Nunavummiut through the Nunavut Teacher Education Program. As I stated, the Department of Education works closely with Nunavut Arctic College and their Teacher Education Program. Specifically with regard to recruitment, information packages to promote the program were distributed to all Nunavut high schools in May 2019. The department is also developing a video to be distributed in 2020 to encourage Nunavummiut in high school to enter the teaching profession. The department is also exploring the use of other technologies, such as videoconferencing, to connect with students and provide information about the various paths to a career in teaching.

Mr. Speaker, while we recognize the gaps created by teacher vacancies across the territory, Nunavut is not alone on this issue, and teachers are in very high demand in many Canadian jurisdictions. My department will strive to continually work hard to fill teaching and all other positions in education and to promote the importance, value, and benefits of being an educator in Nunavut.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Continuing on. The minister is seeking unanimous consent to have the document entered into the record as read. Are there any nays? There are no nays. (interpretation ends) The document will be entered into the record as read.

(interpretation) Continuing on.
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.
Member for Aivilik, Member Netser.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good afternoon” to the residents of both Coral Harbour and Naujaat.

When the Member for Uqqummiut voiced his feelings earlier, I was in complete agreement as we represent all Nunavummiut collectively and we mustn't forget this fact.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the president of Nunavut Arctic College, who is very easy to work with, and we generally are of one mind on issues. He is my good friend now, Pauloosie Suvega, and today is (interpretation ends) Take Your Kids to Work Day, (interpretation) and if I am not mistaken, he brought his son along, Pauloosie

Suvega Jr., as they are in the gallery. I would like them welcomed and I rose to welcome them, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just earlier during my minister's statement I spoke about this person whom I was going to recognize, Monica Ittusardjuat. As I stated previously, her fields are in education and the use of the Inuktitut language, which she has been lobbying hard for and still is. Let's all congratulate Monica Ittusardjuat.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome in the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Member Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Rankin Inlet. My nephew is celebrating his birthday, so I wish him a happy birthday. If she is listening, my wife and I are also celebrating our anniversary, so I celebrate with my family.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to this Assembly a member of our fine community of Rankin Inlet, Ms. Susan Black. Welcome to your Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. (interpretation) Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This person was already recognized earlier, but I would like to recognize her again. Monica Ittusardjuat is originally from Igloolik. I am very proud of the successful work she does, so I congratulate her.

I would also like to say, as I'm sure my colleagues remember a little while back in the 1980s, her late father went from Igloolik to Arviat by dog team. Just like in the old days, they went by dog team to that other community and we were very proud of them. I wanted to mention that and express my pride in Monica, who had very strong parents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Please feel warmly welcome on your recognition in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

Continuing on with the orders of the day. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Member Akoak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 708 – 5(2): Community Morgues

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues and the community of Gjoa Haven. If my family is watching, just a couple of more days to go.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions

are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister will recall, I wrote to him in June of this year concerning the important issue of community morgues. In my correspondence I raised concerns regarding the lack of appropriate morgue facilities in my community of Gjoa Haven. I want to thank the minister for the detailed reply that I recently received from him.

Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues and the listening public, I will follow up today on some of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, in his reply to me, the minister indicated that an interdepartmental working group has been established to “address concerns with regards to the maintenance and operation of morgues and the need to clarify the responsibility for the handling or disposal of a deceased person.” Can the minister provide an update today on this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. I was happy to receive correspondence from you on this concern. This concern is continually becoming more common amongst our communities regarding burials of deceased persons in our cemeteries, as this is not a simple issue and further, we should honour those who have passed on, which is why we bury our dead.

This becomes a heavy burden to all involved, to the hamlets, CGS, Family

Services, and various bodies and organizations. We are working to develop a strategy to move this forward in the best possible manner. There are different circumstances in the communities. Some have prepared burial plots while others need to prepare the burial plots and things like that. We are still dealing with these different challenges contained in this concern that we are discussing and trying to develop, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his reply to me, the minister indicated that his department is “committed to assisting municipalities with the costs of converting a surplus building into a morgue and visitation area for the deceased through its small capital fund with funding packages of up to \$250,000.” Mr. Speaker, this is a positive step and I thank the minister for taking this action. Can the minister indicate which communities have approached his department with funding requests? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know my portfolio has many contribution programs for many different purposes. I don't have the information in front of me right now as to how many communities have requested funding for morgues and such that he is referencing. However, I can tell the member that it has been identified, but I don't have it in front of me right now. Once I have it in front of me, I can provide it to my colleagues. I

regret that I don't have it in front of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary question, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his reply to me, the minister committed to working with the Municipality of Gjoa Haven to address our community's situation. I thank him for this commitment. Can he update me today on what actions have been taken? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The situation in Gjoa Haven regarding the burial of our loved ones is not one unique to Gjoa Haven; it's one that is pan-Nunavut. There are many different issues pertaining to this issue and growing concerns because of that.

As per the details in particular to Gjoa Haven specifically, I can't provide that level of detail at this time, but we are working on that file to ensure that we help the municipalities in ensuring that when our loved ones pass on, they are given the best respect and not so much burden given to those who have to deal with the matter. We will try to support wherever we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towntongie.

Question 709 – 5(2): Polar Bear Management

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be very much aware, residents of the Kivalliq have expressed growing concerns in recent years over the increasing number of polar bears coming into our communities. Polar bears are becoming a larger safety issue as many residents cannot go berry-picking anymore without a guard, and we can't go cloudberry picking either. Polar bears are foraging in our dumps and as we all recall, some Inuit have been mauled by polar bears. There are families who lost a loved one and we empathize with them.

Mr. Speaker, there is significant public frustration and confusion about how polar bear quotas are set. To use this example, in the year 2015 the western Hudson Bay total allowable harvest was increased from 24 to 28. To my understanding, it was most recently increased to 38 in May 2018.

My first question to the minister: can he clearly explain the process by which the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board sets polar bear quotas, and can the minister clearly explain the extent to which he as minister is able to accept, vary, or reject decisions of the board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of the Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As to how we

set polar bear quotas, and in English, the (interpretation ends) total allowable harvest (interpretation) that sets out the absolute limit of bears that can be harvested, this is currently under review by Department of Environment experts, or (interpretation ends) biologists, (interpretation) where they conduct a survey.

They do a survey in western Hudson Bay and estimate the overall population numbers, which is then submitted to the wildlife management board, and then the board makes the final decision about the total allowable harvest for that management area. The overall figure is submitted to the Minister of Environment, and the minister then can agree or disagree. In the case of disagreement, it would be sent back to the wildlife management board for either a new number or resubmission of the decision. The minister can then make a decision on the number and if they agree, then it would be decided. If they disagree, the minister would have to provide a new number. However, the decision has to adhere to the *Wildlife Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. As the minister knows very well, the average citizen, including myself as an Inuk, is in disagreement that the polar bear population is decreasing. He mentioned his government experts or (interpretation ends) biologists (interpretation) who conduct the surveys. It is very obvious that polar bears are increasing rapidly. Can the minister clearly describe how

his department approaches this issue and can he confirm if the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board is currently considering any proposals to change polar bear quotas in the Kivalliq region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. When the biologists conduct their surveys, they provide an estimate to the wildlife management board. However, the wildlife management board may also conduct a public hearing on the issue or consult with the affected communities and hunters on their perspectives on the quota that they are looking at. They do take other matters into consideration.

I didn't quite understand what she meant by changing things. Did she mean like cabins and such? I didn't quite understand what she wanted changed. However, the number that they are going to review is on the total numbers. The NWMB does consultations with residents, hunters, and whoever wants to voice their concerns on the issue is allowed to speak at these hearings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps if I say this in English, he will be able to understand it clearly. (interpretation ends) Currently considering any proposals to change polar bear quotas in the Kivalliq region (interpretation) is the part that I am clarifying here.

For my last question, Mr. Speaker, as

ordinary citizens, many of us feel that these are our bears and we are seeing people mauled to death by polar bears.

(interpretation ends) It continues to be important that we clearly explain to the rest of the world that our polar bears, Nunavut polar bears, are not endangered and that our communities are in the best possible position to decide how to manage the populations. I do know in the minister's home riding with Halloween, children cannot go trick-or-treating the past few years. My final question to the minister: can he describe what efforts his department is making to help send this message that polar bears are not endangered? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member that we're talking about western Hudson Bay, and the government has stated that the polar bear population in western Hudson Bay is stable and it is not in danger currently. It is stable. We just signed a new polar bear management agreement for all of Nunavut. As part of that polar bear management agreement, we have decided that the polar bear harvest ratio... . The polar bear sex harvest ratio used to be two males for every one female, and we have changed it so that they can harvest one male for every female. It's a 50 percent harvest now, and that is some of the stuff we do to help the harvesters and to show the world that the western Hudson Bay polar bear population is not endangered; the population is steady. I don't know what else I can say to that, but thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Question 710 – 5(2): Five-plex Construction Materials

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

Now, in our community many of us have heard stories and experienced firsthand that our children are getting impetigo as a result of staying in the public housing units. It isn't just one case that is appearing, but rather a number of tenants who are experiencing this. It seems to be people residing in the five-plex units, as many children are getting this skin reaction and many residents are deeply concerned about the impacts. The rashes are a result of the units they inhabit. Their children are developing skin rashes and now it has started to affect the parents as well.

The first question I want to ask relates to the steel frames that form the backbone of the building. Are these units constructed using steel frames that are causing this issue? I'm referring to the older or first five-plex buildings that were built. Perhaps I am using the wrong word for (interpretation ends) frames. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps he is talking about the frames used in the studded bedrooms. Is he talking about

the frames that are used to construct the units? Perhaps he is asking about that. I don't know if they use steel frames, but I can certainly have that looked at, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I just explained, children and even some parents are now suffering from a form of skin rash or impetigo. The family was healthy and fine when they moved into the unit, but symptoms start appearing shortly afterwards. I'm clearly indicating that. I will expect to get an answer, as I thought they had the information and hence my query.

However, at this time the new units that are built, are they using...? What did he call them? Steel ribs? Buildings now have ribs. However, are the buildings ribbed with steel frames? Have any units been constructed using steel frames to date or are there still units that were constructed using that method? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do know that larger buildings use steel frames, especially hotel construction projects that use steel frames. I don't know if steel frames are used for public housing units, but as I informed the member, I will have it looked at. Nonetheless, I have only seen that used when either hotels or schools are being constructed. I really don't know if the public housing units have those frames, but I will report

back once I get the information. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All I can think of in this context are delicious ribs.

>>*Laughter*

Nevertheless, I want to reiterate this fact, Mr. Speaker, as we discuss mould remediation on occasion as MLAs, as quite a number of members have mould-infested units in the communities that they represent and many units are affected. Some of the mould is readily visible, while some infestations remain hidden. Even when it isn't visible, the effects are still causing skin rashes or respiratory illness, as the numbers of cases are constant because of (interpretation ends) hidden moulds, (interpretation) where no visible signs exist. This is why I queried the minister about that. Even though the unit is spotless and clean, if there is hidden mould, the residents start experiencing illnesses.

My last question to the minister is regarding hidden mould. He has gone on record as saying that inspections have been done on units with mould, and in Igloolik there were several cases where the minister stated that the units had been inspected or mould remediation had occurred. However, there are also units that have hidden mould infestations. Are housing units inspected regularly for hidden mould infestation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whenever we are informed about units with mould infestation and it is confirmed, then we try to deal with that unit as soon as possible.

With regard to cases of hidden mould, we know that there are infestations that are hidden, as I did an inspection on my own home using a testing kit I bought from our local Co-op to check if I had a case of hidden mould in our home. The issue he raised is a good idea to contemplate, and perhaps the local housing organizations can be our partners in trying to resolve this concern. I also appreciate the member for bringing up this issue, which we will try to assess and determine a course of action on the matter he just raised, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 711 – 5(2): Small Business Owners in Public Housing

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Economic Development.

Mr. Speaker, I was perusing the news articles when I saw a picture of the minister's face, I forget when, but it was revolving around the private sector and the amount of assistance they provide to private businesses, which was announced by the Department of Economic Development. It spoke about the different kinds of contributions and the difficulty of operating a private business.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, from the newspaper ad recently run by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, I'll quote. "The cost of rent, power, food, equipment, and Internet are often more expensive than in southern Canada. Sometimes it's a challenge just to make a profit."

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, in the majority of cases of business start-ups, they generically start their business out of their homes. Perhaps to reiterate in English, (interpretation ends) home-based small business (interpretation) is generally where the starting point is for many businesses. However, we all know that many Nunavummiut don't have private homes. They rent the NHC housing units and furthermore, we often hear that the local housing organizations have policies in place for owning a private business while renting a public housing unit.

(interpretation ends) My first question for the minister is: given that many of Nunavut's residents, about half, I believe, are in public housing units, can the minister commit to meeting with the Nunavut Housing Corporation minister and working to provide clarity around how to run a business from a public housing unit, what types of business are allowed, and to remove as many barriers as possible to small business owners who might live in public housing units? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for having read up on the

article and I am glad he noted my facial expression.

However, small business owners are indeed in a tough spot, which I concur with, and they run their business in various places. As you stated, some of them are specific to the local housing organizations. Yes, I agree with that assessment. I regularly meet with my ministerial colleague responsible for housing and we debate issues, as he is open to healthy discussions, and I will ensure I bring that matter up with him at our next meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) I do believe that would be beneficial for many public housing tenants who might be interested in starting up a business.

One of the other things mentioned in the minister's ad is the cost of electricity, power. Mr. Speaker, in many other jurisdictions across Canada, local governments or provincial governments provide substantial power rate discounts as business incentives in order to attract investment; in order to spur small businesses on.

My next question is also about collaborating with another minister. Will the Minister for Economic Development commit to collaborating or discussing with the Minister for the Qulliq Energy Corporation about establishing discounted power rates specifically for small businesses in Nunavut? Just to clarify, what I'm talking about is a

discount that would be applied at source within the QEC's rate structure. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for bringing that issue up. Yes, I will again commit to working closely with my ministerial colleague. I'll try to find out if there is a discount, but Qulliq's rates for rental units and private businesses are quite different. With that being the case, I will still commit to discussing this with my colleague and if certain small businesses can get a discount. If that will not be pursued, I will report back to you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) I do believe that commercial power rates in Whale Cove, for example, are some of the highest power rates in the territory and so that's a very serious hindrance for small businesses.

The last question I wanted to ask was on the topic of bookkeeping. As we all know, there's a lack of accountant type services in the communities across Nunavut. This is something that is kind of a building block for small businesses. Will the minister commit to working with his staff to head-hunt individuals or to find individuals capable of establishing bookkeeping services at a community level, with a goal of having such a business established in every community in Nunavut? (interpretation)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm hoping that the general public is watching this debate and listening, and you just identified a wonderful business opportunity and I would encourage every Nunavummiut and everybody in the communities to look at these missed opportunities that are taking place now. There's really no reason why people shouldn't be taking bookkeeping or any other opportunities that are out there. I encourage and I will continue to encourage for Nunavummiut to look for and take advantage of opportunities that might not be available in communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Member Angnakak.

Question 712 – 5(2): Nunavut Business Credit Corporation

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, who is also responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

Before I begin with my question, I would like to take this time to thank Minister Akeeagok for organizing the bus tour that we had to the Iqaluit marine facility this morning. I really appreciated that.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, I noted with great interest that the most recent annual report for the NBCC, which was tabled earlier in our fall sitting, indicates that “There is a desire to provide more elder care services in the territory rather than in the south. This may present business opportunities to provide elders care facilities in the territory.”

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, he is responsible for providing an annual letter of expectation to the corporation’s board of directors. Can he clearly indicate what direction he will be providing to the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation in respect to providing government-backed loans to companies that are interested in building or operating elder care facilities in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any business venture that any Nunavummiuq wants, they have different avenues and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation is one avenue. Their board, which I respect and when they make decisions and try to look for business opportunities, they identified this as one of their priorities, as has been under our mandate. We would encourage anybody to do that and we would try to find avenues.

One of the things, talking with the board of directors with the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, is often their board looks for other avenues, which lending venders or credit corporations they can try to get and encourage when they receive applications from Nunavummiut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the minister. He seems to be very supportive of that kind of interest.

Mr. Speaker, I also noted with interest a section in the minister’s current letter of expectation to the board of directors which stated that he was “...interested to hear of informal discussions taking place around the idea of amalgamating NBCC with the Nunavut Development Corporation (NDC). I expect to see NBCC begin to explore this prospect on a more formal basis in partnership with NDC and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation.” Can the minister update the House today on what progress has been made in this area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a joint discussion with the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and the Nunavut Development Corporation’s chairs earlier this summer to look at this specifically and find ways. The immediate reaction was that right now their core businesses are not looking at that, but at the same time they identified that if I increase the scope to include what our department is doing and what we can do to support each other, that was a path forward.

The directions we are going to give our staff is to continue to look at this but with a broader sense of including what

our department staff do and what the communities do when it comes to economic development. Under my direction, I have given my staff direction on that and both of the chairs were going to do that to their corporations. Thank you, Madam...Mr. Speaker.

>>Laughter

Speaker: I don't know.

>>Laughter

(interpretation) Your final supplementary question, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's response is good to hear, which is about collaboration amongst those entities. Yes, that's how it should be.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, we held televised standing committee hearings in the previous Legislative Assembly on the operations of both the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and the Nunavut Development Corporation. One of the issues that arose at that time was a recommendation from the NBCC that its enabling legislation be amended to provide for an increase in its lending limit, which has not changed in many years. What has the minister done to act on this recommendation and bring forward a bill into the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I don't have a legislation amendment in place right now related to this. I stand to be corrected, but if I remember, it was the last Assembly. Through that, they raised their amounts to help assist businesses. I'll double-check that and report back to the member. If there are any legislative changes that are required, then those are the very things that we will continue to pursue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akeeagok.

>>Laughter

Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

Question 713 – 5(2): Baffinland Phase 2 Project Proposal

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today will be to the Premier of Nunavut.

As I noted earlier, the Nunavut Impact Review Board has been holding hearings on Baffinland's phase 2 project proposal, and I want to again express my support for the representatives from Pond Inlet who have been bringing the community's concerns to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

My first question to the Premier is as follows: can he confirm how many formal letters he has sent to the responsible federal ministers over the past year concerning the phase 2 project proposal, and can he confirm what recommendations he made to the federal

government concerning approval of the proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The phase 2 project for Baffinland is in front of the NIRB right now and, as a government, and I speak on behalf of the government, we absolutely agree in the process that was developed when Nunavut was implemented, that the IPGs would do their role in having hearings, whether it be the water board or NIRB and other entities. We have in no way interfered in the process that is ongoing right now, and we will accept the decision of the NIRB when the time comes when they make their decisions on phase 2. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the Premier will be aware, the Government of Nunavut made its final written submissions to the Nunavut Impact Review Board on September 24, 2019. For the benefit of my constituents who are listening today, can the Premier highlight what specific concerns the Government of Nunavut has raised with the Nunavut Impact Review Board concerning Baffinland's phase 2 project proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the exact, specific concerns right in front of me, but we had seven issues that were brought up there and all but one have been resolved and we are still working with Baffinland on that one and final issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for his answer. As the Premier will be aware, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's board of directors unanimously voted last week to not support Baffinland's phase 2 project proposal. Will the Premier commit to withholding any Government of Nunavut support for the phase 2 project proposal until such time as the Municipality of Pond Inlet, the Mittimatalik Hunters and Trappers Organization, and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association formally indicate that they have withdrawn their objections to the proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we believe in the process that IPGs do. Their role is to screen any projects and mitigate any hazardous or environmentally harmful or harmful to the animals. They hear all the interveners present their case and they question the proponents. I'm not going to be interfering in the process. The NIRB will do their due process and they will hear all the proponents and the interveners' sides, and then they will make a recommendation to the federal minister.

I just want to assure the member that the federal minister will have the final say and they will look at the recommendation of the NIRB. I absolutely believe in the process and the process will play out and the NIRB will make a recommendation to the federal government on whether phase 2 should go ahead or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Question 714 – 5(2): Youth with Disabilities

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, there are many young people across Nunavut who suffer with developmental delays and they do need ongoing education. There is more than one young person in my constituency who did have schooling but because of their condition, they could no longer continue with their condition as they grew older.

Can the acting minister clarify what kinds of programs are in place for these young people who still require assistance and will never be able to work because of their condition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Acting Minister of Family Services, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The

Department of Family Services collaborates with the federal government and both have funding agreements. What I'm elaborating on is Piqataugitsi, which is under the (interpretation ends) workforce development agreement. (interpretation) That program has a budget of \$2 million for training and employment and communities can submit proposals for people with disabilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe he answered part of my first supplementary question. I'll say it in English so that it's clear.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my preamble, these young people with disabilities are often pushed out of school even before they have the knowledge that they needed to be taught. Many of these young people, even though they may have a disability, are willing to learn if they are taught and trained in certain skills.

Can the minister confirm to me and this House what plans the department has for these young people with disabilities so that they may feel happier and more fulfilled in their lives? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently there are about 80 participants in the pre-employment programs that are in various programs that we help. We get support from the Nunavummi Disabilities

Makinnasuaqtiit Society. Those are programs that, from what I understand, are ongoing. In the previous year there were 130 participants. If there are people with disabilities, I encourage them to contact our department and/or the society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member Kugluktuk, Member Kamingoak.

Question 715 – 5(2): Wildlife Management

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and Kuglukturmiut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to revisit the issue of the Kitikmeot caribou. When I raised the issue in this House last week, I expressed my support for measures to address wolf predation of the caribou population. However, I also questioned why the rate paid by the Government of Nunavut to our territory's hunters for wolf samples is significantly less than that which is paid by the Northwest Territories government.

In his responses to my questions, the minister stated that he could not comment on how the Northwest Territories government came up with their rate. I understand that, so I will ask my question a little differently. Will he commit to increasing our rate so that it matches or exceeds the rate paid by the Northwest Territories government?
Koana, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the moment I can't commit to that. It could be looked into, but no, I am not willing to commit to putting our rate at the same as the NWT rate currently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. Why won't the department commit to this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year it was a pilot project that we started in the Kitikmeot on the harvester support program or wolf sampling program and this year it's Nunavut-wide. We're just going to see how it goes for Nunavut-wide. That's one of the reasons why I can't commit to putting up the rate.

It's also an arbitrary rate. It's a rate that the Northwest Territories chose to pay and they choose to pay it, but that's not the total picture. There are different portions of it. You can get up to the maximum amount if you harvest wolves in one area. If you harvest them in a different area, then you get a different fee structure that you would get. It's not as simple as if you harvest a wolf anywhere in the Northwest Territories, you get an X amount. There are different amounts for different areas.

Right now we're just starting this wolf sampling program for Nunavut-wide and

we will see how it goes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. When I raised the issue of caribou management in the Kitikmeot, the minister indicated that his department is working with the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to develop a management plan.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be holding a meeting in Kugluktuk early next month. Can the minister confirm what items his department will be presenting at the meeting in relation to Kitikmeot caribou? *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if they have an agenda yet. This is the NWMB's hearing and we will partake in it, but our role would be to present facts and solutions there. I know that right now they're having hearings in Kugluktuk on the possible reduction of the total allowable harvest that they currently have. We will be working both with Kugluktuk's HTO and keeping the Northwest Territories informed on the management plan for the caribou around Kugluktuk, whether it be the Bluenose-East or the Bathurst herd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 716 – 5(2): Language Situation in Nunavut

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) Congratulations, Adam and Hilary, on their new boy. (interpretation) That's what I wanted to say first of all.

My question this afternoon is for the Minister of Culture and Heritage.

Last week the minister provided some results from Statistics Canada's report titled (interpretation ends) *Evolution of the language situation in Nunavut*, (interpretation) 2001 to 2016. I would like to ask about that report. I was interested to note that while the minister indicated that the number of Nunavummiut who can speak Inuktitut has increased since 2001, the fact is the proportion or percentage of the population who can speak Inuktitut has actually decreased. In 2001, 79 percent of the population could speak Inuktitut and 15 years later, in 2016, that percentage had decreased to 76.3 percent.

Perhaps even more worrying is the report indicates that in 2001, 71 percent of Nunavut's population had Inuktitut as their (interpretation ends) mother tongue. (interpretation) That was 71.7 percent, while in 2016 only 65.3 percent of the population had Inuktitut as their mother tongue.

Can the minister clarify whether he is aware of the steady decline in the number of Nunavummiut who have Inuktitut as their mother tongue and indicate what specific initiatives are being undertaken to address this

worrying trend? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Member for Pangnirtung for that question regarding language. The report was presented in partnership with Statistics Canada. They conducted surveys for several years within Nunavut, starting in 2001 to 2016. They started to realize that this was starting to change, so they identified the first trends. Due to these statistics, we continued to maintain that position as a government.

As I have continued to state, language starts at home and not just in government operations. When it is taught and used in homes as the first language, it is generally the strongest foundation. This is based on what we understand. These statistics reports will provide a starting point to try to preserve our language by, for example, service provision and government programs. We can try to provide this service through that.

Additionally, this is something we will continue to pursue and to have it understood by Nunavummiut that some communities have retained their strengths by preserving their language and have remained stable and we want them to continue that as well. We want to steadily keep the percentages rising so that the number of residents who speak and understand Inuktitut increases. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for talking about the statistics report. The Government of Nunavut's work that has been done under *Uqausivut 2.0* was tabled in June 2018. I would like to ask the minister: can he provide an update on some of the key priorities of the *Uqausivut 2.0* plan and what successes have been achieved to date? Can the minister explain that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the other question. Mr. Speaker, I can use as an example a conference that we held in Iqaluit in March with participation from Nunavummiut. *Uqausivut 2.0* is a strategic plan for the coming years and it explains what we as a government will be doing. It can be utilized by the people of Nunavut as well. *Uqausivut 2.0* has four pillars: language of learning, language of work, language services, and the last one is the revitalization of the language.

There were questions from the Kugluktuk member last week using some of the communities as an example where they're not really using the Inuktitut language anymore. We want to work more on that. Although it's a strategic plan, we want to start developing implementation plans to go alongside *Uqausivut 2.0*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report by Statistics Canada shows that after a decrease in the number of Nunavut workers who used Inuktitut as their main language of work from 2001 to 2011, this downward trend was reversed between 2011 and 2016. It is a very good sign indeed to see that more Nunavut workers are using Inuktitut at work. It's good to hear that the numbers are increasing.

Will the minister commit to providing regular updates on specific initiatives implemented by the government to promote the revitalization of Inuktitut in the workplace, in our schools, and in public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Member for Pangnirtung for her question. We will keep monitoring it and we have different funding programs that can be requested for language projects. We call them grants and contributions. It's under an agreement we have with the federal government. As that funding is ending, we're planning to try to work with the new government to work on renewing the language services agreement.

The use of the language has been dropping, but we want to try to do things to revitalize the language and how we can reverse the trend. The population of Nunavut is growing all the time and it's two-fold. There is language use at home, but there are also people who say they

know the language. We're identifying those through the Statistics Canada report, but it has detailed information and they have looked at the numbers, so I would like this to be read by the people of Nunavut. It's categorized correctly and all the communities in Nunavut can use it to get a better understanding and think about what more we can do for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members will note that the time for question period has expired. Member for Hudson Bay, Member Rumbolt.

Motion 056 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the Member for Gjoa Haven, that the time allotted for oral questions be extended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order and is not debatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Question period is extended by 30 minutes.

Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Member Rumbolt.

Question 717 – 5(2): Income Support Services for Sanikiluaq

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Acting Minister of Family Services.

On November 4, which was Monday, I asked the minister questions regarding the effects that the ransomware virus would have on income support clients in

my community and whether clients would be turned away for services. The minister responded by saying that communities have food vouchers for these kinds of emergencies and services would continue.

Mr. Speaker, shortly after question period on November 4, I received information that income support clients were in fact being turned away in my community because of miscommunications, and it also turned out that Sanikiluaq happened to be the only community in Nunavut without food vouchers.

Can the minister explain to us today why food vouchers were not available for income support clients in Sanikiluaq during this emergency? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister of Family Services, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, I want to apologize to Sanikiluaq clients and also if there were any other community clients that have been turned away as a result of this ransomware.

The food vouchers are in every office, but when we executed the emergency plan, it was learned that Sanikiluaq did not have the food vouchers. This was the result of probably a very good thing of having the office recently renovated. When they were doing that, they packed up the vouchers and unintentionally shipped it back to the headquarters. Through this, we learned about it and we are trying to correct it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been bringing up the issue of office space in my community for many years. I think, during the renovation, they found out that they didn't have enough space and they shipped them to Rankin Inlet or another community for safe storage, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister update us today on what actions the department has taken to ensure that income support clients are receiving assistance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department shipped the food vouchers yesterday and were made available for around one o'clock. To date about 35 clients have received food vouchers. I want to commend the income assistance worker there, who had to work late as a result of our department not having those food vouchers readily available in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister can give us an update on whether any other communities throughout Nunavut are having difficulties issuing income support to clients and, if so, which communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As acting minister, I have not received any other community to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerker.

Question 718 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure Deficit

Mr. Kaernerker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Department of Economic Development. I believe there's still time for development and we want things to develop.

Mr. Speaker, there have been MLAs before me who have requested small craft harbours for Amittuq. I would like to reiterate that I represent two communities: part of Igloolik and Hall Beach. When I say Amittuq, I mean both communities. My predecessors have requested small craft harbours. We are in the Fifth Assembly now and the people of Amittuq still want a small craft harbour or port.

Can we be one of the priorities? On behalf of the two small communities that I represent, that is my first question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very good that my colleague keeps bringing this up and I would like him to continue bringing it up because many communities have been requesting small

craft harbours.

We have a (interpretation ends) request for proposals (interpretation) out right now to have all the communities visited. The request for proposal is open right now. Once we award a company through that request for proposals, we want all 18 communities that don't have small craft harbours to be visited and if they are going to be visiting a community, they must talk to the community and ask them where they would plan to locate the harbour.

Some communities have one already, but the people in Amittuq don't have one and I don't know if there is an old plan for that purpose. Those 18 communities will be included in the visits and the report will be provided to me. Once we receive that report, we will submit a request to the federal government to work on small craft harbours. That's what we have planned for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Kaernerker.

Mr. Kaernerker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for pointing out the request for proposals. Along the same lines, have the people who will be visiting the communities been to Hall Beach and Igloolik? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The (interpretation ends) request for proposals (interpretation) is still open right now and once we have awarded a

company, then they will visit the communities. I don't think there have been any visits to Amittuq on the subject. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me explain. You said that through the RFP, there are 18 communities that have would like them. Let me again say what it states here, that once the visits are done, they will select four to six communities out of the 18 communities. This report was released on October 18, 2019. This has been a priority for harvesters and it has been needed for a long time. Will you be making the communities that don't have small craft harbours a priority as the Department of Economic Development? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that document that you quoted from speaks to the first part of the original plan for the Small Craft Harbours program where four to six communities would be identified for the first phase of construction. This is how it is laid out. We know that the federal government has \$94 million available under the Oceans Protection Plan at this time. They will want to see requests for funding, and we feel that this is a good way to plan for this infrastructure.

We don't know which communities will be identified. Once we have the information from our community visits, we can start identifying the communities that will be prioritized. I also want to

work closely with my colleagues. After the assessment is done, I will try to ensure I do it properly. This issue has been brought up on more than one occasion by our colleagues in this House, and this is a very important part of our infrastructure needs. I look forward to reviewing the assessment with you once it is done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Member Kamingoak.

Question 719 – 5(2): Medical Travel Support for Kitikmeot

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, there continues to be confusion about the government's medical travel policies. My constituents have raised a number of concerns and I would like to take this opportunity to ask the minister for some clarification.

Can the minister clarify why community health centre staff do not have the final say in the approval of escorts for medical clients who are required to travel for medical services? *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health, Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to medical travel, the approval process, when you have people in the health centre, they don't always know the full story, the funding, NIHB, whether it be GN

medical travel, and the approval process needs to be made at a more central location to have consistency, for one.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at medical travel, we have all heard anecdotal stories of how some communities feel favoured over others and we want to make sure that there's a very consistent approach that it's when medically needed when people need an escort that they get one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. It has been noted that medical clients are often left to make their own way to and from the airport when they are scheduled to travel for health care reasons. Can the minister confirm what arrangements are currently in place to ensure that patient transportation is provided to medical clients, and specifically what arrangements are currently in place for medical clients travelling to and from the community of Kugluktuk? *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue was brought up just recently with regard to ambulances being delivered to some communities through a great program delivery.

Mr. Speaker, oftentimes the hamlets themselves undertake medical travel to the airport where the services are available and that is on a fee for service. If there's an ambulance or the hamlet has a vehicle that is used for ambulatory travel to the airport, they are reimbursed

at established rates. Otherwise most communities do also have alternatives like taxis or things like that where the travel would be reimbursed.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately when it comes to health centre staff using health centre vehicles, for numerous reasons, mainly being insurance, they are not able to provide transportation to the airport except under the most extreme emergency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. It seems as though medical clients may not always have the information they need to be able to call to arrange their return flight home, transportation to and from the airport, or with any other concerns they may have with their medical travel arrangements. Will the minister commit to ensuring that all medical travel clients are given the necessary contact information prior to their travel so that they know who to contact in case of any complications? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have mentioned before, when people do go on medical travel, there is a whole package of information, including the rules that they have to adhere to when they're on medical travel that they sign off on. All the contact information is in that package, but if the member has any specific examples or a client that has not received that information, please let me know.

Just for public record, in the Kitikmeot

region the medical travel toll-free number is 1-844-886-8010. If anyone at any point in their medical travel from the Kitikmeot has any concerns, please call that number. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Question 720 – 5(2): Information Technology Program

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Just recently and now with the network being down, I imagine they have IT technicians. I would probably call them interoperability electricians or in English, (interpretation ends) information technology, (interpretation) as they conduct the digital connections.

My first question to the minister is if they offer any (interpretation ends) information technology (interpretation) courses at the college. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for his question. Now, we are planning a community tour with NAC consulting the communities on the types of programming they would like to see offered locally at the community learning centres.

With respect to information technology

and computers, we are totally immersed in the digital world and it's obvious that some students take some courses in information technology and computers. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of when the last time they had a program on information technology for Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) My notes do not indicate when the last time we had such a program in terms of information technology, but I keep telling the House that we are going to do a consultation to the communities in terms of what programs they would like to see in training our people. I welcome the member to either go on the site, but at the moment we cannot go on the site due to all the computer failures. We will consult with the communities in terms of what the communities would like to see. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your [final] supplementary question, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had imagined that the ministers are debriefed on such issues. I had asked earlier when the last time this program was offered at Arctic College, considering that some Inuit have already taken the previous courses. I also know that there were previous classes on

information technology, which I thought he would be aware of personally as the minister responsible.

This will be my last question, which he probably won't answer. How many Arctic College graduates are working for the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who take the office administration course at Arctic College are taught about computers. We don't know how many have jobs. Mr. Speaker, there are many graduates and some of them go outside of Nunavut to work. Graduates of Arctic College are able to apply for jobs anywhere in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Member Angnakak.

Question 721 – 5(2): Status of Iqaluit's Damp Shelter

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, as you may recall, during our spring sitting, I was very pleased to recognize the hard work and effort of all those who had succeeded in opening Iqaluit's first damp shelter. The damp shelter operated during the coldest months of the year and was closed down on July 1, 2019.

Can the minister provide an update on

when Iqaluit's damp shelter will be reopening? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Acting Minister of Family Services, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the [member] for the question. The department is looking for community partners at this time. Therefore I don't have a firm timeline of when it would be open. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very important that we get one up and running again as soon as possible.

I appreciate that the damp shelter was opened as a pilot project in 2019. Many groups and individuals pulled together to make it happen and it is very fortunate that they did. Our northern winters are not forgiving to those who have no place to go, especially while under the influence.

Can the minister provide an update on how the operations of the pilot project damp shelter were evaluated and what improvements are being considered for when it opens again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for asking the question. The department is establishing and developing a long-term

program to support ongoing funding and strengthening governance. I don't have the specifics in terms of what was actually evaluated, but that's one thing that the department is doing is trying to develop a long-term plan for these types of programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are all aware of the sad and devastating consequences of homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, addiction, and poor mental health. Our city needs all the resources it can muster to ensure that all of our citizens and especially the most vulnerable have services that they need.

Will the minister commit to providing an update to this House, perhaps during our next sitting, on what steps have been taken to establish a long-term and stable damp shelter program with ongoing funding, a governance structure, training for staff, and targeted programming support for clients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Mr. Speaker, I thank you. Thank you for the question. As acting minister, I will commit to talk to the minister that oversees this. As this is a long-term solution, I can't commit myself for this, but I will definitely relay this message to the current minister and I'm sure that she will be able to commit to this. It has been in this House and in this government's best interest in terms of what the long-term plans will be. Once we know that, we will definitely bring it forward. Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 722 – 5(2): Update on the Computer Server

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Premier regarding computers, as it has had a devastating effect on our entire government.

My first question is what we heard in the news was the computers crashed because of (interpretation ends) malware; ransomware. (interpretation) Can our Premier indicate how much effort the government has put into dealing with this issue and have they hired anyone from outside of Nunavut to do the work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member. Nunavummiut will hear how hard the Government of Nunavut is working on that. Ever since we shut down our computer system to try to stop the virus from spreading further, government staff have been working 24 hours a day to deal with the problem. I thank them for their hard work and for continuing to work diligently.

In regard to the other question, yes, we are getting help from outside of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm certainly not a computer expert myself and some of this material is very complex and hard to understand.

In terms of the effect on the government's operations, I think we can safely say that it has been significant with the lack of email capability, payroll, and all these different functions being affected. I know that there is a big cleanup effort underway. Does the government have a timeline or estimate as to when the cleanup could be completed in terms of a time frame and have the government return to normal operations in terms of using computers and software services? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad that the member is not tech-savvy; otherwise he would be able to out-talk me pretty easily because I'm in the same boat as him. I just know about the operational stuff.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have an exact timeline as to when stuff will be back to normal. I can assure the member that all our information and all our data was backed up and all that is there. The time-consuming part is we have to build a completely separate system and then take the backup data and information into that system to make sure that the virus is not transferred. We shall also have to go to every workstation and make sure that the workstations are not infected and, if they are, then they will have to deal with that.

Within a week or two we should be operational, but I don't have a timeline when things will be normal or at the same state as before the virus struck our network. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) *Ma'na*, Premier. In terms of the financial impact, I know that it is very early in the process in terms of what it is going to end up costing the government in terms of extra work or maybe extra equipment. My last question is: are there any specific funds from the federal government or elsewhere, emergency type funds that the government can or is looking at accessing in order to defray any additional expenses to the government? As we all know, money is in short supply around here in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't comment on the part of how much it's going to cost. We're still working on it and we're not sure how much longer we will be working on it. We're just trying to get the system up and running and there will be some capacity. We're not working and we're at 100 percent. It's going to be a gradual thing and there will be certain things that come online first.

For instance, we have to make sure that essential services get full capacity first; health, justice, family services, and stuff like that. We will work on the real essential departments that need it first

and we will be looking at all other options. Currently we are not even looking at what it's going to cost us. We just want to make sure that we can get the system up and running to serve Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The time for question period has expired. Continuing on with the orders of the day. Written Questions. Continuing on. Returns to Written Questions. Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. (interpretation) Continuing on. Petitions. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

Item 10: Petitions

Petition 020 – 5(2): Minimum Wage

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't able to be here when the issue of minimum wages was being debated.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today of presenting a petition that has been signed by approximately 65 residents from Igloolik and Hall Beach.

Mr. Speaker, this petition recognizes that our territory has the highest cost of living in the country and calls on the Government of Nunavut to increase the minimum wage in the jurisdiction to a living wage over the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition on behalf of my residents of my constituency of Amittuq. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Petitions.

(interpretation) Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Item 11: Responses to Petitions

Response to Petition 005 – 5(2): Full-day Kindergarten, School Food Program, and After School Programming

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a response to the petition tabled by MLA, MLA Adam, MLA Adam Arreak Lightstone...

>> *Laughter*

...dated Monday, October 21, 2019, Petition No. 5 – 5(2), and it's in regard to full-day kindergarten, school food program, and after school programming.

Mr. Speaker, I filed a copy of the response to the petition with the Clerk's office and I ask that it be entered into the record.

The Department of Education thanks the residents of Iqaluit for their petition. The petition raises several different issues and I will address each one separately.

Full-day Senior Kindergarten

Based on a recommendation made by the Special Committee to Review the *Education Act*, my department has already started work to determine the implications to transition from the current half-day to a full-day kindergarten program. We are gathering information on the feasibility of implementing such a program.

Considerations related to implementing full-day kindergarten include school infrastructure capital costs, increased human resource requirements, and curriculum resource requirements.

My department will be developing various options for future consideration regarding the rollout of full-day kindergarten.

I can assure you that any options put forward regarding full-day kindergarten will consider the best interests of children.

Junior Kindergarten

My department supports licensed child care facilities in Nunavut through funding, training, guidance, and other supports. There are currently 57 licensed child care facilities in Nunavut, including 15 preschools, 7 of which are federally funded Aboriginal Head Start programs.

Expansion of classroom space in schools and human resources requirements limit the feasibilities of providing full-day junior kindergarten in Nunavut schools.

As I mentioned, my department is exploring the feasibilities of full-day senior kindergarten. Any potential exploration of junior kindergarten will be based on and informed by the results of the research regarding senior kindergarten and an evaluation of full-day senior kindergarten once any rollout is complete.

After School Programming

After school programming that is licensed as a child care facility receives

funding, training, and support from the Department of Education. There are seven licensed after school care programs in the territory. Currently no district education authorities offer after school programming. However, if a district education authority or a non-profit organization wished to provide after school care for children under 12, they can apply to be licensed and supported by the Department of Education.

Homework clubs, arts and sports programs run through the school and are done at the discretion of the school and district education authority, and rely on staff and community volunteers. I encourage motivated community members and parents to volunteer their time to support sports and activity programs in their communities.

Breakfast and Lunch Programs

Nunavut has school food programs serving all of its 44 schools supported by community wellness plans, funded by the federal government through the Department of Health and administered by sponsoring agencies such as hamlets and some district education authorities.

Every community wellness plan must allocate funding for a school food program in their community and the amount of money allocated is determined by the community. The total wellness plan funding for school food programs across the territory is approximately \$3.5 million. Some schools and district education authorities also seek other third party funding to supplement their food programs.

School staff and community members

volunteer their time to support breakfast, snack and lunch programs. These vary widely by school depending on the capacity, needs, and resources available. Some schools offer breakfast, snack and lunch programs. It is at the community's discretion as to how community wellness funds are spent.

My department will further explore the feasibility of and the need to increase funding for school food programs.

Again, thank you for taking the time to communicate your concerns regarding these important topics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Thank you. It is automatically entered into our records as part of our rules. Thank you.

(interpretation) Continuing on. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. There are none. Continuing on. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 222 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Grants and Contributions

Tabled Document 223 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Public Accounts Annual Report

Tabled Document 224 – 5(2): Interim Financial Report (Unaudited) March 31, 2019

Tabled Document 225 – 5(2): Responses to the 2019-2020 Letters of Expectation for Territorial Corporations

Tabled Document 226 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board's Annual Report

Tabled Document 227 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission's Annual Report

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have six documents to table today.

I am pleased to table the 2018-19 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission's Annual Report.

As well as I am pleased to table the 2018-19 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board's Annual Report.

Also I am tabling today the Responses to the 2019-2020 Letters of Expectation for Territorial Corporations.

As well as I am tabling the Interim Financial Report (unaudited) March 31, 2019.

As well as I am tabling the Public Accounts Report for 2018-19 that I'm sure Mr. Lightstone will look at with interest.

I am also finally tabling the Grants and Contributions Report for 2018-19. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents.

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Tabled Document 228 – 5(2): 2016-2019 Annual Reports for the Country Food Distribution Program

Hon. David Akeegok: Mr. Speaker, I am tabling the 2017-18 Annual Report for the Country Food Distribution Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. (interpretation ends) Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Minister Savikataaq.

Tabled Document 229 – 5(2): Nunavummi Kiglisiniaqtiit Annual Report 2016-2017

Tabled Document 230 – 5(2): Nunavummi Kiglisiniaqtiit Annual Report 2018-2019

Tabled Document 231 – 5(2): Government of Nunavut Response to the Report on the Review of the 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 Annual Reports of the Representative for Children and Youth

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three documents to table. I am pleased to table the following annual reports: Nunavut Kiglisiniaqtiit for the period of April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017; Nunavut Kiglisiniaqtiit from 2018 to 2019; and the other document is I am pleased today to table the Government's Response to the Report on the Review of the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 Annual Reports of the

Representative for Children and Youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Tabled Document 232 – 5(2): Division of Corrections, Department of Justice 2017-2018 Annual Report

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Today I am tabling the 2017-18 Annual Report of the Division of Corrections. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasie.

Tabled Document 233 – 5(2): P/T Report for the Ministers of Education Focus on Indigenous Education and the Future of Education at CMEC 108, Victoria, BC

Tabled Document 234 – 5(2): Indigenous Education Major Focus of CMEC, Vancouver, BC, July 6, 2018

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling today the Provincial and Territorial Report for the Ministers of Education, Indigenous Education, Major Focus of Council of Ministers of Education Canada, Vancouver, British Columbia, July 6, 2018. As well, I would like to also table the Provincial and Territorial Report for the Ministers of Education, Focus on Indigenous Education and the Future of Education at CMEC 108, Victoria, BC, July 15, 2019. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

**Tabled Document 235 – 5(2):
Submissions to the Standing
Committee on Legislation on Bill
25, An Act to Amend the
Education Act and the Inuit
Language Protection Act**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to table copies of the submissions which have been received by the committee regarding Bill 25, *An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act*.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank those individuals, organizations, and interested groups who took the time to provide their input to the standing committee. The standing committee has been reviewing these submissions with great care.

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Legislation will be inviting the Minister of Education and a number of those who made submissions on Bill 25 to appear before the committee during a live televised hearing that will be held in this Chamber later this month from November 25 to November 27. A detailed schedule for the hearings will be issued in the very near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Tabled Document 236 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Annual Report on Members' Indemnities, Allowances, Expenses and Benefits April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

Tabled Document 237 – 5(2): Report on Members' Absences from Sittings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses to the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut for the Period of April 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019

Tabled Document 238 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Audited Financial Statements under the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act

Tabled Document 239 – 5(2): 2018-2019 Audited Financial Statements under the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act

Members, I have four documents to table today.

The first document is the 2018-19 *Annual Report on Members' Indemnities, Allowances, Expenses and Benefits*.

The second document is the Report on Members' Absences from Sittings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the period April 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

The third document is the 2018-19 audited financial statements under the *Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act*.

The fourth document is the 2018-19 audited financial statements under the

Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act.
(interpretation) Thank you.

Notices of Motions. Continuing on. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 38 – An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act – Notice

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I give notice that on Thursday, November 7, 2019, I will [move] that Bill 38, *An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act*, be read for the first time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Continuing on. Motions. Continuing on. First Reading of Bills. Continuing on. 18. Second Reading of Bills. Continuing on. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 8, 26, 29, 33, and 34 with Mr. Rumbolt in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 50 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 16:10 and
Committee resumed at 16:40

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

Chairman (Mr. Rumbolt): Good afternoon, members. Order, please. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 33, 26, 34, and 29. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to first deal with Bill 33, followed by Bills 26, 34, and 29. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 33?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 33 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019 – Consideration in Committee

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

Hon. George Hickes: Yes, please, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee to let the witnesses go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. For the record, Minister Hickeys, if you could please introduce your witnesses and then continue on to your opening comments. Minister Hickeys.

Hon. George Hickeys: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To your left I have my Deputy Minister of Finance, Jeff Chown, and to your right, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services Constance Hourie.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman and members. I appear before you today to present Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (O&M) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019*. Through this bill, the government is seeking to increase its overall O&M appropriation for 2018-19 by \$17,765,000.

Mr. Chairman and members, there are three parts to this request, each to adjust year-end amounts to reflect actual spending as determined by our usual work to prepare the financial statements.

First, we are seeking \$5,512,000 for the Department of Finance so it may absorb a year-end accounting expense on behalf of all departments.

The government provides certain employee benefits upon retirement. As the GN will need to pay these costs out at some point in the future, we want to ensure our financial statements reflect the liability now.

We estimate the amount of this liability based on certain assumptions and engage

the expertise of actuaries in this area. Our actuaries expect more employees will take advantage of these benefits in the future and so we need to increase our liability. Specifically the GN must report a \$6.6 million liability in 2018-19.

Although the retirement benefits are available to GN employees from all departments, we will attribute the related expense to the Department of Finance. The department would have lapsed just over \$1 million in 2018-19, about 1 percent of its budget. As a result of absorbing this year-end expense, it now requires this supplementary appropriation.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman and members, we are seeking \$2,847,000 for the Department of Community and Government Services to cover its budget shortfall for the year. The department has identified two main issues that drove this higher spending.

To start, Community and Government Services paid \$1.8 million in 2018-19 for spending that took place in prior fiscal years. By not attributing these costs to prior years as should have happened, the department ended up taking on unexpected costs in 2018-19. The department is taking steps to avoid such issues in the future.

Second, Mr. Chairman and members, the Qulliq Energy Corporation increased its electricity rates in May 2018. Community and Government Services, which pays the Government of Nunavut's utilities bills, did not take into account this rate increase as part of its 2018-19 in-year budgeting. As a result, the department overspent its utilities budget by just over \$3 million.

Third, we are seeking \$9,406,000 to cover the Department of Health's 2018-19 budget shortfall. Mr. Chairman and as all members know, this is the second supplementary appropriation to Health. In March 2019 the Assembly provided the department with an additional \$40 million, increasing the department's overall budget by 11 percent to about \$432.7 million.

We based our request then on the department's internal projections using data available to them in December 2018. As it turns out, we did not ask for enough. In particular by the end of 2018-19 the department had overspent most in the areas of medical travel by \$5.4 million and other expenses by \$3.1 million. We also spent more than the annual budget on doctors and health staffing.

On the other hand, the department did not spend its full budgets in other areas, including out-of-territory care for mental health, addictions treatment, and hospital and physician care.

We have provided the program-specific budget and spending summary in the members' briefing material.

Mr. Chairman and members, this concludes my opening comments and I would be pleased to take any questions about this bill. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Are there any general comments? If not, we will move on. We are on page 4 of Bill 33, Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) No. 2, 2018-19. Finance. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. \$5,512,000. Any questions?

Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The briefing material here mentions certain employee benefits. I wonder if the minister could explain just exactly what type of benefits we're talking about here. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically retiree health and dental benefits. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Does the department maintain or do they have forecasts or projections in terms of the workforce now and how much they estimate will be needed in coming years in terms of these types of benefits? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we work with an actuarial group that actually specializes in this. When we look at employment information from March 2017, it was one year that they're using as a base. We had over 4,000 active employees with an average age of 44. They look at the average years of service and they use their formula to calculate anticipated needs down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Do those forecasts or projections allow the department to better anticipate these expenses? Maybe I guess the question I should ask is, it says here, “a year-end accounting expense.” Now, I’m not an accountant, so if the minister could explain what that means by “accounting expense.” (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question and I’ll keep it fairly simple. Basically we carry a liability on our books because we know we’re going to have to expend this money at some point. We’re making an adjustment to that liability with the forecasted needs that we’re anticipating in the future. There are no actual monies; it’s just a liability that’s kept on the books. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main. No, you’re done? Okay. Thank you. Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: ...(no audio)
...assumption about how many employees will take advantage of these retiree benefits. Why is there an assumption? It might not happen; it might happen. How did that come about? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towntongie. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. These are, I’ll say, educated guesses. It is more precise in that they use a lot of actuarial data from historical, current trends, the age of employees, how long they typically worked for the employer. They take all of this information and they make a fairly precise, educated guess. There may be some variations in uptake of the benefits, but that being said, we need to make sure that we carry an appropriate liability in our books so that if things come to fruition, we do have the resources allocated to fund this benefit program. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want clarification on the briefing note, “additional service contracts.” Are these sole source contracts, or what are “additional service contracts”? I would like to get clarification on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It’s my final question.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towntongie. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the member isolate which page she is looking at? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Ms. Towntongie, if you could please clarify your question. Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It’s in the MLA briefing note 2018-19, Health spending by program area. It tells me, “additional service contracts, main estimates.” I want to get

clarification. Are these sole source contracts? What is “additional service contracts”? Is it outside of Nunavut? Is it within the Nunavut administration? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Ms. Towtongie. You’re jumping ahead a little bit. We’re currently doing Finance and you’re asking a question on Health. We will wait until we get to that department and we will let you ask your question at that time.

Anybody with have any other questions? Thank you. Finance. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$5,512,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Health. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$9,406,000. I will now ask Ms. Towtongie if you want to ask that same question to the minister. Before I go to her, Minister Hickee, are you prepared to answer that question or do you want her to repeat the question again? Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: If the member could repeat the question. I was focusing on the finance side of things. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for allowing me to ask this question because it’s telling me “additional service contracts.” If it’s additional, is it within the GN administration of government or is it a sole source contract outside for

specialists to get into Nunavut? Is that clear? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towtongie. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of different service contracts that we have. The total out of this one is approximately \$700,000. I’m just looking at some of the detail that I have in there. I’m not sure if I have the level of detail that the member is requesting with me here right now, but basically it’s any additional service contracts that we would need. I don’t want to make a presumption, Mr. Chairman, so I’ll have to leave it at that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickee. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on medical travel, \$5.4 million over, I know that there is no easy answer and because there’s so much demand on medical travel and everybody wants an escort and everybody wants this and that, but in what ways is the department trying to cut down on the costs for medical travel? Are there ways that you could cut down? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question. There has been a lot of work that’s ongoing with our Medical Travel Division, with our Finance Division within the Department of Health, collaborating with officials with the Department of Finance itself.

With medical travel specifically, through ongoing review, we have made some changes already, like the breastfeeding children and that to be able to attend. We're anticipating [fewer] cancellations with that, which brings additional expenses into play. Some of the other aspects that we're successfully implementing... Well, maybe not successfully implementing this week, but the MEDITECH system has rolled out to all communities now, which has been able to keep the charts or the progress of the patients with a lot more readily available information to make sure that appointments are initiated on the system when medical travel is brought in. As part of the review, we're looking at training more frequently or in more detail.

Typically, as I'm sure most members are aware, when there are short staffing situations in a health centre, oftentimes the medical travel person is grabbed from wherever, so that consistency of service is flawed and by no fault of the people who are doing it, but because they're thrust into a position because it's needed immediately. One of the things that we're really focusing on and there have been a number of trips from our medical travel team out to the communities to do better training and looking at bringing people in. That's going to be one of the key components, I think, is the training aspect to lower... .

I'm probably talking too fast for the interpreters. My apologies.

When we have people who are given the resources to be able to do their job better, they're able to function and provide better service. Those are just some of the quick, high, easy ones to

pick from.

Through the medical travel review, we're going to continue to evaluate notification times of medical travel, making sure that when people are cleared to go home, the case management system is better coordinated with medical travel so that people aren't waiting, they're finished their appointments, but they're not waiting to be cleared to travel. There are a number of different measures that we're taking. I'll leave it at that for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. In terms of medical travel, we know that the government has negotiated a new term. Maybe it's publicly available and maybe it's not. I don't know, but I wonder if the minister can tell us the differences between the last contract and the current one that they just negotiated, what kind of a difference, even if it's just a percentage, up or down or the same. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In general most communities went down. Some communities did go up, but it is a community-by-community basis. I would say that overall the rates went down. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good news. Hopefully

it can be passed down to all these other expenses.

Just in terms of the medical travel review that's often talked about, are we going to get any chance at all in the House here to review what's being done to date with that review, what kinds of findings that you have come to a conclusion of and because of that, you're going to make this change or that change, and maybe even like the feedback from patients on how they feel medical travel is working for them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Forgive my hesitation. Basically the format that the review is being done in is not like a report. We're reviewing the operations of medical travel in various different ways and different layers. I would have to speak to my officials on how that could be correlated into a report type structure. We're basically looking at fixing things as we see issues, so it is fluid, like there's no end date. There wasn't really even a start date.

Over the years as we have sat in this House and brought forward supplementary appropriations for medical travel every year, we recognized one thing that it's an underfunded category, but at the same time we have to be able to justify adding additional resources to it. We need to make sure that we're expending the resources fiscally responsibly. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister actually responded in a way that shows why you should be sharing that report. I would be really interested in seeing if the department could do that. It's just about sharing information because off the over-expenditures of the appropriation, it gives us a better understanding of what has been happening to date, what is the department trying to do about it because this picture here that we see is a familiar picture. It's something that happens every year, like you said. If the department can do it in a way that doesn't jeopardize any personal information of any kind but maybe just in overall of what kinds of problems the department faces and maybe how do Nunavummiut feel this program is working. That's just a comment there.

Just in terms of funding, there was some talk before about that zero-based funding or something and you start from there. Why aren't we doing that yet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In some respects we are to a certain degree. We're not so much zero based, but we're looking at using more actuals from previous years, similar yet different. I think one of the key components when you're looking at budgetary processes is there are different pressures; things change as years progress. As programs mature or deflate, whatever you want to call it, uptake goes up and down. We need to be better adjusting or better able to adjust our figures from year to year.

It's very easy if your budget is a hundred thousand dollars and you get a 2.5 percent increase, you just add your 2.5 percent to your hundred thousand dollars, but what we're pushing all departments to do more and my finance officials are working with health officials with the finance crews to help with the forecasting. That's one of the issues that we've had challenges with. When you're looking at the increase in medical travel, the growth is off the charts. There's no consistency to it, so it's very difficult to forecast. I think we do a reasonable job of forecasting the numbers, but at the same time it's providing business cases to add money to match those forecasts. That's where some of the challenges lie. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On that medical travel review, what is the focus of that review? Is it specifically focused on cutting costs and finding ways to do things cheaper or is it also about streamlining your operations in terms of medical travel? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. It's a very important one and for a couple of different factors. We recognize the medical travel costs are increasing and I'm sitting here again looking for an appropriation, so cost is a factor, but so is the service. If you look at one of changes that we have made in

the Medical Travel Policy is allowing breastfeeding mothers to take their infants with them. That actually added expenses to our medical travel; it doesn't cost an airplane ticket, but the boarding homes still charge for that.

When we brought forward those changes to our Medical Travel Policy, we're actually increasing the cost on the program, but it's providing a service that Nunavummiut want and, in my opinion, need. When you've got a mother, if it's not interfering with medical care that's being provided, infants who are breastfeeding should be with their mothers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The medical travel review, what I was looking for was: are ways being found to save money? I recognize the breastfeeding infants thing, yes, that's important, of course. All of this is important and that's the tough thing about medical travel is who wants to be the person to say "No, we're not going to send you out for that appointment because we can't afford it." I don't think anyone wants to say that.

Specifically when it comes to saving money, I'll use an example. Some of my constituents come to me and they say "I'm travelling tomorrow and I received my ticket today." I believe that was something that was also flagged in the Lufthansa report in terms of how governments buy plane tickets and that there was no consistency in terms of making sure you get the best price for the ticket.

Specifically with regard to making sure tickets are booked at least two weeks in advance to get the cheapest fare, is that something that's happening within the department right now? (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main.
Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to when we book, it's not a factor in the cost. We have contracted ticket price. When we book is, I'll say, more or less irrelevant. That being said, that is one of the things like I had mentioned earlier, the timing of notifications of travel is a very important aspect of, for one... I'll use the member as an example, if the Chair will indulge me. I know the member has children. If he had a medical appointment that he just found out about and he's got to leave tomorrow, he's going to have to try to find child care. That can put a lot of challenges to people where people don't go to their appointment or they miss the plane or instances like that.

One of the things that I think is very important to realize is we are here asking for more money and I acknowledge there are issues that we're developing and working on within our Medical Travel Division, but there's also a responsibility of the public and of our patients when they're travelling to make sure they do meet the flight that they're scheduled to fly on, that they do go to the appointment that they're scheduled to go to, and that they follow the rules when they're on medical travel. There are extra costs incurred if somebody misses their appointment. It may be months before their next appointment. We've

got to bring them home and then we've got to send them back down again for their appointment that they should have been at before.

No-shows to flights has been raised to me a couple of times from airline executives, what a challenge that is when they're trying to schedule their flights and the amount of seats that are available on a plane. They may be turning away passengers because medical travel is a priority for going to an appointment. They may be turning away passengers and then we have medical travel patients that don't show up. Those are seats the airline could have sold.

I will sit here and take full responsibility for issues that we are working on and, for lack of a better term, on ongoing development of streamlining the process, but our patients have a responsibility as well too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes.
Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends)
Thank you, minister. When it comes to empty seats or missed appointments or missed flights, does the department track that and do we have anything resembling an estimate as to the costs of these mistakes, I'll call them? (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main.
Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's an ongoing part of the review. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Along the lines of what my colleague was talking about, it's important for us. We're sitting here and we're being asked approve this, and it's an annual exercise. I think it would be great to have some additional information in terms of what you find out through that review. Once a figure is put onto the cost of missed appointments and empty seats, etcetera, will those estimates or figures be shared with members? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's very important information to share with the public to see the impact of some of these practices and the frequency of them. As soon as I get that information, I will gladly share it with members. I think it's important. We have all, me included, had constituents contact us. I have dealt with just about every member in this House on medical travel issues with their constituents.

I know our staff work very hard to try to accommodate requests as they come in. I had a question in question period earlier today where medical travel patients, when they're travelling, need to know that the rules and the contact information and all that are in there. I think it's a very important component, yes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you. We will look forward to receiving more information on that.

The minister mentioned earlier boarding homes. I'm just looking at the items here and my question is: are there extra costs through under additional service contracts or is it under other expenses? Are there costs associated with boarding homes in this supp. bill? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: I don't believe so. I would have to look through the intimate detail on every line item that makes up this bill, but I don't have that information with me. Typically boarding home expenses... . Again, how do I vocalize this properly? The majority of our boarding home expenses are covered through NIHB, but not all and that's something that discussions are ongoing about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On that note, Non-Insured Health Benefits and the federal government, the recent change with regard to expectant mothers where they get an escort now, where that's a policy or guideline now where they have to have an escort, as a government, have we been made whole in terms of extra funding from the federal government to cover those costs or right now are we just eating those costs with our existing budget specifically with regard to the recent

change to escorts and pregnant mothers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It depends to which boarding home people are going to. We have negotiated rates with the boarding homes and then there are negotiated rates with Health Canada or Indigenous Services on what we're reimbursed for those facilities. They're not always equal and they don't have to have an escort, but they're entitled to one. Typically most people do take the opportunity to have an escort when they're away from home for so long, but at the same time we have to make up the difference, if that makes sense to the member.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I wonder if the minister would be able to tally that up or provide that information to us at a later date in terms of what the difference is and what we are covering as a government because we have to find ways to either increase our revenues on this health file or decrease the expenses. As mentioned, decreasing the expenses is pretty difficult. I'll just put that out there as a request.

My last question on this item is the recent changes to air travel, the passenger bill of rights, means that passengers are now eligible for vouchers in the case of a delay in their flights. In the case of these medical travellers, when there is a delay and vouchers are

issued... I believe I received one recently for a hundred and something dollars.

Is the Department of Health speaking with the Department of Finance or whoever they have to, to make sure that that voucher goes back into the Department of Health's budget to reduce the travel expenses? In my mind that seems like the logical thing to happen. It's a government ticket that they're travelling on. That's my last question in terms of those vouchers and how they will be dealt with. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's not something that has been discussed in detail. I think there are also differing opinions that it's the traveller who is inconvenienced by whatever circumstance caused the reason for the voucher to be issued, whether it be for additional food or shelter, if it's a rebate on a ticket or maybe a discount on a future ticket, but I appreciate the member's question. Maybe we will initiate a little bit more in-depth discussion on that internally. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Next on my list, Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, minister.

Maybe I'll speak English. (interpretation ends) You mentioned that some medical travel patients are not going and you explained a bit on that as some of the areas that you encounter, and certainly you did state that our patients got a

responsibility too. I agree with that, but on the other hand a lot of patients that are sent out at times encounter or find out that they have no appointments and therefore the department has to fly them back. We see that a lot, patients who have been sent down south and coming back saying apparently there was no appointment made, and then the travel cost is used.

Do you have records of patients who were sent out and brought back because there were no appointments? I mean, these are the things that are experienced by our Nunavummiut. Do you have any numbers or do you keep track of those? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quassa. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. Again, it's a very good one. It's another question that I have asked for further information on. That is also something that is either being tracked or will be tracked in the very near future.

I will say that as we have progressed through the MEDITECH implementation across the territory, those instances are fewer and fewer. We have a lot better tracking mechanism through the MEDITECH of when people's appointments are and they're confirmed in there. I'm not saying that it will never happen. That's part of the training regimen that we have initiated as well so that people are trained better or given more resources to be able to do their job better.

That is another important component of

that to make sure that people are aware when they have an appointment and when it's set up. Sometimes your appointment may be two months down the road and you shouldn't be finding out the day that you're travelling. That's all part of the training and the information that's available to the medical travel personnel. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, we keep hearing quite a bit about patients who are sent down, but there was no appointment. It is a concern because they're using large amounts of money to send patients down for nothing. We have heard that on more than one occasion in our communities. For that reason, I think you already said you have to revamp that area, so we encourage you further.

When you're requesting funding to cover an over-expenditure of \$9.4 million, it has to be reorganized to reduce costs. That's more of a comment, Mr. Chairman. We're really concerned about the need to fix the issue of substantial over-expenditures. I again encourage the minister to address this, as we will want to hear about changes being made. That's obvious. That's just a comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you for your comment. We're on Health, Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$9,406,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go to page 6.

Community and Government Services. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$2,847,000. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, good evening, everybody. Sorry I'm a bit late and I must also advise everybody that I been up since five and I'm struggling off of three hours of sleep, but I'll try to do my best to put together sentences here.

>> *Laughter*

My first question is with regard to the \$1.8 million for prior year expenses. My first question is: what were those specific expenditures for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you. If members could give me a moment, please.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for the delay. I needed to wrap my head around the response.

Basically it was the forecasting of utilities, sealift logistics, and maintenance forecasting. There have been events, specifically weather being mentioned as one of them, which delayed some of the invoicing or the work, so it had an impact on when the invoices were received. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickee. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Typically at year-end

procedures, it states that the departments will send letters to vendors asking them to provide any invoices prior to the year-end cut-off date. How were these specific invoices missed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the specific information of which companies or which invoices were delayed. It was basically the fact that the invoices weren't received when the work was being done when it should have been allocated to the appropriate budget. I can't answer for what companies or why there was delayed invoicing. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickee. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Typically when an error is identified regarding prior year expenditures, there is a correction made through restatements of prior year expenditures and typically it's corrected in a future year as opposed to the current year that it was identified in. My next question is why this particular expense wasn't corrected through a restatement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From what I understand, it came in very late and very close to the finalization of our public accounts and it was felt with the timing that this was the best course of action. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next question and it's in relation to the QEC utility rates increase. In the briefing binder that was provided, it indicates that QEC utility rates increased 3.3 percent. It also identifies that the utilities budget is overspent by \$3 million, which was 10 percent of the \$30 million budget. My question is: how is it that the QEC's 3 percent increase led to a 10 percent increase in the budget? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through the Chairman, if I could ask my Deputy Minister of Finance to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Chown.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The utility rate increase was one of the most significant impacts on the amount in that budget. CGS also is part of the annual budgeting process. As members mentioned earlier, it was making an effort to adjust its budgets to be more reflective of actual trends. When they developed the budget for this particular year, they looked at the history of the budget there and they actually did a budget adjustment downwards to reflect what they were seeing as those trends.

For various reasons, those trends didn't stay consistent and when you're working with a budget of this magnitude, there are a lot of different things that can come

into play that will impact the actual expenses for the year. If you have a warm year, your heating costs may go down; if you have a cold year, they may go up. They adjust it based on their historical trends. Those trends didn't prove to come out the same in this particular year and so expenses were also a little bit higher just for whatever are the reasons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Chown. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question has two parts to it. First, Mr. Chown had indicated that CGS is trying to run budgets to actuals, which led to a decrease in the electricity budgets. What are historical utility expenses that CGS has been paying? Secondly, the QEC had proposed this utility rate increase long before the budget development process was underway. The QEC said that they want to increase the rates and then a few months later during the budget process, CGS determined that the budget had a surplus and decided to reduce it. A two-part question: what are the historical actuals and secondly, how was it that the QEC proposed an increase and CGS decided to have a decrease? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. I think your question is pretty detailed and I don't think we're going to get that level of information from the minister at this type of sitting, but I'll ask the minister if he wants to comment on it. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can give the 2017-18

number of \$36,555,000.

With regard specifically to adjustments, when an entity such as the Qulliq Energy Corporation puts in a proposal for a rate increase, it doesn't mean there will be a rate increase. That would be one consideration brought into play. As well, like Deputy Minister Chown mentioned, there was some forecasting discrepancy, I guess I'll say, that the usage was more than what was anticipated. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this will be my last question. Looking at prior year actuals, CGS has had a significant surplus in the last three years, ranging from \$4 million to \$6 million. I do understand that CGS has substantiated the need for this \$2.8 million, but out of curiosity, what has differed in this year which had led to a deficit or meeting the current budget whereas prior years, program spending had seen a surplus? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically, as Mr. Chown had mentioned earlier, they have been managing the budgets better. Going back to actual uses, as the members brought up numerous times in this House, this is sometimes the ramification of using actuals. Sometimes you're off and you have to come back for more money. In my opinion that's, I guess in some ways, the price of using actuals and the best guesses and forecasting, but not having cushions for departments that have

lapsed funds in the past. If we're going to do a proper budgeting methodology, we're going to see this from time to time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My first question is: for the \$1,848,000 amount that my colleague was asking about, would the department be able to provide some more detailed information at a later date in terms of these invoices? It was mentioned that they came in very late. It sounds like an extraordinary, out of the ordinary type of situation. If we could be provided that information at a later date, it's my request. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Hourie beside me doesn't think that that will be an issue, but she will have to check with her officials on the level of detail. It's probably worth noting that as the member mentioned, this is kind of an extraordinary occurrence. Typically there would be an adjustment to the final accounts. In this instance, just with the timing, it was really awkward timing. Typically it wouldn't go this way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you and I hope that that

information will be forthcoming. The fact that it is out of the ordinary, for me, that's what kind of attracts my attention and makes me more curious.

With regard to the utility increases and looking at ways to control these expenses, does CGS have a policy on shutting off computers when they're no longer in use and shutting off the lights when there's no longer any business being done in GN facilities?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of any type of a direct policy, but I think all of us and anyone watching and listening, including myself, I don't always shut my computer off at night and look at the harm that could take place. That's another computer that may have to be fixed. I think, anyone listening, take note and I think it might even be worth a little communications plan. We do in some of CGS's projects. We've got the Energy Management Program, which automatically controls the lights. That's not an issue, but I think we all have a responsibility in energy saving. I think I for one have to change some of my habits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. I must also say that yes, I'm guilty of leaving my computer on sometimes and even the lights, but it's just a suggestion that if a policy of

that type was to be developed, maybe it might help to reduce future expenses. I don't want to be accused of micromanaging the government, but we are talking about a \$36 million utility budget here. I'll just put that on the record.

There are government facilities where lights are left on, on a routine basis. I don't know why. If it's safety or something, okay fine. It's just a suggestion. No further questions. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. We are on Community and Government Services. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$2,847,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go back to page 2. Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) No. 2, 2018-19. Schedule 1. Operations and Maintenance. Operations and Maintenance Appropriation. \$17,765,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Now I'll members to go to Bill 33 in your legislative binders.

Thank you. We are on Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019*. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary Amounts Appropriated for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2019. Vote 1: Operations and Maintenance. Total Supplementary Appropriation. \$17,765,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree to Bill 33 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree, pursuant to Rule 62(2), that Bill 33 can be placed on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. I got ahead of myself. I apologize. Okay, we did the Schedule, right, and that was fine. Where I made the mistake is I forgot to go to clause 4. Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree to Bill 33 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree, pursuant to Rule 62(2), that Bill 33 can be placed on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes, do you have any closing comments? Please go ahead.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again I just want to thank the staff, not just the staff that are here with me or in the gallery but behind the scenes of putting all this information together and allowing me to be able to answer the questions in the level of detail that I did. We did take some notes of some of the comments and requested information and we will continue to follow up with members. I do want to thank all the people behind the scenes that put in hours and hours of work on these issues. Thank you.

Bill 26 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. We will now move on to Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, and I will ask Minister Hickes if he has any opening comments. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Yes, I do, but before I do that, I would request a change in witnesses, please.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-

Arms, if you could please escort the witness out.

Do members agree to let a different witness come to the table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the new witness in.

Thank you. For the record, Minister Hickes, if you could please introduce your witness and then continue on into your opening comments. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. Joining me now is Dan Carlson, Assistant Deputy Minister at the Department of Finance.

Mr. Chairman and members, I appear before you today to present Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*.

On July 1, 2019 the federal government implemented its carbon tax in Nunavut. This increased the price of fuel slightly by about 5 cents per litre. The Government of Canada has agreed to pass along all carbon taxes it collects in Nunavut to the Government of Nunavut. The amount we will receive depends on how much the federal government collects.

We currently expect to raise over \$12 million in 2019-2020. The Government of Nunavut itself will pay some of this through our own higher utility bills to heat public housing and government buildings like schools and health centres.

Mr. Chairman and members, our

government intends to use the rest of these federal carbon revenues, about \$10 million, to directly benefit Nunavummiut and their businesses. One of these ways is to fund a new Nunavut carbon rebate, which will provide an immediate at-the-pump rebate to consumers. I have sought appropriations for this program separately through Bill 23.

I am pleased to announce that our government, through Bill 26, is taking steps to use carbon revenues to reduce territorial income tax that Nunavummiut and their businesses pay. We are proposing to do this in three ways.

First, we propose to increase the basic personal amount from \$13,325,000 to \$16,000. This means that each taxpayer in Nunavut will be able to earn nearly \$3,000 more in a year before they begin to pay territorial tax.

>> *Applause*

In other words we are using federal carbon revenues so that Nunavummiut can keep more of what they earn. We expect this change will benefit about 15,500 taxpayers and in total will save Nunavummiut about \$1.5 million in personal income taxes in 2019.

Second, Mr. Chairman and members, we propose to increase the maximum cost of living tax credit from \$1,200 to \$1,500. Nunavut taxpayers who earn more than \$60,000 will receive up to \$300 more back when they file their taxes. We expect this change will benefit about 7,200 tax filers and will reduce income taxes by another \$1.8 million.

Third, we propose to reduce Nunavut's

corporate tax rate for small businesses from 4 percent to 3 percent. In this way our government is helping support the nearly 1,100 firms that live and work in our communities and pay taxes in Nunavut. We expect this change will reduce our corporate income tax revenues by about \$2.9 million in 2019-2020 and by about \$3 million per year starting in 2020-21.

Mr. Chairman and members, through these tax reductions our government is taking steps to give back over \$6.2 million in federal carbon revenues to Nunavummiut and their businesses this year. We expect total tax savings over the next four fiscal years will reach nearly \$27 million.

Through Bill 26, our government is taking significant action to recycle carbon revenues back into our economy.

Mr. Chairman and members, this concludes my opening comments and I would be pleased to take any questions. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Go ahead, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 26.

(interpretation ends) As members will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved \$3.6 million in funding for the new Nunavut Carbon Rebate Program during the recent spring sitting of the

House. The initiative was introduced through the passage of *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2019-2020*.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee on the occasion of its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 26, members engaged in a robust dialogue on a range of issues, including the extent to which the government envisions the proposed tax cuts to be permanent, as well as its rationale for mitigating the impact of the federal carbon tax on Nunavummiut through the proposed mechanism rather than through direct cash payments to residents.

I wish to note that although the standing committee agreed to report Bill 26 back to the House, a number of individual members may raise additional concerns as the Committee of the Whole proceeds with its consideration of the bill. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Are there any general comments? Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In reading Bill 26, it's going to impact private homeowners if we're going to become environmentally conscious. I have a constituent in Rankin Inlet. She bought an environmentally friendly door on sale at \$3,000. Last I heard of it, it had gone for \$15,000, it's now at \$17,000 with labour costs and installing that environmentally friendly door for Nunavut. While the bill in large is good, I really feel for the private homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for your comment. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just wanted to thank the department for providing additional information as requested by the committee and by members because this is a complex issue as it pertains to the carbon tax. In a general sense we already deal with a very high cost of living up here. The carbon tax, I think, for that reason, was a big concern for my constituents. I'm pleased to see that the government is taking steps to try to reduce my constituents' tax burden to compensate for the increased costs of the carbon tax. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Any more general comments? If not, we will move on. We are on Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*. Clause 1. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I think this is the legislation that we have talked about a lot and there are concerns because, well, for me anyhow, maybe we haven't seen the language about rebates and more direct rebates for using less fuel like doing alternative energy projects. If you want to put, I don't know, solar panelling up or if you want to have a windmill or whatever it is, it's so expensive and it's really hard to do that. You would think that with a bill like this, it would talk about that a little more whereas, I think, as a department you have gone more into the income tax. I understand why you have done that.

What I would like to say is that I think it needs also another approach and, that is,

to go into looking at incentives. If I'm going to buy appliances that use less energy, if I'm going to put better windows into my house, if I'm going to try myself to do those kinds of things because as a homeowner we're the ones who are impacted, then I would like to see the government do its part and offer some kind of incentive to be doing this kind of thing. I just wanted to state that for the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for your comment. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions and my first question is... I appreciate the need to return these carbon revenues back to those that incurred the expenses. My first question is: why is it that there are no rebates for...? Sorry. Why are there no tax rebates for homeowners or individuals or businesses that choose to invest in initiatives that will be reducing their carbon footprint? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While there is potential for rebate programs down the road and homeownership renovation programs down the road, this is our first year of a ten-year endeavour of the carbon tax, so this is the measure that we felt would make an immediate impact in people's pocketbooks.

In the one case specifically to people in the higher salary ranges, those are typically the people who are the homeowners or do have vehicles that

would be impacted most by the carbon tax. Those are measures that we took one step across the board to make sure that every tax filer has a benefit and to another step so that people in the higher brackets were likely incurring more expenses related to the carbon tax get a benefit, as well as small businesses to help defray some of their increased expenses so they don't pass that along to the consumer. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question was in relation to tax rebates to assist in energy efficiency initiatives. My next question is: why are these carbon tax revenues not being used for incentive programs to assist individuals or businesses with purchase or installation of energy efficiency initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like I said, this is a ten-year endeavour. This is year one and these are the steps that we have taken to make an immediate impact. There are going to be all kinds of ideas that are going to be floated down the road and we're open to ideas. We have put a call out to departments. Here now I put a call out anybody, members here sitting in the room, anyone out in the public who listening, if they've got ideas on how the government could create or enhance existing programming to make improvements or use carbon tax revenues to do what it's intended to do, is to reduce our carbon footprint, of

which we have some limited options, but there are some options available to us that we want to encourage. Right now we are here for these income tax measures. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Climate change is a matter that I take very seriously and I believe that it is one of the major challenges that are facing this generation as well as the generations to follow. With that being said, I have put forward rough ideas and recommendations to this government on numerous occasions about ideas to incentivize or introduce programming to encourage Nunavummiut to adopt energy efficiency initiatives. I'm not sure how many times I have brought it up, but I have brought it up several times on several different occasions over the last two years. Why have those ideas not been taken into consideration and proposed to be used with carbon tax revenues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the departments responsible for individual programs such as what the member is talking about were listening, and I look forward to seeing business cases come forward on how to access additional carbon tax revenues that we receive. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the minister's response just

now, he had indicated that he is looking forward to departments submitting business cases for use of carbon tax revenues. Does that mean that the minister has yet to receive any submissions from departments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have received business cases. Some are more complex than others and some have been sent back to departments to do a bit more research and more work on.

We look at the Green Investment Fund that Community and Government Services has put out, the street light project that Qulliq Energy has put out, the immediate fuel rebate at the pump, these income tax measures... . Those are about six or seven different approaches just on our first year.

I'm excited to see what opportunities come forward or additional programming to help, for one, to utilize these revenues, but for two, to make sure that they're acting in a way which was the intent of the carbon tax. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate that the government is leaving some room available with carbon tax revenues to then potentially use later on for such initiatives, but given that there is a 50 percent rebate at the pump as well as this \$6 million tax rebate system which is going to use 50 percent of the \$12

million revenues that is projected to be generated through carbon tax revenues, I believe that doesn't leave that much room left for potential energy efficiency initiatives. My next question is: given the 50 percent rebate at the pump plus this additional 50 percent usage of the carbon tax revenues, why is there so little room being left behind for energy efficiency initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the member well knows that this carbon tax is based on a certain pricing structure that is increasing each year for five years, of which we're continuing that at-the-pump rebate. Every other increase is open to new programs, so there is going to be increasingly more room every year. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next question and it's in relation to the letter we received from the minister on October 28. In the letter, the minister explains how each different area of the tax amendments will be aimed at the different areas of the population, from low-income earners to high-income earners to businesses.

One issue that one of my colleagues had raised was the lack of assistance to homeowners who will be receiving the brunt of the carbon tax. The one initiative that's aimed at these individuals is the increase in the cost of

living tax credit where it will benefit individuals making between \$60,000 and \$80,000. I'm worried that homeowners won't really be seeing much of a benefit in this specific cost of living tax credit, as I'm not sure if I know any homeowners that earn a salary range of \$60,000 to \$80,000.

Mr. Chairman, I'm worried that this initiative that's aimed at assisting the homeowners is not going to really actually end up being paid out to homeowners. With this cost of living tax credit, how many Nunavummiut will actually be receiving the potential \$300 rebate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I covered it in my opening comments that approximately 7,200 people would benefit from that rebate. Mr. Chairman, the member very well knows there are different tax brackets and once you hit that \$60,000 tax bracket, it's not \$60,000 to \$80,000; it's like \$60,000 to infinity. You would get that \$300 extra tax credit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the minister's opening comments the minister stated that individuals would receive up to \$300, so every individual who has an income of over \$60,000 will be receiving \$300 back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Correct, yes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: My next question is: for homeowners or individuals who do pay their own heating fuel costs, how much will this carbon tax increase their home heating fuel costs on a yearly basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously it depends on usage, but basically half as much with the rebate right at the pump, again, that is for home heating fuel as well too that the immediate fuel rebate is brought into play, that 50 percent of that is knocked right off at the price. There is an immediate impact on the carbon tax of only 50 percent impact as well as the incentives from a tax standpoint. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is along the lines of the decision to return the rebates through the reduction in income tax. It's my understanding that we're currently heavily reliant on federal transfers and our own-source revenues make up 10 to 15 percent of what we receive. We're very reliant on those own-source revenues that we do generate to meet our operational needs.

For example, whenever a member brings up a request for additional funding or a

new initiative in their communities, the response is “There are fiscal constraints. We can’t do that.” The way I see it, by reducing our income taxes that the GN receives and replacing it by carbon tax revenues, we’re essentially using the carbon tax revenues to pay government operations. My question is: why is it that the government is using carbon tax revenues to fund government operations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A very small part of the carbon tax revenue that we collect is going to stay with the Government of Nunavut and it’s basically to offset our own carbon that we don’t qualify for the rebates that we’re creating to offset some of those increased costs.

Mr. Chairman, I don’t think the public would be very fond of us if we took these carbon revenues and put them into our general revenue and didn’t pass on any of these savings to the consumer. Our intent with this first-level foray into our carbon tax programs, because there are a number of them, is to make sure that we are lessening the immediate impact from the first level of carbon tax. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I completely agree that the carbon tax revenues need to be returned to the individuals who incurred the expenses, but by doing so through the *Income Tax Act*, I don’t believe it’s the most efficient manner of doing it.

Mr. Chairman, I’ll move on to my next question. The minister had indicated that some of the funds will be retained to offset increased government expenses that are accountable to the carbon tax. My question is: how much is the government going to incur in increased costs associated to carbon tax revenues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone, and if you could move your phone away from the microphone a little bit too, please. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We’re projecting in the 2019-2020 fiscal year approximately \$1.8 million; in the 2020 fiscal year approximately \$3.4 million; in 2021-22 we’re estimating approximately \$4.5 million; and in 2022-23 approximately \$5.3 million. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a significant amount when we’re talking about millions of dollars. Which department or government organizations will be receiving the brunt of this increased cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would say the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the Nunavut Housing Corporation receive a portion of this carbon tax revenue to offset the increased cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just through the normal budgeting appropriation cycle, yes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My first questions are about the tax cut to businesses and a good chunk of this funding will go towards cutting tax for businesses. It mentions in the documentation that there are about 950, I think, mentioned in there. It's for small businesses specifically that earn under \$500,000 a year. I have to say that I'm very happy to see business-specific measures in this bill because our small businesses in Nunavut are already being crushed at every opportunity with shipping, airfare, and utilities. Anything we can do to help them out, I think, is good.

I have two questions. I'll just ask them both at once on the business thing. Number one, were consultations done with any business-related organizations, and number two, does the department have estimates on the average benefit that the 1 percent decrease will provide to these businesses in terms of reducing the tax burden? I don't know what their average tax return is. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would depend. I'll touch on the second one first as I'm trying to recall the first one.

On the second one, when you're looking at small business, it would depend on how much revenue that they're claiming. Again, if they're claiming like up to the \$500,000 mark, it would be \$5,000 in tax savings that they would save.

I do apologize, Mr. Chairman. I lost track of the first question. My sincere apologies. I remember now or I was reminded. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

There wasn't a direct consultation to my awareness, but it has been talked about numerous times in this House and in public about tax measures. I just got flipped the note that there actually was some consultation in late September 2017 that there was talk from the chamber of commerce of the small business tax rates, as well as there were discussions with the association of mines and with individual mines. To what level those consultations were, I don't have that level of detail with me.

I will say that it has been brought up in this House that the small business tax rate was on the higher end in the territory. There is some recognition that: how do we stop or how do we limit the increases in services to our residents from small businesses that provide a lot of the services in our communities? This 1 percent tax rate decrease was thought to be a very good strategy and I agree with it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am in full support of that. (interpretation ends) When it comes to homeowners in terms of additional initiatives, there have been one-time rebates provided to homeowners in the past and they were, I believe, \$500. Specifically it was to respond to fuel rate or fuel price spikes at the time. I realize it's not in this bill, so you might rule me out of order, Mr. Chairman, but has that been discussed? Is that on the radar in terms of future initiatives to give homeowners a cheque to help them to cope with the carbon tax? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe, when I was sitting maybe in that seat specifically or maybe one off, I was very successful in lobbying for continued support of the fuel tax rebate program as fuel prices were increasing. As they have stabilized, we have stopped that program for the time being. It doesn't mean, out of carbon tax revenue, that that's off the table. That is, again, something that, going forward with these increasing revenues, we're going to have access to going forward. There are going to be a number of different programs to look at and I thank the member for raising it again. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In the letter that's provided on October 30, it details the estimates on increased costs to the GN of the carbon tax. As mentioned, the Nunavut Housing Corporation will take a lot of the extra costs because of the amount of fuel oil. CGS is also mentioned here in terms of heating GN buildings.

I'm wondering about municipalities. Do those increased costs include increased costs to municipalities that heat things like community halls, parking garages, hamlet offices, and whatnot? I just want to hear that municipalities are being taken into consideration that they're going to face increased costs as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was recognized through the fuel rebate that we lessened the impact that way. There is no specific program at this time for municipalities. I'm just going to say that there's nothing that's off the table when we're looking at future revenue allocations on different programs. I take any and all suggestions and we will see what type of impacts we can make.

I will state another, as Minister Ehaloak brought forward, the street light program. That is going to save the municipalities a lot of money as well too. That is another immediate impact that this carbon tax initiative is going to bring forward in savings. I can't remember the numbers offhand, but I know it was asked during Minister

Ehloak's appearance for that part of this plan and it was quite substantial, so that will save municipalities money immediately. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I only have two more questions. My second-last question is about income assistance recipients. There are a huge number of them in Nunavut and based on the documentation or based on my understanding, the only benefit that most income assistance recipients would see would be from increasing the basic personal allowance.

Taking the average income assistance recipient and looking at their average tax return, what is the average result going to be? I don't know if that's too general of a question, but there are a lot of income assistance recipients and I just wanted to hear that that scenario or that group of people has been taken into consideration. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While there is some variation to it, approximately about \$110 would be an immediate impact, but it was stressed throughout these different options that were being brought forward is people on income support who are in public housing are in very heavily subsidized...they don't pay the same power rates, so that's why the increased costs to the Nunavut Housing Corporation is such an impact because

people in public housing won't see a change. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I guess I'll rephrase the question. It says here in one of your letters...I forget; I'm getting mixed up. It says "Increasing the basic personal allowance will save each tax filer in Nunavut over \$100 each year from the start." It also goes on to say "This matters most to individuals at the lower end of the income scale." Does that include income assistance recipients? Will they see a benefit from these changes? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question. This way maybe I can simplify things a little bit.

When you're looking at the basic allowance right now, the \$13,250 I think it is, it's the cut-off point. That's when we start charging you a tax. Right now we're raising that so that until you hit that limit, you won't pay any taxes. Up to that \$16,000 mark, you won't pay any territorial taxes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My last question or questions are about the risks to the government in terms of implementing this. The carbon tax is in

place and although there are different federal parties that have proposed to repeal it, it is in place for the time being.

I know we don't know what future federal governments are going to look like, and it was in response to that type of questioning that the department clarified to committee members that this is intended to be a permanent tax cut or permanent change to the system. With regard to the carbon tax, the revenue side that we are receiving from the federal government, do we have security or a written agreement that gives us assurances that this money will be coming in?

I know that it is based on estimates that this money will be coming in. Do we have surety or assurances when it comes to the exemptions to the carbon tax, which were power generation and aviation, I believe? Do we have some security or assurances that we won't be left holding the bag if changes are made in Ottawa? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as a formal agreement, no, we don't. The federal government could make changes to it in its authority, but I would seriously caution them in doing that and I don't think there is any intent to do that.

That being said, the tax policy that we're bringing forward is a sound policy for a couple of different reasons. The main one is the immediate offset and impact of the carbon tax, but from a revenue standpoint from the government, our

population is continuing to grow, so we're going to continue to grow our tax filers as well too. That at some point is going to offset what we're paying down. We're going to continue to grow the territory as an economy as a population. At some point there will be that alignment, if you want to call it that, of the revenues we're generating now to what we're going to be generating in the future. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Specifically on those exemptions for power generation and aviation, is there anything in writing that gives us security there? That's my last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: I just learned a new term, Mr. Chairman. We don't have a specific contract; we have a strong political understanding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Laughter*

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. You're done, Mr. Main? Thank you. We are on clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 26 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree, pursuant to Rule 62(2), that Bill 26 can be placed on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes, do you have any closing comments? Please go ahead.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate a lot of the commentary and a lot of the questions and ideas that were brought forward here today. I would strongly encourage members or people out in the public, if they have ideas, to write to their MLA or to the government and bring forward some of these ideas.

I just wanted to follow up. The member mentioned the standing committee appearance and how we did provide some written correspondence just prior to that right under the gun. There were some questions that were raised in there

that although we didn't commit to coming back in writing before we had this IT issue, we did. We were in the midst of drafting a response to some of the detailed questions and I will commit to the committee that I will follow up with that and I will forward that information to the committee once we get these issues resolved.

I want to thank the members for their support. I think there has been a lot of talk about what we're not doing with carbon tax revenues, but I think that's a very great indication of some of the ideas that I look forward to seeing on how we can utilize future revenues as they increase to decrease the impact of the carbon tax. I want to thank members for their due diligence in this and I look forward to continuing dialogue on this topic. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Bill 34 – Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. We're going to move on to Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019*. I will start by asking Minister Hickes: would you like to change your officials? Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Yes, please.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Does the committee agree for a different witness to come to the table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the new

witness in.

Thank you. For the record, Minister Hickes, if you could please introduce your witnesses and then continue on into your opening comments. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me to your right is Nathaniel Hutchinson, Director of the PPD, and obviously still with me is Deputy Minister Jeff Chown from the Department of Finance.

I would like to thank members. I appear before you today to present Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019*. Through this bill we are seeking authority to reduce the accounting book value of certain assets so that we may accurately reflect, in accounting terms, significant changes that occurred during 2018-19.

Year-end adjustments to assets and liabilities are a usual part of our accounting process. When we need to reduce the value of assets by more than \$20,000, the *Financial Administration Act* requires that we seek Assembly approval. In this way our system is designed to ensure you are aware of the more significant reductions.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation is seeking to reduce the value of its public housing stock by about \$742,315. The Nunavut Housing Corporation must write off five public housing units, a value of \$249,556 due to fire, which destroyed two units, as well as the planned demolition of three units. As these three units were old and in significant state of disrepair, the Nunavut Housing Corporation deemed it

would be more cost effective and safer to simply take them down.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation must also write down the value of ten public housing units, a value of \$492,759. Fire heavily damaged two units and, through its work to fix and repair units across Nunavut, the Nunavut Housing Corporation identified eight units with mould damage significant enough to reduce the assets' values.

Separately the Department of Community and Government Services' Petroleum Products Division is seeking authority to write off \$699,032 in fuel inventories. This reflects the evaporation or other unverifiable loss of about 820,000 litres of fuel during 2018-19, roughly 0.4 percent of the overall sales.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to take questions about this bill. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Mr. Main, please proceed.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019*.

The standing committee does not object to the purpose of the bill, which the sponsoring minister described clearly in his opening comments.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee on the occasion of its clause-by-clause consideration of the bill, members noted a significant change between the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years with respect to the volume of petroleum products being written off through this bill. I anticipate that members will seek an on-the-record clarification for this change during today's deliberations.

The standing committee has been encouraging the Minister of Community and Government Services to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly concerning the operations of the Petroleum Products Division of the department. The standing committee has recommended that this report include detailed information concerning rates of fuel evaporation, shrinkage, spillage and theft in Nunavut communities, as well as detailed information concerning inventory management practices and innovations. The standing committee is pleased to note that the first such annual report was tabled yesterday in the Legislative Assembly, earlier this week, and looks forward to future tablings.

The standing committee also notes that the Government of Nunavut has recently published information indicating that it is reviewing the structure of the Petroleum Products Division and considering a number of options, including transitioning the division into a "subsidiary corporation under the Qulliq Energy Corporation." The standing committee will monitor developments in this area with attention.

The standing committee recommends the passage of Bill 34 to all members.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Are there any general comments? If not, we will move on. We're on Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019*. Clause 1. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just a clarification, is this the point to ask questions regarding the Petroleum Products Division? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 1, as per the Schedule, is petroleum products, so this is where you would ask questions on petroleum products if you have them. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My first question is, looking at the annual report which was tabled yesterday, the general trend in the volume written off has been going down. Back in 2006-07 it was as high as 1 percent of the total volume. It's encouraging to see that the numbers have been decreasing, but in 2018-19 it was 0.4 percent of the total volume. That's a jump up again. I guess the first question is: what made 2018-19 different than the previous five years in terms of the amount written off? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickers.

Hon. George Hickers: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Hutchinson may want to elaborate further, but in general there is an overall feeling within the PPD that

there are some errors in the final numbers at the end of the year. There are some measurements. We talk about dip tanks and sometimes inconsistency there. There's a potential for unaccounted sales. They're currently undergoing an audit from an accounting firm. We do expect this number to actually be reduced. To close out our books at the end of the year, we have to deal with it right now, but I do anticipate adjustments to be forthcoming throughout the year. Thank you.

If that doesn't answer the member's question fully, I'll ask Mr. Hutchinson to respond more.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Mr. Hutchinson, if you want to add some more, please. Please go ahead.

Mr. Hutchinson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, he is right, we are conducting an investigation right now to figure out why they jumped so much this year. As part of that investigation, we are looking at our point-of-sales data and reconciling that against our manual meter tickets to try to figure out if there's a reason for the variance on that end. As the minister said, I do expect that we're going to be able to make some corrections there. Any corrections will be recorded as a recovery in the current fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Well, it says in this annual report that the Petroleum Products Division introduced a new point-of-sale system. I have seen that in my home community of Arviat. In terms of reducing this write-off, theft

and/or mistakes in terms of reconciling sales with inventories, I wonder if a bit more information could be shared as to how beneficial that new point-of-sale system has been for the Petroleum Products Division. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. The minister is indicating that I go direct to Mr. Hutchinson. Please go ahead.

Mr. Hutchinson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The point-of-sale system has been very effective not only in terms of getting the sales data to the PPD far faster than it has come in the past. We have converted that process from two to three weeks or four weeks in some cases now down to data flowing in on a daily basis, if we wish, or on a weekly basis.

In terms of the reconciliation process, the POS data captures all sales data directly at the point of sale and it brings that to the PPD. We are still using the manual process. In some cases we have noted that there is a slight variation between the manual meter tickets that we have that back up our financial system and what the point of sale is recording and that's where we're working now to investigate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The amount being proposed for write-off here is 820,000 litres of fuel and the amount is \$699,000. In terms of putting that in context with the total volume of fuel that's sold in the course of the year, I wonder if that could be... . On the surface of it, 820,000 litres of fuel

sounds like a huge amount, but in terms of the context and the overall volumes of fuel that are sold. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Almost 204 million litres. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Again, I don't want to be accused of micromanaging the government, but what is the method for conducting a tank dip in terms of trying to understand how much fuel or gasoline is sitting in a fuel tank? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could probably sit here and read the information that I was provided, but probably Mr. Hutchinson would be able to give it a layman's terms description. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hutchinson.

Mr. Hutchinson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We conduct monthly dips on our tank farms, so we measure inventories throughout the territory every month and at year-end. The process basically is our local fuel delivery contractors do the dips. They use calibrated gauging tapes. What that looks like essentially is it is a measure tape on a reel with a plumb bob. It goes

down into the tank and gets them a volume and we record temperature as well, and then we use strapping charts to calculate the volume of the tank and then we temperature correct that fuel to 15 degrees Celsius. That process feeds into our overall stock reconciliation process that happens each month at the PPD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When we were looking at this bill in committee, one of our colleagues mentioned the process by which fuel is transferred from a ship to the tank in a community. How does the Petroleum Products Division verify that the amount that the contractor is delivering to a community is actually delivered? I don't know. I'm sure there's a system in place, but to make sure that there's no difference between what we're being billed for and what actually ends up in the tanks in the community. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Again the minister is referring to Mr. Hutchinson. Please go ahead.

Mr. Hutchinson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have an independent third party quantity and quality surveyor. The company is Intertek. They're a multinational company. They accompany our fuel transfers and they perform abbreviated testing to confirm spec, but they also perform haulage tests while onboard the ship to confirm quantity. The primary measure in how we are billed is based on the fuel that is received at our shore tanks and Intertek

Testing Services is there with us and performs those dips, which we are there to witness. That's what's used for billing from our supplier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm almost done here. Earlier you mentioned that there's a possibility that this amount will actually come down once further investigations are done. What's the time frame for getting that work done? When do you anticipate having the final counts or mathematical calculations done? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within this fiscal year. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It mentions here in the briefing material that there are issues with some delivery contractors and that the PPD collected close to half a million dollars from contractors in respect of nearly 326,000 litres of losses beyond allowable limits. The length of some of these contracts is ten-year contracts now for the fuel delivery. If you're having chronic issues with the fuel delivery contractor, how does that factor into whether that contractor will continue to have the fuel delivery contract or whether they would be allowed to bid on future contracts in future years? (interpretation) Thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll generalize this a little bit. Anytime we have issues with any of our contracts in any department, we work with the contractor to rectify whether it be bad habits or errors that are occurring. It's always a last recourse of cancelling a contract. We work with contractors in cases of this. As long as they're accounting for those losses and maintaining the conditions of the contract, the PPD will continue work with them. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It's my last question and again you may rule me out of order on this one. It mentions in the PPD report inspections that are done on tanks to make sure that they're structurally sound. It also mentions reducing the risk of a catastrophic failure of a tank. I hope that we will never see that in Nunavut. In terms of the contingency planning, are we insured for a catastrophic fuel spill? Are we self-insured? That's my last question in terms of anticipating or trying to make sure we are prepared for an unlikely event. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think you should rule the question out of order. I don't have that

information. I do commit to getting back to the member with some details on that, but I just don't have that information with me. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. We are on clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Schedule on page 2. Part 1 Asset Write-offs. Petroleum products inventory lost due to fuel shrinkage. Total. \$699,031.50. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go back to...now clause 2 is on the Nunavut Housing Corporation's buildings and three public housing units. Are there any questions? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just very briefly, I know in my home community there was one of these units, I'm not sure if it's in this bill or not, but just on the topic of these housing units that are so degraded or mouldy or what have you that they have to be torn down and written off, does the housing corporation have any estimates as to what the extent of this condition is? I don't know what you would call them, houses that are basically write-offs waiting to happen. I know it's a very large stock of public housing, over 5,000 units. Do we have any measurements or estimates in terms of how many of those are future write-offs or write-offs waiting to happen? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clarify first that we're not writing it off; we're writing down the value because of the condition ratings. The Nunavut Housing Corporation has an ongoing exercise right now to assess the ratings on their units. We will know more when that assessment is complete on actual numbers, but the member is right. When we have to write down the value of an asset, it's over \$20,000, so it takes a substantial amount of damage or assessed value to get to this point. I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just a comment that it is concerning to see these type of units, public housing units that can no longer be repaired because in some cases people are still living in them right up until maybe a couple of weeks before they're torn down or condemned. It's a concern for my constituents. I just wanted to mention that and mention that I would appreciate any information that can be shared as soon as the assessment that the minister mentioned is ready or once calculations have been made in terms of those type of units. I don't even know what to call them, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. I would call them aging units. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question or two and it's to do with the public housing units where they have caught on fire and

they are being written off.

If we look at what the government is doing with the schools, they're trying to do different things so that, for example, kids can't get under the school to light fires. Is there anything that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is doing to address fire and fire damage? Is there anything that could be done to the design or if a family was in a public housing unit and one of their children, perhaps, or maybe whatever it is the reason why it might have caught on fire, is there any kind of attempt to maybe educate the family, or I don't know, anything to address what has happened? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not that I'm aware of with regard to specific fire retardation other than some of the materials that get used in the construction. Most fires do start from inside the residence, so it's not like a school where kids are crawling underneath and lighting it on fire like it has happened in the past.

With regard to education components, I'm not aware of any specific ones that the Nunavut Housing Corporation does, but they do public awareness campaigns like their calendar program where kids have written in different things, themes for different months to put on their calendars on public awareness. I know Community and Government Services sends the fire marshal around to do different awareness programs at different schools.

I think it's a very important topic and

initiative with the history that we have been having lately in this territory, how important it is for people to realize our infrastructure is so valuable and we're so behind the curve we cannot afford to continue to have major incidents of fires. I know that that's not related directly to the question that the member asked, but I can't reinforce enough how important it is for people in general to realize how dangerous fire is. You may think it's just a fun little game at some point and it gets out of control and next thing you know, we have to cancel programs that are construction projects to meet a need that still had life to it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickee. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I totally agree with the minister. I think resources should be put towards more because obviously we're still having fires. I'm not too sure and it would be interesting to find out how the government deals with families who have set fires accidentally or on purpose or whatever to their units. What happens? They still will need a roof over their heads, you know?

We were talking about mould earlier and I know that the government has put an emphasis on training homeowners or people in public housing units about how to identify mould and how to deal with mould. I'm just wondering because that training, I think, has been going on for a couple of years now. Are we seeing more houses with mould or do you think that's going down? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we will have to wait until this assessment is complete to see previous conditions versus current conditions to see what the trend is. I'm hoping, cross my fingers, that people are paying attention to these awareness initiatives so that if you see mould getting started in small portions of your residence, you deal with it early before it becomes an issue. Contact your local housing organization when there are issues so that they can come in and do early mitigation measures. As far as right now, not that I'm aware of. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also want to talk about mould issues in housing and we're talking about write-off of assets. In your comment, second-last paragraph, it notes that "The Nunavut Housing Corporation deemed it would be more cost effective and safer to simply take them down."

I'm just wondering if there were times that the house is really mouldy and it's really bad and people are getting sick in their home because I know there are some people like that in Gjoa Haven; they're getting sick. How bad a mould would it have to be before you can even write off the building? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a difficult question to answer. There are so many variables to it and it would be a case by case, obviously. There are different kinds of

mould, the locations, and the extent of how pervasive it is into the structure. There are too many variables to be able to answer that question with specifics. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Even when you see people getting sick in a building with lots of sores on their bodies, that would be a way to figure out the mould is too bad. That's why I put out the question. Maybe there's something that needs to be done. That's just a comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Okay. Thank you. Comment taken. Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are we on the write-down part? Okay. It means reducing the value of assets. There are some people still living in houses like that and I have seen houses like that where there are holes in the wall and there's a lot of damage. Even the floors are warped and worn out. People are still living in these housing units. Hopefully the rent is lowered if the tenant is working. Do they lower the rent for people who are working and living in mouldy houses? I'm asking it that way because you respond like a housing person. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quassa. That's a bit beyond the scope of this bill, but Mr. Hickes, if you want respond, please go ahead.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to respond. It was a long time ago for a

very short period of time I was the housing minister, but this is irrelevant to that.

Mr. Chairman, this exercise that we're undertaking right now is an accounting process. This question specific to what the member would be best directed to the minister in another venue for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

From a finance standpoint, this is the appreciated or depreciated value of the property itself, so this is an accounting measure. When we look at a facility, if the Chairman will indulge me, if we've got a \$10,000 piece of infrastructure and it's got a ten-year life expectancy, we're going to depreciate the value by a thousand dollars every year, but also halfway through, it's valued at \$5,000, we realize the wheels fell off so it's not worth as much money, we can make an adjustment and maybe it's only worth \$2,500 as a book value.

This is an accounting exercise. It's not a matter of specifics related to accommodation in that regard. This is an accounting exercise. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know, again, if this is an appropriate question, but again, we do have a lot of houses that were built in the 1980s or even before that are still being used. These are the types of houses that depreciate. (interpretation) Is that actually the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is any number of reasons new buildings can have mould issues if there's a flaw in the build or design or water intrusion somewhere that it's sitting. It's not so much always the age of the unit; it's the maintenance on it, the cleanliness of it. There are a number of different factors that come into play on how mould gets throughout a unit. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I guess it's your opening statement that on page 1 at the very last paragraph it says that fire heavily damaged two units and it goes on to identify eight units. When you talk about units, are these single-family dwellings or are these duplexes or are these five-plexes? I would like to get clarification as to what you mean by "units." Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a combination. Some are single-family and some are multiplex units. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. No more questions? Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Part 2 of the Schedule on page 2. Nunavut Housing Corporation buildings and three public housing units. Total. \$249,556. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 3. This one is again on housing. It says “10 Nunavut Housing Corporation buildings” written down. Are there any questions on this particular item? If not, clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go to Part 3 of the Schedule on page 2. Assets Written Down. Ten Nunavut Housing Corporation buildings. Total. \$492,759. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree to Bill 34 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree, pursuant to Rule 62(2), that Bill 34 can be placed on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes, any closing comments?

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just very briefly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Hutchinson for joining me up here to deal with some of the detailed questions with regard to the PPD. I have never been a Minister of CGS, so I have very limited knowledge of the PPD program.

I want to thank the members for the scrutiny on this bill. I think there were some good questions raised and some good ideas brought up with some of the fire prevention activities that could be

initiated. I think it's a very important message that we need to deal with. I just want to thank the members who brought that up and as well as the work, again, behind the scenes from people to prepare me for this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. On behalf of the committee, I thank you and your officials for answering the questions that were posed to you today. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses out. Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move a motion to report progress for today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. There's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Rumbolt.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bills 26, 33, and 34 and would like to report that Bills 26, 33, and 34 are immediately ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Minister Hickes. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 26 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 26, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker (interpretation): All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 26 is now ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Bill 31 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2019-2020 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 31, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2019-2020*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 31 is now ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Bill 32 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2019-2020 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2019-2020*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker (interpretation): All those in favour. The motion is carried. Bill 32 is now ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Bill 33 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 33 is now ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Bill 34 – Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hicke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2018-2019*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 34 is now ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Continuing on. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for November 7:

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

13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 38
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 8
 - Bill 29
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Thursday, November 7, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 19:18*

