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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Paul Quassa, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Aggu)

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(Quttiktuq)
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Development and Transportation*

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(Amittuq)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

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Human Resources*

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Utility Rates Review Council*

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(Cambridge Bay)
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Labour; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

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(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

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Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
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Arctic College; Minister responsible
for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation*

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

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, September 28, 2020**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaernerck, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>> *House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Paul Quassa) (interpretation): Before we begin, Mr. Keyootak, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>> *Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day. We say “good day” to our fellow Nunavummiut, as well as to the viewing audience, please feel welcome.

Before we begin, I wish to inform members that Written Question 71 – 5(2) that was directed to the Minister of Finance by the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak will be directed to the Minister of Human Resources for the return.

Let’s proceed. Ministers’ Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers’ Statements

Minister’s Statement 457 – 5(2): Wolf Harvest – Support for Active Harvesters Program

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on an initiative under the Department of Environment’s Support for Active Harvesters Program. The wolf sample collection program offers \$300 to local hunters who supply samples and kill information from their harvested wolves to local wildlife offices.

The wolf sample collection program has been successful in increasing the overall wolf harvest and has been an effective way to provide additional support to our hunters.

Mr. Speaker, under this program, Nunavummiut harvested 654 wolves in the 2019-2020 harvest season. This includes 151 wolves in the Kitikmeot, 471 wolves in the Kivalliq, and 32 wolves in the Qikiqtaaluk. I’m pleased to announce that the program provided a total of \$196,000 to Nunavut hunters over the last fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, the knowledge and research gathered through this program will help to identify the diet composition of wolves and provide information about regional wolf packs and populations. Using that, we will be able to relate wolf harvest information to caribou population data, which will serve as a valuable management tool. This information may assist in the recovery of our caribou herds and allow us to

provide additional financial support to our hunters.

I look forward to providing additional updates on this work in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 458 – 5(2): QEC Board Appointments

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon to my colleagues and to all of those in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advise the House of the recently appointed members of the Board of Directors to the Qulliq Energy Corporation. In May 2020 cabinet approved the appointments of Ms. Sheena Akoomalik, Ms. Okalik Egeesiak, and Mr. Marvin Dion for three-year terms on the corporation's board. At the same time cabinet the reappointment of Ms. Nicole Jauvin for a consecutive three-year term.

I would also like to announce the appointment of Mr. Keith Peterson as chairperson. A former cabinet minister and MLA representing Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson was responsible for the portfolios of Finance, Justice, Health, and even served as the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation for a short time. He also served as the mayor of Cambridge Bay for two terms.

In addition, Mr. Andrew Nakashuk was appointed as vice-chairperson. An active member of many committees and organizations across Nunavut, Mr. Nakashuk is currently chairperson on the Nunavut Planning Commission, facilitating community consultations and planning meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the new board will provide the Qulliq Energy Corporation with a strong leadership which supports our employees to continue to deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy to Nunavummiut.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the board of directors on their appointments. I look forward to their input and governance as they continue to provide a safe and reliable power supply to Nunavummiut and to plan for Nunavut's energy future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 459 – 5(2): Recognition of Rankin Inlet's Krista Ulujuk Zawadski

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of a momentous milestone of our own Nunavummiuq. Earlier this summer my department granted its very first archaeological permit for research

purposes to an Inuk, Ms. Krista Ulujuk Zawadski of Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, as part of her PhD dissertation, Ms. Zawadski is undertaking a study on Inuit knowledge and interpretation of the history of Qatiktalik near Rankin Inlet. (interpretation ends) Through group discussion and documentation with knowledge holders in Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet, she is focusing on the reinterpretation of Qatiktalik through Inuit eyes and Inuktitut storywork.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Zawadski is a graduate of Alaittuq High School in Rankin Inlet, graduate of Nunavut Sivuniksavut, holds a Bachelor's Degree from Carleton University and a Master's Degree from the University of British Columbia, is a previous participant of four Nunavut-based archaeological field schools hosted by my department, has been employed in culture and heritage branches of a number of organizations, and most recently is the part-time Curator of Inuit Art in the Department of Culture and Heritage. Last year she received the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Repatriation Award.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I commend Ms. Zawadski for her pursuits of higher education in her chosen field of study, for focusing on Inuit values and beliefs in her research, and for her continuous contribution to the conservation, preservation, and advancement of Inuit knowledge.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing similar success stories like Ms. Zawadski's in this House in the future. Congratulations,

Krista. You make Nunavut proud. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of Krista. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Minister's Statement 460 – 5(2): COVID-19 Testing and Rapid Response

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The health department has been working hard to enhance its ability and preparedness to respond to COVID-19 in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, one of our priorities has been to ensure fast and reliable testing in-territory. I am pleased to say we now have two options for COVID-19 testing within the territory: the GeneXpert and BioFire point of care diagnostic units.

Mr. Speaker, these units, operating in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, will provide faster results and allow for a quicker response to COVID-19. These devices can also be used as part of the overall health care system as some testing kits available can test for several different pathogens, such as pertussis and respiratory syncytial virus, also known as RSV. We will continue to work with our lab partners in the provinces for high volume and confirmatory testing.

Mr. Speaker and members, the Rapid Response Team is another tool that Health has in place to respond to COVID-19. Comprised of nurses, interpreters, and support personnel, the Rapid Response Team is a core

component to our COVID-19 response plan. This vital team's role is to identify, track, and contain the virus. This work is carried out with support from the communicable disease and epidemiology teams.

Mr. Speaker and members, back in April 2020 the Rapid Response Team responded to a false-positive case of COVID-19 in Pond Inlet. The Rapid Response Team was mobilized quickly, arriving just 14 hours after notification of the positive COVID-19 result.

Mr. Speaker and members, the Rapid Response Team enhances our ability to prevent further transmission and limit the spread of the virus if a COVID-19 case arrives in one of our communities.

During its time in Pond Inlet, the Rapid Response Team was able to assess the effectiveness of its response and iron out any logistical challenges for future deployment in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker and members, I would like to thank every team and individual working on the frontline to keep Nunavummiut safe during this unprecedented time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 461 – 5(2):
Efforts of Nunavut's Offshore
Fishing Crew Changes in the Face
of COVID**

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the many areas the pandemic has seriously impacted is Nunavummiut's ability to work on offshore fishing vessels as this required travel in the south to get to and from the vessels.

I am pleased and proud today to say that through joint efforts by territorial and federal governments, industry and the Government of Greenland, it is possible for Nunavummiut crew changes to happen through direct charters between Iqaluit and Nuuk, if all conditions are met. Both Greenland and Iqaluit are presently COVID-free. Direct charters for these crew changes reduce the burden on the isolation hubs and allow Nunavummiut working these seasonal jobs to return home safely and efficiently.

We remain committed to seeing Nunavummiut being able to access their jobs despite this pandemic. We extend a huge thank you to the Government of Canada departments and the Government of Greenland for working with us towards this success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

**Minister's Statement 462 – 5(2):
Congratulating Amaaqtaarniq
Education Leave Program
Graduates**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Good day to the people of Rankin Inlet and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our government provides many valuable training opportunities targeted for Inuit employees, leading to increased capacity and improved delivery of government programs and services to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) We are excited by the success of the Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave Program. The aim of Amaaqtaarniq is to remove barriers to post-secondary education for eligible Inuit employees by sponsoring long-term education leave and to help the Government of Nunavut fill specialized positions with qualified Inuit employees. The program is coordinated by my Department of Human Resources through our Article 23 implementation funding.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and congratulate five Inuit employees who have completed post-secondary studies with funding from the Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave Program. They are:

- Markoosie Arsenault-Papatsie – Bookkeeping and Accounting Practices Certificate, Algonquin College (Justice)
- Charlotte Kuksuk – Social Service Worker Diploma, Nunavut Arctic College (Family Services)
- Christa Kunuk – Bachelor of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria (Representative for Children and Youth)
- David Kunuk – Certificate in General Studies, University of Victoria (Economic Development and Transportation)

- Marlene Kuniliusie – Office Administration Certificate, Nunavut Arctic College (Family Services)

Mr. Speaker, there are currently 15 GN employees attending post-secondary studies through the Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave Program. I wish them every success to complete their programs and return to work as our public servants.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to providing education and training that supports employment and career development. We are pleased to see many Inuit employees participating in training and we recognize them for their ongoing service to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Let's be proud of the graduates who complete their studies. Ministers' Statements. There are no more. Let's proceed. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk will go first, followed by the Member for Netsilik. Member Pedersen.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 686 – 5(2): Tribute to Grace Mary Hayokhok Niptanatiak

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to the late Grace Mary Hayokhok Niptanatiak.

Mr. Speaker, Grace passed away recently following a courageous struggle with illness, and the entire community of

Kugluktuk has been mourning her passing.

Mr. Speaker, Grace was married to Allen Niptanatiak for many years. Our hearts are with Allen and their children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, generations of Kugluktuk's young people attended the Jimmy Hikok Ilihakvik Elementary School, and I am confident that every one of them has warm memories of Grace, who worked there for many years as a student support assistant.

Mr. Speaker, Grace touched many lives.

Grace and her husband Allen worked tirelessly to ensure that the school's lunch program was able to provide nutritious country food to the children.

Their commitment to the well-being of the community was a reflection of their deep faith.

As a student support assistant, Grace was renowned for her tireless patience. She spent countless hours helping special needs and at-risk students. Her dedication helped many students to succeed under challenging circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, my own daughters benefitted greatly from Grace's care and hard work. For a number of years, Grace and Margaret Haviyoyak, who is also a dedicated community volunteer, devoted countless hours to mentoring the school's Ayakutaq Rainbow Youth Square Dance Group. My daughters were very enthusiastic participants in this group.

Grace and Margaret created the beautiful uniforms that were worn by the students, fund-raised for their activities and chaperoned them on trips to other communities for very memorable square dance competitions.

Mr. Speaker, Grace leaves behind a loving legacy of care and commitment.

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Kugluktuk, I will be recommending that our community's district education authority establish an award in Grace's memory to recognize students who demonstrate the same qualities of care, commitment, and compassion that characterized Grace's life.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in paying tribute to the late Grace Mary Hayokhok Niptanatiak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, followed by the Member for Pangnirtung. Member Qirngnuq.

**Member's Statement 687 – 5(2):
Congratulations to Nathan
Mannilaq**

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate one of my constituents, Mr. Nathan Mannilaq of Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, Nathan has recently been selected as the 2020 recipient of the Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut's Recreation Leader of the Year award. Nathan works as the Municipality of Taloyoak's Recreation Coordinator and is well known for his energy and commitment to the community.

The Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut is a not-for-profit organization that was established in 2012. The association is led by a volunteer board of directors. The association's mandate is to "support the health and well-being of individuals, organizations, recreation professionals and community organizations in Nunavut." The association receives operating funding from the Department of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, the association's recreation leader award "recognizes a recreation practitioner who has made significant contributions to the growth and development of recreation services and who promotes the benefits of physical activity and recreation. This includes leaders, supervisors, program managers and recreation co-ordinators."

I am proud to support initiatives and programs that encourage healthy communities and healthy lifestyles.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Nathan Mannilaq on his accomplishment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member for Pangnirtung, followed by the Member for Uqqummiut. Member Nakashuk.

**Member's Statement 688 – 5(2):
Recognizing Pangnirtung Search
and Rescue Volunteers**

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, colleagues. I also say "good day" to the people of Pangnirtung.

Today I rise to acknowledge the ongoing work throughout the spring and summer season of Pangnirtung's emergency response team. They continue to provide exemplary service to residents facing dire situations and during emergencies. The hamlet office is continually manned, including during the night.

I want to recognize the following people who comprise the committee overseeing our ERT search team and they are:

- Peepeelee Qappik
- Adamie Veevee
- Leopa Akpalialuk
- Jaco Ishulutak
- Judas Akpalialuk
- Pauloosie Pishuktie
- Geeold Kakkik
- Lisa Ishulutak
- Timiusi Evic
- Andy Akulukjuk

Also, there are the RCMP officers in Pangnirtung along with the members from the search and rescue team in Iqaluit who provided help during a search centred between Pangnirtung and Iqaluit. I would also like to thank Meeka Mike for her help.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the rescue plane and helicopter sent from Halifax to assist our team during a different emergency situation. Local searchers assisting in that emergency were Silasie Nowyuk, Tommy Nakashuk, and Josephie Qiyuktaq.

There are other Inuit who I haven't named that came together over the summer and worked tirelessly to provide assistance to hunters when their engines broke down or were in some other need. Their contributions to the community are greatly appreciated and I would like to recognize them again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, followed by the Member for Tununiq. Member Keyootak.

Member's Statement 689 – 5(2): Clyde River High School Graduates

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise today to announce some celebratory news.

Now, as we know, communities had graduating students in our constituency, and although there were not many, we must always voice our pleasure and pride in their accomplishments. Everyone is aware that these recent graduates comprise our future workforce and to replace the workers as they retire or in a field they choose for further education.

I wish to recognize the graduates from Clyde River who completed their studies but were faced with an unprecedented event, though they did hold a graduation ceremony using social distancing and the distancing rules. COVID-19 has caused changes in our practices, and ceremonies were no different.

This spring there were seven students from Clyde River that graduated, and I would like to take a moment and recognize them. I apologize in advance if I mispronounce any names. The following are the recent graduates:

- Rosemary Arreak
- Angie Illauq
- Grace Naqi Jaypoody
- Lana Tasugat
- Andrew Joanasie
- Jason Corkum
- Ipeelie Paneak

These are the high school graduates of Clyde River, and soon we will learn what these graduates have planned for their futures. They may wish to continue with higher education or look at many different possibilities. The choice is theirs. Let's congratulate these graduates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are proud of them. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, who will then be followed by the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. Member Qamaniq.

**Member's Statement 690 – 5(2):
Congratulations to Pond Inlet
Environmental Technology
Graduates**

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow community members as well as to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to congratulate Pond Inlet's recent graduates of the two-year Environmental Technology Program that was recently delivered in the community

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I know that it is not easy trying to study at home while also trying to take care of children and other family members. The hard work and the support from family all pays off at the end.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the delivery of the Environment Technology Program in Pond Inlet and the students were required to complete a component of their coursework and assignments from home.

Mr. Speaker, the graduates are:

- Andrew Jawrenko
- Cara Killiktee
- Christian Merkosak
- Daniel Ipirq Inuarak
- Jimmy Pitseolak
- Jonathan Pitseolak
- Ken Arreak
- Lynn Angnatsiak
- Noni Johnny Pewatoalook
- Tabitha Kasarnak
- Terry Quaraq
- Tyson Angnetsiak

I would like to thank the Pond Inlet Adult Educator, Karen Nutarak, as well as the other instructors in the program.

I wish all the graduates good luck with their future endeavours and I ask all members to join me in congratulating them on their accomplishment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of our students who graduate in Nunavut. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, followed by Member Ehaloak. Member Main.

**Member's Statement 691 – 5(2):
Whale Cove High School
Graduates**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. First of all, I rise today to congratulate the graduates of Whale Cove and to say how proud I am of them. They are:

- Amber Sharp
- Amos Voisey
- Shufly Nattar
- Rene'e Okalik
- Ricky Okalik
- Katie Amitnaaq

Mr. Speaker, these young people are the six recent graduates from Whale Cove in whom I take great pride in.

Nonetheless, there are many questions regarding school practices and systems used during this COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. Parents, teachers, amongst others, such as the district education authorities or their staff hold valid

concerns and many questions. For that reason, many members expressed pleasure as regular members about the Department of Education introduction in July of their pandemic plan on opening up the schools and their approach therein.

Regular members submitted written questions on the pandemic to the Minister of Education. We are grateful for the adequate response from the minister totalling a letter that was... .
(interpretation ends) It is 10 pages.
(interpretation) It was a very long letter presenting their position while answering our questions. Regardless of that, there are still several issues that require further highlighting of details, as many parents have many questions. This includes teachers' questions about workplace health hazards as well as working in a risk-free environment.

However, our children and youth require schooling and we need to think about the interim measures as it pertains to schooling and whether or not the minister should identify more details related to schooling. I will have questions at the appropriate time on that issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 692 – 5(2):
Cambridge Bay High School
Graduates**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise proudly today to congratulate a number of high school students from my community of Cambridge Bay from the Kiilnik High School. Like everyone

else, like every student in Nunavut, they went through trying times, especially when COVID hit the world. I wish these graduates all the best and for their future endeavours and these graduates are:

- Mika Angohiatok
- Rhea Ekpakohak
- Annie Oyakyoak
- Tristian Peterson
- Sinclair Lyall
- Dexter Maniyogina
- Jeannie Qiyuapik
- Nicolas Ekpakohak
- Peter Norman Evalik
- Sydney Atatahak
- Andy Angutingnungniq
- Cyril Angulalik
- Corbyn Klengenber
- Dean Evetalegak
- Dale Epsilon

I especially want to say big congratulations to the one person who has made a huge impact in my life and that's my grandson, Calvin Ehaloak. He graduated from the two-year environmental program this year.

I look forward all these students and seeing where they go in the future. They might even be sitting at my seat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We also congratulate the graduates from Cambridge Bay. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, followed by Member Kusugak. Member Simailak.

**Member's Statement 693 – 5(2):
Sports and Recreation**

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my fellow MLAs, staff in the leg., and the interpreters. Hope you guys had a wonderful one-day weekend. We had meetings on Saturday, so of course the staff were here working. It's much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that we all need outlets of some sort to decompress, release stress, and we need a means of a safe, healthy way to do it and the easiest way is to take part in recreational activities now more than ever, as our people need to do physical activities. It helps the body in so many ways to live a long and healthy life.

Mr. Speaker, with the continued uncertainty of this pandemic and having to deal with the new normal of it, I'm hopeful that our people in Nunavut will have access to safe, fun, recreational activities, especially with the long, dark winter approaching. We will definitely need an outlet of some sort.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of CGS some questions, looking for some clarification as to how Nunavut will be addressing this need in the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet, Member Kusugak.

**Member's Statement 694 – 5(2):
Tribute to Yvo Airut**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be glad to answer those questions.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell you a little story that happened the day before yesterday in Rankin Inlet. We lost a fellow resident who was a major leader in Rankin Inlet. That person always put others first and always tried to help others. Yvo Airut, we have your family in our thoughts.

I remember when Yvo was the mayor of Rankin Inlet. He seemed like a very intimidating person, but he really wasn't; we were just young. Mr. Speaker, when he was the mayor of Rankin Inlet and I was working at CBC, it was the first interview I did when CBC opened on July 16, 1979 and he was the first person I interviewed. He was the mayor at the time and he was a great leader. He understood everything that the community needed and what its people needed.

Mr. Speaker, he was one of the very first Inuit to have a private business. You would remember him too. He used to sell Yamaha snowmobiles. He travelled all through the Kivalliq, Kitikmeot and Baffin regions. His business operated for a very long time and while doing that, he operated dump trucks. They would be doing construction and building the roads.

Yvo was never idle when he was working. He was a skilled hunter as well. When he went hunting, you never

heard of him selling anything. He would just give it all away and he fed so many people. I know the people of Rankin Inlet will miss him and many people will remember him. We will remember him and we feel compassion for his family, and let us remember them in our prayers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We send our condolences to the people of Rankin Inlet and those who have lost a loved one. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Member Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 695 – 5(2):
Quttiktuq High School Graduates**

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish my wife a belated happy "kissaversary."

Today they have three schools in the High Arctic and when COVID-19 arrived, they had different dates for the last day of school, but I would like to express my pride to the graduates.

In Umingmak School in Grise Fiord, their principal and teachers were only able to go to the graduation ceremony. Although we all wanted to go, we are very proud of them. Derrick Akeeagok and Alaasua Audlaluk graduated.

In Qarmartalik School in Resolute Bay we have yet to celebrate the graduation of one student, who is Sky Nungaq.

Also, at the Inuujaq School in Arctic Bay we expect to hold a graduation ceremony in November, as long as COVID-19 does not make its way into

the communities. I am very excited for this celebration to occur, and those graduates that we will be recognizing are:

- Andrew Akikulu
- Nora Eecheak
- Rick Jr. Oyukuluk
- Troy Qamanirq
- Eli Qaqqasiq Taqtu
- Colin Tilley
- James Reid

Additionally, there are another four students that have not quite completed their studies, but are being prepared for graduation in November as the school has now reopened and they can complete the necessary classes. Those four are:

- Christine Pauloosie
- Crystal Enoogoo
- Tara Tunraluk
- Jessie Oyukuluk

I am also very proud of them and happy that they are likely going to be graduating. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of all of the students. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Let's proceed. Item 4. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

**Return to Oral Question 956 – 5(2):
Housing Issues in Baker Lake**

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to supplement an answer I gave to the Member for Baker Lake, Craig Simailak. His question was on the housing file.

Mr. Speaker, for the 419 public housing units located in Baker Lake, the Nunavut Housing Corporation budgeted a total of \$627,000 for the current fiscal year, with \$253,000 coming from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and \$374,000 from the Government of Nunavut.

The LHOs routinely input data into the condition rating system when they do their regular inspections on public housing units. The Nunavut Housing Corporation provides tablets to all of our LHOs for this specific purpose, and the corporation then reviews the data and decides where to best spend the budgeted dollars. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. (interpretation) Let's proceed. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. We were not planning on having visitors in the gallery, so we don't have any visitors. Let us continue. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak will be first, and immediately following...I didn't get the next one. Member Lightstone.

Item 6: Oral Questions**Question 962 – 5(2): Homelessness
and the Justice System**

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Justice and the topic is homelessness and the justice system.

As the minister will be aware, the work of Iqaluit's Uquutaq Society saves lives through its provision of shelter to the homeless. As the minister will recall, I have had the honour of formally supporting a number of the society's initiatives in recent years.

Mr. Speaker, the society recently announced that its emergency homeless shelter will no longer allow overcrowding. In its announcement, the society indicated that "Men are discharged to the shelter from Justice, Health, RCMP and directed from other services in Iqaluit and in the Qikiqtaaluk. Uquutaq has been viewed by these organizations and services as the safety net for all displaced men. This will no longer be the case."

Mr. Speaker, when inmates from other communities are released from the Government of Nunavut correctional facilities at the end of their sentences, it is my understanding that the department provides the means for them to return to their home communities, but that they cannot force these individuals to return.

My question is: can the minister confirm what her department's approach is when inmates refuse to return to their home communities, and can she indicate what changes are being considered in light of the society's announcement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. When an inmate is released from our facilities, usually the judge who has presided for the individual, when an individual is released on conditions that he cannot return to his community or must stay within Iqaluit itself, there are conditions that the individual has to follow. We've had a few cases where this has happened and if the individual feels that they have nowhere to go, no place to go, through the work with their lawyer, they can ask their lawyer to ask the judge if they can return to their home community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response. For my next question, the Uqutaq Society made its announcement at the end of last month. Can the minister confirm what discussions she has had with the Minister responsible for Homelessness concerning ways that the Government of Nunavut can address this situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Because this is early notice

from the organization you mentioned, I will be speaking to the Minister of Homelessness to discuss how we can help these inmates who have been released but won't be taken in the men's shelter. As I mentioned, we will work towards helping these individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In Uqutaq Society's announcement they also made reference to the RCMP. For my last question, I would like to ask: can the minister confirm what discussions she has had with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's "V" Division concerning this situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As I stated earlier, because there were new announcements made by the organization, the department will be working and meeting with the RCMP to have these discussions so that we can find a solution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, followed by the Member for Kugluktuk. Member Qirngnuq.

Question 963 – 5(2): Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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

Mr. Speaker, we are all aware that there are many challenges to our social wellness. Too many of our constituents face poverty, food insecurity, and a lack of employment opportunities. These conditions can have a very negative impact on our mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic has put an additional strain on everyone.

Last week the minister spoke of additional mental health supports being made available in the isolation hubs down south. Can the minister provide an update on what additional mental health supports have been made available in our communities, especially for those who are experiencing different stresses as a result of the pandemic?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the reaction to COVID-19, like we have been talking about here for the last week and a bit, has been very fluid and had to be very reactive.

Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges that, and I had mentioned this before with health staff overall, but to be specific to mental health, one of the challenges that we continue to face is our recruitment and it has even been exaggerated now

under the COVID-19 conditions of bringing in new employees and new mental health staff into the territory where there are a lot of people with a lot of uncertainty in their lives right now. I have often stated that the biggest challenge we have with mental health professionals and paraprofessionals in the territory is just to have that consistent ear so that people don't have to go over their stories over and over again.

I can't speak to any specific measures. We're continuing with our recruitment measures that have been further challenged by COVID-19. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. Even though it's challenging, he's able to respond. For clarity, I'll ask further about that issue.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the work of our frontline workers and I recognize that they too need support and resources as they work through the pandemic experience.

Can the minister provide a brief description of what additional guidelines and resources have been provided to community-based frontline mental health workers to support their work as they help Nunavummiut deal with issues that may arise due to the pandemic?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I appreciate the question. With all these challenges that I spoke of earlier, the mental health staff that we have in the territory do an incredible job of outreach, taking care of virtual appointments, trying to link people up with psychiatric or psychologist care. We often say in different endeavours of thinking outside the box, and I have to take this moment to thank the leadership in our mental health team and how they have been thinking outside the box, to reach out to people, to make sure that the gaps, where they do occur, are minimal, to continue to work with families.

I do look forward to upcoming work with the *Mental Health Act*, which will help engage families more in mental health supports for their family members and for their friends. I do look forward to more encouraging paths forward in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to receive responses like that and it's getting interesting.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, last week in responding to questions by my colleague from Iqaluit-Manirajak, the Premier encouraged GN employees to take advantage of what is offered by the government to help them out with mental health or burnout. I believe that all Nunavummiut need to take advantage

of the supports that are available to them to improve their social wellness.

Will the minister commit to making more information and resources available at the community level so that all Nunavummiut know how to get mental health support during this pandemic? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely, I will speak to my communications and our mental health team to see how we can improve just the access or at least the knowledge of where to go so that people can seek out services. I have often said in here, again, sounding like a broken record, the first step in receiving help is asking for help and it's not a bad thing. It's not a weakness; it's a sign of strength. If you're feeling insecure of something or you're unsettled of an occurrence in your life or in your own situation, please reach out and ask for help. There are people who are out there that want to help. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, followed by the Member for Uqummiut. Member Pedersen.

Question 964 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation and they concern the issue of marine infrastructure.

Federal funding for this initiative was provided through the Safety Equipment and Basic Marine Infrastructure in Northern Communities Initiative under the Oceans Protection Plan.

The request for proposals indicated that one of the communities to be examined is Kugluktuk. Can the minister confirm if the community has been visited as part of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) For the comprehensive community scoping study, that study started off, but it hasn't been completed yet and one of the components is on the community visits. Due to COVID-19, we had to put a pause on this and slowly we're starting to get this back up and going. I do apologize to a number of communities that haven't been visited, but our work still needs to get done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Economic Development and Transportation administers the government's Community Transportation Initiatives Program. During the 2017-18 fiscal year the Municipality of Kugluktuk received \$52,000 under this program for a waterfront revitalization project. The "sunset date" for the Community Transportation Initiatives Program Policy was March 31, 2020. Can the

minister confirm when the policy will be revised or renewed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I recall, I believe we reviewed it this year for all of our program initiatives that are geared towards the communities. I can check to see if the website has been updated or not, but I'll verify once I look into that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for your responses. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Kugluktuk's search and rescue volunteers for their successful launch earlier this month of the community's latest marine asset: a new boat which has been named the "Coppermine." The acquisition of this new marine asset was made possible by the Canadian Coast Guard's Indigenous Community Boat Volunteer Pilot Program, and we are appreciative of this support, which I understand has also enabled Clyde River to acquire a new search and rescue marine asset.

Can the minister indicate how his department has been working with the Canadian Coast Guard on this marine initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok: Mr. Speaker, I do want to provide as much information as possible to the member, but the last two questions are two different programs and this third one is in a completely different format.

In terms of search and rescue, it rests with Community and Government Services and working with them, any enhancements in search and rescue have been supported by this government, and as Economic Development and Transportation, we have not been directly involved in those discussions. If there are any enhancements towards search and rescue or any marine enhancements, we are always supportive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, who will be followed by the Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet. Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak.

Question 965 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. I do not think that the questions will come as a surprise to the minister.

Mr. Speaker, the need for modern marine infrastructure in Qikiqtarjuaq remains as great as ever and also for the people of Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, when I

last raised this issue during our winter sitting, the minister indicated that the proposal for a new marine facility in the community had been rejected for funding under the federal government's National Trade Corridors Fund. The minister also indicated that the territorial government expected to develop a new submission.

Can the minister update me today on the status of this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are still looking to get a response for the submission we made to the federal government. We have yet to get a response and we are still waiting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, he had previously indicated a willingness to work with the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation in developing a new proposal. Can he clarify what role the corporation currently has with respect to the proposal for new marine infrastructure for Qikiqtarjuaq? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to

thank the member for repeatedly asking these questions. We will have to develop a new proposal first of all, then we will start the wheel rolling and again, we have seen different architectural designs. There are different planning stages and I think it will make it a little easier. We are currently developing a proposal and there will, of course, be a limit and what the requirements will be or the criteria. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clear explanation. Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, his department issued a request for proposals in October 2019 for a “comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping study.” One of the communities that have been identified for this work is Qikiqtarjuaq. Can the minister update me today on the status of this work and can he confirm when the report from the study will be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier on this very same subject, there has been a delay. We will have to visit the community and put a report together. Due to this delay, we haven't been able to do a full study with the coronavirus and everything going on. Once we have it completed, I will make sure that the

member is informed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, followed by the Member for Tununiq. Member Towtongie.

Question 966 – 5(2): Enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act

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

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, a saline water spill occurred recently. The spill is equal to approximately 305 tanker trucks. The spill occurred at the Meliadine mine near Rankin Inlet. As the minister is also aware, there are a number of requirements under the territorial *Environmental Protection Act* concerning the reporting of discharges and spills.

Can the minister confirm what actions have been taken to date in response to the spill? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the mine and looking at the water licence, they have been approved by the Nunavut Water Board. I'm not sure what it's called in Inuktitut, but it is managed by (interpretation ends) Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. (interpretation) The federal government manages the water issues at mines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. The territorial *Environmental Protection Act* is very important. It is important that the municipality and community members be kept fully informed when incidents like this occur. I'll say this part in English. (interpretation ends) Can the minister confirm what requirements are under the *Environmental Protection Act* with respect to the public disclosure of discharges and spills? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under Agnico Eagle's water licence, all of the terms and conditions would be spelled out, but in terms of environmental hazards within Nunavut, the Department of Environment takes it very seriously. Any spills of any nature, whether it be petroleum products, corrosion, and as in this case, saline water, the Department of Environment is notified and they work with the agencies that take the lead role.

Mr. Speaker, if I could just explain a bit, depending on when a spill occurs, there are different agencies that take the lead role. In this case it is the CIRNAC that is taking the lead role. If it were to be on different lands, then it might be the Department of Environment. If it is in the ocean, it is the Coast Guard. It depends on where it spills that determines who takes the lead role.

We make sure as a government and as a department, if there is any wildlife or human concerns that we have, we will inform the public and the community that will be affected of the concerns we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Legislative Assembly considered the Department of Environment's proposed 2020-21 main estimates and business plan during our winter sitting earlier this year, the regular members of the Legislative Assembly recommended that the minister begin the practice of tabling an annual report on the administration and enforcement of the *Environmental Protection Act*.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, MLAs recommended that the minister begin the practice of tabling an annual report on the administration and enforcement of its *Environmental Protection Act*, 2020-21 main estimates and business plan. When will this recommendation be acted on? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I made the commitment at standing committee that this report would be done and we are still working on it. As soon it is completed, we will be tabling it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Pond Inlet, followed by the Member for Pangnirtung. Member Qamaniq.

Question 967 – 5(2): Fiscal Situation

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, he delivered the 2020 Budget Address in this House back in February of this year.

Mr. Speaker, in the minister's Budget Address, he informed the House and Nunavummiut that our fiscal situation was "better than it has been for several years." He also indicated that the government was projecting an operating deficit of about \$30 million.

Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 global pandemic hit just a few weeks after the budget was delivered. The crisis has had a major impact on public finances across the country.

Can the minister update us today on what the government's deficit is now projected to be by the end of the current 2020-21 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nobody could predict ransomware and a global pandemic occurring back to back like that in Nunavut. Just last week we approved tens of millions of dollars in spending over and above what we had anticipated when the Budget Address was given.

Mr. Speaker, obviously we're very concerned; I am very concerned about our fiscal situation. Unfortunately I can't give a number at this time. There were a number of different negotiations and discussions going on with our partners, with the federal government on monies that could be available that will offset some of the expenditures that are related to COVID-19, as we have already received some monies from the federal government to assist us with airline support, isolation hub support, and other measures related to COVID-19. I am anticipating again a larger-than-projected deficit, but unfortunately I can't get into specifics at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his answers. Mr. Speaker, the government's most recent collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union expired on September 30, 2018, almost two years ago. The current collective agreement between the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the Nunavut Employees Union expires at the end of this year, and the current collective agreement with the Nunavut Teachers Association expires in June of next year. Can the minister update the House today on the status of collective bargaining? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although as the finance minister I do get updated on the different

types of offers that go back and forth and the financial implications of, I'm not party directly to those negotiations and I do apologize that I don't have the information, but it may best be directed to the Minister of Human Resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his answers and maybe perhaps on another day we will have what the minister has indicated.

Mr. Speaker, there is now a new Minister of Finance in Ottawa. Can the minister indicate what discussions he has had with his new federal counterpart regarding Nunavut's fiscal needs and can he clarify what impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on federal transfers to Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's question on that topic. Minister Freeland and I spoke very shortly after she was named Canada's finance minister. It was more of an introductory call at that point. I have had other group discussions with other federal, provincial and territorial finance ministers a few times now since she has been named Canada's finance minister.

Mr. Speaker, most of those discussions have centred on COVID-19 measures. With regard specifically to our territorial funding formula related to COVID-19,

there would not be an impact on that, but I will take a moment just to note that Canada's census is upcoming next year, I believe, and I strongly encourage all Nunavummiut to participate, as those numbers are what dictate what levels of support that we do get through our territorial funding formula. I strongly encourage all Nunavummiut to participate when census takers travel throughout their community. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, followed by the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. Member Nakashuk.

Question 968 – 5(2): Overcrowding at Tammaativvik Boarding Home

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions this afternoon to the Minister of Health on this issue which he has heard about frequently and, that is, the Tammaativvik Boarding Home.

We all have stories about problematic issues as they are quite numerous: the lack of food, spotty cleanliness, and another issue that is brought up more frequently now is the lack of space. I was informed and briefed earlier today that due to the lack of rooms, there are sometimes five patients in a single room, even up to six patients. This is quite disconcerting and can contribute to a patient's health challenges, especially in light of today's pandemic.

I would like to ask the minister: is he aware of the usual number of people who don't have a place to stay who arrive to Iqaluit from other communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did get some questions on this last week and I do acknowledge and recognize that as more and more health services are being transferred over to the Qikiqtani General Hospital instead of sending Nunavummiut to their southern health care providers, it has had an increase in volume here in Iqaluit at the Tammaativvik Boarding Home and it has created a challenge, especially with the hotel spaces that are currently available are limited in the city of Iqaluit.

I am encouraged by some of the discussions that have been occurring better. The communication lines are getting better with the specialist services that we are bringing in to take a look at the volumes beforehand. In some cases such as a recent specialist visit, they actually booked more appointments than was anticipated to try to deal with the backlog of Nunavummiut that are waiting to receive these services. One of the challenges we continuously have is if a flight is cancelled or due to weather or mechanical issues, we have 30 people that are supposed to leave and all of a sudden they show back up. It creates a real challenge. There have been discussions with our medical travel team and the leadership at Tammaativvik, and we're hoping that we can make some progress in this.

I will take a moment, Mr. Speaker, if you will indulge me, that if somebody is travelling to Iqaluit and they have friends and family here, we do have a billeting system set up with the Department of Health that they can

arrange through their local health centre so that they don't have to go through the boarding home process. They can stay with family and friends and be compensated for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. I would like to reiterate what we went through last week. A patient arrived and wanted to be picked up by the boarding home. However, they were told that "It is better if you don't come here. You should find your own accommodations." I have heard of many incidents now that medical travellers are just left to fend for themselves.

For people who are here on medical travel, what kind of assistance does the Department of Health or community health centres provide? Are you looking ahead of time to see if Tammaativvik is full or how more help can be provided? Does the Department of Health provide help particularly for those who don't speak English and who don't have accommodations and are going through hardships? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We don't want any of our residents going through anything more complicated than necessary, and it is unfortunate that some of these cases happen.

Again, I will reiterate that our Office of Patient Relations has a dedicated team that can assist people to navigate through the system to make sure that the resources that are available to them and there are bilingual people that work out of that office that they can access so they can be guided to the services that can assist them through whatever their personal circumstances are at the time.

I strongly encourage people to continue to contact their medical travel coordinator at the health centre to make sure that the flights and the accommodations and everything that are part of their medical travel trip are coordinated appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize that these types of unfortunate incidents still transpire, causing further barriers to Inuit. As my last question, it seems clear that this type of experience won't change overnight. What expectations should Nunavummiut have to ensure we aren't just spending additional funds? Has the department undertaken any further studies to increase capacity or further improvements that are being undertaken at this time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my closing comments the other day, I put a shout-out to our medical travel team and the incredible workload that they have undertaken

through this COVID situation, dealing with other jurisdictions opening up and providing more services and dealing with backlogs for so many different specialty issues; working on lengthening the time of specialists here in Iqaluit to see more people.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want anyone to go through any unnecessary hardship and none of us do. I can't say we are going to be able to fix it tomorrow, but I do know that either late last week or sometime this week our medical travel personnel are meeting with the leadership from the contractor here in Iqaluit to discuss different options on how to streamline and smooth out the process. Hopefully those discussions will bear fruit and we can look forward to less of these occurrences happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, followed by the Member for Baker Lake. Member Main.

Question 969 – 5(2): Clarification on Ministerial Correspondence on COVID-19

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask questions to the Minister of Education.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to again thank the minister for his letter dated September 22 regarding the reopening plan for Nunavut's schools. I would like to seek clarification on a number of topics.

The first topic is schools that are dealing with a shortage of space. I have two such schools in my constituency:

Levi Angmak Ilinniarvik and Qitiqliq Middle School. In the minister's letter, on the second page it states, "If schools have issues related to a lack of space, the use of non-traditional spaces can be explored. Schools have been encouraged to implement land-based instruction where feasible."

Mr. Speaker, my first question for the minister: how does he envision the use of non-traditional space and/or land-based instruction within Nunavut schools during the pandemic?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. There was much work that was put into the opening plans for our department and I thank all the work that went into this process.

When we're talking about non-traditional spaces, we're talking about using space that would not normally be used for a classroom, let's say for example, the gym or a library, if it has more space, maximizing that space to allow students to be distanced as much as possible. Where feasible, we're encouraging schools to use non-traditional space to allow for the education program to be delivered.

With land-based instruction, each school has different land-based instruction that they plan for and DEAs support this area a lot. This involves outdoor activities. In our opening plans, one of the resources that we provided to educators is a tool kit that lists a whole bunch of different

activities depending on the season that schools can undertake to support land-based instruction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The second area I would like to seek clarification on is a pretty basic one: how do parents know when it's safe to send their children to school?

Mr. Speaker, on page 4 of the minister's letter, again I'll quote, it mentions "strict adherence to the personal hazard assessment, COVID self-assessment to ensure that anyone exhibiting symptoms of viral illness does not enter the school." Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister to translate that into normal person speak for the parents out there, including myself. What specifically are parents supposed to look for in terms of trying to determine whether their child is too sick to go to school or well enough to attend in terms of making that decision? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank again the member for his question. The basic message we want to send to parents or guardians around their child or children's health: if they're sick, stay home. That is the number one guidance that we want to give, but as for symptoms that parents and guardians can look for in their children, the big three

are fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. Those are the three main COVID symptoms that we want people to understand. I again thank the member for bringing up these questions around it because we all need to be on the same page around this pandemic to understand how it works or how it presents itself.

I also just want to remind people that if you have questions around your health, you can seek advice from your local health centre's call-in. There's also the COVID hotline, 1-888-975-8601. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister, for translating that for me.

Mr. Speaker, the final area I would like to seek clarification on is the area of supplemental learning tools. Again I will quote from the minister's letter. This is on page 8. "The department has secured and will be piloting an online platform for students, teachers, and parents. Additionally, the department is purchasing laptops, iPads, and portable Internet devices to be deployed to communities directly affected by COVID-19."

Mr. Speaker, this is encouraging and it could be a silver lining to the pandemic in Nunavut in terms of the education system. Can the minister outline what online platform has been purchased and what the department's plans are to deploy these new tools if they are needed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Education, Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department has purchased the online platform called Edsby, it is spelled E-d-s-b-y, and this would help support and enable teachers to provide lessons, materials, and communicate with students and parents through the Internet. We're currently preparing and planning for piloting this platform in several schools and checking out all the functionalities of this new platform. We expect staff to be training on this platform in mid to late October. This would be a valuable tool to support students and teachers beyond the pandemic.

I just want to also say that we're aiming to purchase 3,000 devices and these would be laptops or iPads, Internet-capable devices, and these would be deployed as and when a community is impacted by COVID. Just to go back, the purchase of the computers and iPads is all through the federal funding that has been made available, which we're very thankful for, but we expect the online platform to be deployed and delivered early in the new year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, followed by the Member for Gjoa Haven. Member Simailak.

Question 970 – 5(2): Sports and Recreation

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister

of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, an important component of community wellness is providing opportunities for our residents to engage in healthy sport and recreation programming.

As the minister is aware, his department's current business plan indicates that it recently completed stakeholder consultations for the development of a new "sport, physical activity and recreation policy framework." It also indicates that one of the department's priorities for the current 2020-21 fiscal year is to complete this work.

Can the minister update the House today on when the new sport, physical activity and recreation policy framework will be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the topic that my colleague is talking about, the Nunaliit Aulajut document talks about how the people of Nunavut can do more recreational activities, do more walking, or do more involvement with sports in the communities. It will be our goal through the recreation division. We have spoken with the different stakeholders in Nunavut, recreation coordinators, and other people who do that kind of work. We have spoken to them and this will start soon. As soon as everything is done, I'll present it here

and to people out there that want to use it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. The Sport and Recreation Division of the Department of Community and Government Services has published *Guidelines for Community Recreation* to assist community recreation leaders with safe planning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Can the minister indicate what other support his department is providing to local recreation leaders during this challenging and unprecedented time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department's recreation division has worked with and continues to work with all recreation committees in every community to resolve any problems related to providing recreational activities for their community residents.

As an example, many communities now hold fishing derbies and many recreation committees and workers in the communities are canvassed, in collaboration with the Department of Health, during this COVID-19 pandemic. We make joint announcements, such as an announcement outlining the maximum number or capacity limits for arenas and

dance halls, along with various facilities, so we have cooperated with them.

Furthermore, we provide all hamlets with recreation funding to allow the committees to offer recreation activities and if they require supervision within the facility or outdoor playgrounds, and we have provided additional funding to every community during this pandemic to provide more assistance to hire more supervisors if needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. The Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for administering the government's Sport and Recreation Grants and Contributions Policy. Can the minister clarify the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted applications for funding under this policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The application process for recreation funding applications within our department is continuing, and there haven't been any changes to how funding is provided as we are using past practices, Mr. Speaker. However, it is also quite pleasing to see more residents outside, enjoying the fresh air with walks, games and such. There has been no change in the

application process numbers. It has not stopped things and the number of applications has not increased either. There has not been much change in the number of applications due to COVID-19, so I am glad to hear that many people are still active in recreation and sports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 971 – 5(2): Economic Development

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me a chance. A big "hello" to the community of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

As the minister will recall, I raised a number of questions during our winter sitting concerning economic development. At that time I spoke about the development of a commercial test fishery for Gjoa Haven, which has the potential to create much-needed employment for the community. The government is always looking for jobs for our Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly approved the government's 2020-21 main estimates during the winter sitting, which included funding for the transfer of the Fisheries and Sealing Division from the Department of Environment to the Department of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister update the House today on the status of this transfer

and can he clarify how many of the division's positions are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The transition of the fisheries and sealing from the Department of Environment and EDT did take place on April 1, 2020, but at this very moment I don't have the number of vacancies that are within that division for now, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I raised the issue of a commercial test fishery for Gjoa Haven during our winter sitting, the minister indicated that he anticipated that his department's Fisheries and Sealing Division would be working closely with the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the minister's 2019-2020 *Letter of Expectation to the Nunavut Development Corporation* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 12, 2019. It indicated that one of the goals of the corporation is to "seek new investments...with an emphasis on local harvesting and tourism sectors." Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what specific actions have been taken to achieve this goal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of actions that have taken place for both organizations, the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and the Nunavut Development Corporation, such as I have mentioned in this House, the reusable masks were ones that have taken place. Also, for the variety of things that will continue on and from what I understand, I can report on these in written form. As there are a lot of good activities that are taking place between the two organizations, I can spend a lot of time in this House promoting those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's 2019-2020 *Letters of Expectation to the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation* were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 12, 2019. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm when the 2020-21 letters of expectation will be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These letters of expectation, we

coordinate with my finance colleague here in terms of tabling to this House. I'm assuming that we would be tabling it within that same time frame. I don't have a specific time frame. I believe just yesterday I got a letter acknowledging from my finance minister as one of our organizations did ask for an extension, but it is always as early as possible is our aim, but we do collect all agencies and then table it. We are very committed in tabling of our letters of expectation and their responses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members will note that the time for question period has expired. We will proceed to Item 7. No. 7. Written Questions. No. 8. (interpretation ends) Returns to Written Questions. (interpretation) No. 9. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. 10. Petitions. (interpretation) No. 11. (interpretation ends) Responses to Petitions. (interpretation) No. 12. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Item 12: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters

Committee Report 029 – 5(2): Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to report that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 49 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The member is seeking unanimous consent to allow for Bill 49 to immediately proceed to the Committee of the Whole. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement and Bill 49 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

(interpretation) Let's proceed. No. 13. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. No. 14. Notices of Motions. (interpretation) Let's proceed. No. 15. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Let's proceed. 16. Motions. (interpretation ends) Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 16: Motions

Motion 085 – 5(2): Support for Students during COVID-19 Pandemic

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to move the following motion:

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has had a serious economic impact on the options and opportunities available to all sectors of Nunavut society;

AND WHEREAS Nunavut high school graduates and post-secondary students

are facing limited education and employment opportunities as a consequence of travel restrictions and course delivery options, conditions which may have significant long-term impacts on their future academic and career prospects;

AND WHEREAS the Office of the Auditor General's 2019 Report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners concluded that "selected Government of Nunavut organizations had not adequately supported youth and adult learners' transition to post-secondary employment";

AND WHEREAS the budget for the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program will likely be impacted by a decrease in the number of applicants;

AND WHEREAS the budget for the Summer Student Employment Equity Program has not increased in recent years, despite increased participation in the program;

AND WHEREAS the Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation was established to provide funding for training and initiatives that will provide Inuit with skills and qualifications for employment;

AND WHEREAS Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has recently called for pandemic response initiatives to create new public policies that will provide Inuit with training opportunities, pre-employment training opportunities, and employment opportunities;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-

Whale Cove, that the Government of Nunavut explore options, in partnership with such entities as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, for providing meaningful employment and training opportunities for high school graduates and post-secondary students who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: The motion is in order. Before we proceed with debate on the motion before us, I have a few comments to make as to the procedures.

Every member has a right to speak once to the motion for a total of 20 minutes.

The mover of the motion, Mr. Lightstone, speaks first, and the seconder, Mr. Main, speaks second.

The mover of the motion has the right to last reply, which closes debate.

A reminder also that a recorded vote can be called for.

To the motion. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of reasons that I felt it necessary to introduce a motion to direct the Government of Nunavut to explore options to provide meaningful employment and training opportunities for students who have been impacted by the pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, our youth are our future. We must ensure that they have all the resources necessary in order for Nunavut to prosper. Unfortunately our youth face

countless barriers to success, barriers such as food insecurity, overcrowding, abuse, mental health, as well as limited education and employment opportunities. The challenges our youth face on a daily basis have been exasperated.

Mr. Speaker, it has come to light that a significant number of Nunavut's recent high school graduates and post-secondary students have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and, as a consequence, have been prevented from pursuing post-secondary studies and other initiatives. I have spoken directly to a majority of Iqaluit's own Inuksuk High School graduates and many have stated that the pandemic has influenced their decision to take a year off before pursuing their initial plans.

It is clear from ministerial responses to questions in this Assembly as well as through written correspondence that this issue is not isolated to Iqaluit. Across Nunavut, our students have found themselves in a difficult position and countless have put their lives on hold, as evidenced in the reduced applicants for Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students as well as for Nunavut Arctic College. For the majority of our youth who have decided not to pursue their plans for further education, many will find themselves with extremely limited employment opportunities.

Statistics Canada recently published a report titled *Potential earnings losses between high schools and post-secondary graduates due to the COVID-19 economic downturn*. The study determined that this year's graduates who will enter the labour market may do so under very challenging conditions,

indicating that during a recession, new entrants to the labour market are typically the hardest hit. Further, that those conditions may also have significant, long-term ramifications on their future academic and career prospects. The report indicated that the unemployment rate for youth between the ages of 15 and 24 almost tripled from 10 percent in February to 29 percent in May.

I'm aware that a number of students will have participated in the Summer Student Employment Equity Program, which ends in two days' time on September 30. Some summer students may have been fortunate enough to secure a casual position to continue their employment beyond the summer. However, the decision to continue with a staffing action is influenced by a number of factors, including budgetary restrictions.

In addition, the summer student budget has remained stagnant since its inception, despite the fact that participation in the program has increased to almost 300 students. The summer student program is integral to youth success. Unfortunately the program is inadequate and must be expanded to provide more opportunities that will provide a majority of students to gain experience in a work environment and help them prepare for the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, in 2019 the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held hearings on the Office of the Auditor General's Report on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners. The report noted that our education system had a

number of gaps and barriers that made it difficult to succeed academically and to transition to post-secondary education and/or employment and that the Government of Nunavut had not adequately supported youth in this transition.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that providing meaningful employment and training opportunities has the potential to satisfy many of the Auditor General's recommendations, and I encourage the Government of Nunavut to take this under consideration when exploring options through this motion today.

Mr. Speaker, there's also a significant underlying issue which motivated this motion. About four in ten Nunavummiut are on social assistance and this represents the highest proportion in the country. Many youth who complete high school and post-secondary do not have realistic job opportunities in their home communities and cannot simply relocate to pursue employment given our current housing crisis. It is true that Nunavut continues to see more youth completing high school and post-secondary, but the fact remains that a majority of our youth have limited alternatives to income support.

Mr. Speaker, in the 2016 census there were over 6,000 Nunavummiut in the 15 to 24 age category. At the same time 32 percent were not in the labour force, meaning they were likely on social assistance. Of the remaining 68 percent of youth in that age category, the unemployment rate was a further 37 percent. Again, it is likely that these youth are also reliant on social assistance.

I know that the Government of Nunavut has produced several success stories with their initiatives to divert recipients away from income support, but the fact remains that Nunavummiut become dependent on the program and it can be very difficult to become self-reliant.

Every year the Government of Nunavut's Income Support Program sees increased expenditures. In the 2018-19 fiscal year income support payments totalled \$48.6 million. This represents an increase of \$20 million in just over ten years. I understand that there have been some reforms and increase to benefits, but I'm sure that there is a strong correlation between the cost drivers and youth aging into the program. More must be done to divert our youth from income support.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut is obligated under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, which states, "The objective of this Article is to increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level. It is recognized that the achievement of this objective will require initiatives by Inuit and by Government."

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut's Inuit employment levels have remained stagnant for years. I do understand that the government's workforce has grown significantly, but we have barely been able to keep the current ratio. Something drastic must be done to encourage youth or the status quo will continue. We must place an emphasis on our youth if we would like to achieve a representative workforce in a timely and feasible manner. We must

welcome our youth into our workplaces and encourage them to learn.

Mr. Speaker, the GN's own business plan states on page II-3, "Based on current labour market information and statistics regarding the educational attainment rates of young Nunavummiut, there is a...need for targeted youth programs, for Nunavummiut who are not in school and between the ages of 15-30." I encourage the Government of Nunavut to create such targeted youth programs through this motion today.

Further in the government's business plan, on page II-8, it states that, and I quote again, "As Nunavut's large cohort of young people become adults, efforts must continue to strengthen the partnerships between the government and other service providers to provide training and employment, and ensure Nunavummiut have opportunities to move towards independence." I encourage the Government of Nunavut to provide training and employment opportunities in collaboration with other service providers through this motion today.

Further, on page II-8 in the government's business plan it states that "Actions to address poverty in Nunavut are guided by the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*. The *Act* affirms the commitment of the Government of Nunavut to collaborate with other government departments, Inuit organizations and the non-profit sector on activities associated with poverty reduction." Again, I encourage the government to collaborate with partners such as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to address poverty

reduction efforts through this motion today.

Mr. Speaker, at the onset of the Fifth Assembly, we created *Turaaqtavut* and set the priorities of this government. One priority, *Sivummuaqpalliajjutivut*, states that "We will provide education and training that prepares children, youth, and adult [learners] for positive contributions to society and for meaningful employment." I encourage the Government of Nunavut to meet this priority through this motion today.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, our youth face many barriers and more must be done to increase their likelihood of success. Creating a program with the objective of producing meaningful employment and training opportunities for students is the first step in the right direction. I highly encourage the Government of Nunavut to seriously explore its options for students who have been impacted by the pandemic, but I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage the Government of Nunavut to also consider medium- and long-term supports to ensure our youth have the resources necessary to become self-sufficient and become positive contributors to our society.

Creating employment opportunities for youth may be a costly venture, but the ramifications of not doing so would be insurmountable. I further propose this as an opportunity for the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to collaborate with the Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation, which was established to provide funding and other support for training initiatives that will provide Inuit with skills and qualifications for employment.

It is my view that such a program would provide meaningful employment for high school graduates and post-secondary students who currently have extremely limited employment and education options due to the pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, a program of this type can not only mitigate the long-term impacts of youth training and career development, but directly bolster Government of Nunavut Inuit employment in the long term and could also play a role in diverting a cohort of recent high school graduates from seeking access to other government programs such as income assistance.

For these reasons, I have put forward this motion and I ask that all members vote in favour for our youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting the motion and I would urge the regular members to support the motion.

Mr. Lightstone, I'm very pleased that you brought up this motion, and Ms. Angnakak, who is not here today, we have you in mind and I'm sure that you would have something to say to the motion if you were in attendance.

To explore the motion and to look at options and to urge to have training provided for the students, but it doesn't identify everything that is available or what is available. We are urging the government. They would review the matter and look at providing guidelines

and outline their opinion. For example, as regular members we're not trying to tie the hands of the government. They will have options about where they're going to be going with the motion, but there is definitely a need to provide training and opportunities.

There are students who are going to Arctic College and some of the students don't want to leave their communities anymore, possibly by being urged by their parents or because they're concerned about this pandemic. With that, we will definitely have to look at ways in providing further support to the students and look at a short-term plan.

We know that unemployment and poverty go hand in hand and we know that some communities have more opportunities than others. There are some with decentralized government. There are more opportunities available for those communities. By way of a motion, we are seeking the government to provide further support.

We also have to include not only the Nunavut government but also the local governments or to also include the local housing organizations or possibly Inuit organizations. We will need participation from all levels. Even if the motion goes through, we will have to look at different options, but we have to focus on cooperation because COVID-19 has affected everyone at the national and international levels. Working together is the solution so that we can provide more support for our students and the young people.

Even though there is the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be able to look back and say that we did something very

positive as a government for the youth.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Forty percent of youth had idled, as Adam said, sitting at idle. This is a dangerous statistic in my eyes. We all know our little communities have very little jobs during the summer when the GN does employ a small percentage of these graduates and post-secondary students through the summer employment program.

I'm looking at this through the eyes of my previous career in justice. In that career I had to learn the history of each inmate in order to help create a specific plan for recovery that is specialized to that individual. While doing this, each of these men started by telling me how they became into the correction system. A high percentage of these men stated that all it started from was one bad night, one bad night sometimes sadly leading to years of being put through the justice system.

I would hate to hear the corrections officers in 20 years or so gathering statistics and realizing that there's a very high percentage of Inuit incarcerated because they had one bad night during COVID-19 shortly after losing their summer jobs and deciding not to continue post-secondary school due to the risk of COVID-19.

I would much rather in 20 years see an interview on CBC news, *The National*, about a group of Inuit on their path to success and how, through this Assembly passing this motion, we're able to

improve our territory and to make it the most successful territory in Canada.

Remember: all it takes is one time, one bad night that led to this life in the justice system or we can hear of one job that these kids had during the winter of 2020 that started the path to making Nunavut the greatest place on Earth to live and work in.

For this reason, I am supporting this motion put forth by Mr. Lightstone 100 percent and I encourage you all to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. (interpretation ends)
Minister of Family Services, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank our colleague for presenting this motion. I am happy to voice my support to the motion. I will continue to actively work to explore options to ensure students and recent graduates have access to programming and supports during COVID-19.

(interpretation ends) Early in the pandemic, the Government of Canada created a federal program called the Canada Emergency Student Benefit that provides financial support to post-secondary students and high school graduates who are unable to find work due to COVID-19. Eligible students have until tomorrow to file their applications; if they have not already done so, I encourage them, for the periods covering May to August. As you might have noticed, our government did resist in finding temporary programs as the federal government already had a

program dedicated to students on this portion.

Having said this, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the work that the Department of Family Services and our government have done and will continue to do to ensure Nunavut students are being supported during this pandemic. These programs include our hamlets employing youth, Kisarvik; summer students for Nunavut students is a wage subsidy for post-secondary students that provide jobs and training for mentorship. These programs have been extended to end of fiscal year for students who did not attend their post-secondary schooling due to COVID-19. That is geared towards the business aspects of our territory.

In addition, I would also like to highlight some of the collaborative activities between our departments, which include the Skilled Trades Worker Diploma Program, the Getting Ready for Employment Training Program, and the Office Administration Diploma Program.

Also, I do want to highlight that our income assistance workers have been trained and have been starting to implement what we call “One Client One Plan,” where it bridges the income assistance and career development, and it is a great opportunity, as the member noted in terms of the statistics of how many are assumed to be on income assistance, is that this plan helps them with a career path and also looking at their future schooling.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I want to stand together and continue to support our Nunavut students. Thank you for

giving me this opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. (interpretation ends) Minister of Education, Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for bringing the motion forward today.

Mr. Speaker, my department, through the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, or FANS program, continues to support post-secondary students throughout this pandemic and so far, FANS has received 508 applications for the fall semester. This is for students in territory and out of territory. Of the applications that we have received, 299 have been approved. These numbers fluctuate over time as we receive and process applications. While these numbers do represent a decrease in applications compared to last year, this is consistent with trends happening across the globe and we anticipate additional applications coming forward for the winter semester.

We cannot say whether we will have a surplus at this time and we will be in a better position to determine so later in the fiscal year. My department will continue to support our students as best we can as we all continue to navigate this global pandemic.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I want to inform you that I will be in support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. (interpretation ends)

Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the member for Manirajak for introducing this motion and I will support it because the coronavirus has impacted the education system globally.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 has forced Nunavummiut to ask themselves, “What am I comfortable doing in this new environment?” This is a question post-secondary students have been asking themselves and their families worldwide. The drop in enrolments at the colleges, universities, and trade schools appears to be an international trend brought on by the onslaught of COVID-19.

Nunavut Arctic College is not exempt from this trend, but it’s important to note that students are still attending the college’s programs. This includes participation in the law program, NTEP, pre-health and nursing, management studies, social services worker, Piqqusilirivvik, jewellery and metalwork, interpreter/translator, Inuit studies, fur design, fur production, Environmental Technology Program, office administration, college foundations, carpentry, electrical, plumber, oil heater technician, housing maintainer, skilled trades worker, underground mining, heavy equipment operator, driver training, adult basic education, the G.R.E.A.T. program, and last but not least, pre-trades.

Mr. Speaker, the deadline to withdraw from our college program was last Monday and college officials advised me that they will present the final enrolment

numbers to me this week. The college has also taken additional steps to support our students during this global pandemic by providing laptops, Internet devices, expanded access to wireless Internet, and developing programs with alternative delivery models.

Mr. Speaker, I have also taken the initiative to contact Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to explore the possibility of securing Makigiaqta funds to assist in the delivery of programs for post-secondary students. Specifically I have asked to explore the option of securing Makigiaqta funds for new programs, including the mine training centre programs, a bachelor degree social worker program, an expanded NTEP program, and a licensed practical nurse program.

NTI, or Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the college have solid records on matters relating to continuing education. It is proving that our organizations effectively work together to ensure the possible delivery of higher learning for Nunavut Arctic College students and indeed for Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the member for Manirajak for introducing this motion and I will support it. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): To the motion. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I fully support the motion.

Mr. Speaker, as people of Nunavut, though COVID-19 is not in Nunavut proper, we are also impacted as it affects nations globally.

Mr. Speaker, this motion will highlight our support to our student bodies, including our recent graduates as they haven't completed their education beyond high school. We have to provide visible leadership, as well as through non-public actions and advice. Any person can capably learn both through observation as well as through non-visual lessons.

Mr. Speaker, our territorial students were unable to complete their school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in a hasty shutdown, and now we hear concerns and questions due to this unplanned closure, such as "What will we do now to catch up since we have not completed our lessons?"

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult for our youth. Let us support our youth. When we are getting old, they will be providing help to us. Mr. Speaker, even though this is difficult, I will also support the motion so that there can be learning resources for our youth. Thank you for giving me this opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am in support of this motion. I want to thank the member for bringing a motion of this nature forward. This motion is very similar to a letter

that the Premier and I received from the chair of the Regular Members' Caucus, dated September 3, in which we are preparing responses to.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see this motion and I will support it. It is very similar to the letter we received a few days ago from the chair of the Regular Members' Caucus and we are preparing the responses to that letter.

I wish to highlight some areas that outline our support, and as we all know, the Government of Nunavut has a summer student program for students in post-secondary education institutions that is quite successful and that we wish to see continue over the upcoming years.

Nunavut students in college and other post-secondary institutions and students applying for programs are eligible in the communities and we have been able to provide summer jobs for students wherever possible. This temporary summer work program provides insight into how the government works and operates.

The budget from HR is set at \$985,000. However, the total cost of the program runs anywhere between \$2 million and \$3 million per summer and we have been able to incorporate funding from various regions and departments that are hiring these summer students within government. It can be given more money from different departments that employ them within the government. This year, even with COVID-19, we successfully hired 180 students over the summer.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention that the summer students taking summer courses have not all returned to school,

although some students have had classes reopened. However, we have many students still working for the government. They have moved to casual staffing actions. Many people are able to garner more income with temporary jobs in the summer on top of their job.

We also have the Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave Program. Employees want more education, but are concerned that their job may disappear if they go to school. Using the Amaaqtaarniq program, they can go back to school if they want to. Once they finish the program or if they don't like the program, then the position they left would be available for reinsertion.

This summer, five employees completed their program studies and they have more qualifications and previous employees sometimes return while others become qualified to apply for a higher position when they return. There are currently 15 more approved and sponsored to attend post-secondary studies in Inuit Nunangat and southern institutions, those who are working for the government.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we're establishing a Government of Nunavut pre-employment steering committee. We are planning on how better to provide assistance. We will be doing the planning at the beginning of next month on how this can move forward so that they can have a good plan.

(interpretation ends) Lastly, Mr. Speaker, we are establishing a Government of Nunavut pre-employment steering committee. Our senior officials will be meeting in early October to review the terms of reference

and we will ensure that supporting our students and graduates will be one of the initial topics for this committee to address.

In closing, I want members to know that I support this motion, as we are always looking for ways to improve and support all Nunavummiut. I hope that members will be happy with the response to the letter that will be returned to the chair of the Regular Members' Caucus on this matter, and I too will rise to support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the opportunity for cabinet to speak to the initiatives and programs our government has already put in place to support our students during COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, students at every level across the globe are facing unprecedented challenges. The Government of Nunavut has always worked to support students, from kindergarten to post-secondary and beyond. We're here to help our students succeed in the long term. Their success makes Nunavut stronger. I encourage all students to follow up on the programs and services mentioned by my colleagues today. While the pandemic has created short-term difficulties, we will always work to ensure we support their success and path.

We know how difficult this time has been for our students, but as you can see, we are actively moving forward. We are happy to support this motion to explore even more options to ensure that Nunavut students are adequately provided opportunities for now more than ever. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Does the mover of the motion, Mr. Lightstone, have any last reply?

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to hear all the members supporting this motion, especially cabinet. Given cabinet support of this motion, I'm even more excited to see the results of their exploratory efforts.

It's great that this was an opportunity for cabinet to highlight their current initiatives and others that are underway, but that's not really the point of this motion. The point of this motion is the fact that we need to do more and that the Government of Nunavut has not been as supportive as possible for our youth, as indicated from the Auditor General's report titled "Support for High School Students and Post-secondary Students," which ironically could have been titled, "Lack of Support for High School Students and Post-secondary Students." Regardless, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and optimistic hearing the responses today.

Mr. Speaker, as I... Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated, such an initiative could potentially have much

positives, including addressing our stagnant Inuit employment rates. If such an initiative were to be created by this motion, it could definitely see a drastic change in our Inuit employment rates several years down the road.

Mr. Speaker, the motion is directing the Government of Nunavut to explore options and there are several options that can be considered. Mr. Speaker, given the fact that our Inuit employment rates have been stagnant, it would be an ideal place for these youth to gain employment within the Government of Nunavut.

With that being said, I do understand that it would be quite impossible to give every youth a job within the Government of Nunavut, which is why I think it is highly important that the Government of Nunavut consider a collaborative effort and an initiative created by the public sector to create employment opportunities within the public sector, but for this initiative to succeed, it will also require initiatives and efforts on behalf of the private sector. I highly encourage our government to take that into consideration.

With all that being said, I'm very happy with what all members have been saying, and I look forward to this motion being passed.

In final, Mr. Speaker, I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The debate is now closed and a recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please

stand and sit down when I call your name.

Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Main.

Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Pedersen.

Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Towtongie.

Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Kusugak.

Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Akeegok.

Ms. Ehaloak.

Mr. Netser.

Mr. Hickes.

Members, the motion has been carried unanimously.

>>Applause

(interpretation) Thank you. Let's proceed. No. 17. (interpretation ends) First Reading of Bills. 18. Second Reading of Bills. 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 44, 48, 49, *amma* 50 and Tabled Document 65 – 5(2) with Mr. Rumbolt in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 83 – 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.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 16:16 and Committee resumed at 16:46*

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

Chairman (Mr. Rumbolt): Good afternoon, members. Welcome back. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 44, 48, 49, and 50 and Tabled Document 65 – 5(2). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to review Bills 44, 48, and 50 with the Minister of Finance, followed by Bill 49 with the Minister of Justice. If time permits, we will proceed with the review of Tabled Document 65 – 5(2). Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 44?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 44 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2019-2020 – 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: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the committee will allow, yes, please. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree for the witnesses to appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Hickes, if you could please introduce your officials and then go on into your opening comments on Bill 44. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. With me, no stranger to the House, especially this past week, Mr. Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance. Over in the batter's box we have Mr. Bernie MacIsaac, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Terry Audla, the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation; and Peter Ma, the President of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes, do you have opening comments? If you do, please proceed.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. I am here to provide an overview of Bill 44, Write-off of Assets Act, 2019-2020. Through this bill we are seeking authority to reduce the financial value of government assets by \$1,264,000.

Our goal is to ensure the Government of Nunavut's financial statements accurately reflect the value of our assets, which change over time. We report slow and steady reductions of asset values like normal wear and tear on a building as depreciation costs to our public accounts. Of more interest to members are larger or more sudden reductions in value. In these cases the *Financial Administration Act* requires me to submit these to the Assembly as part of a specific act of write-off.

As a brief reminder to members, a downward accounting adjustment to the value of a public asset is a "write-down." When an asset loses its value completely, the adjustment is a write-off. We are seeking to make four such adjustments for 2019-2020.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation is seeking to write off a triplex in Kugaaruk that burned down, as well as two other units in Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit that are no longer usable. The total value of these five units is just over \$242,000.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation is seeking to write down the value of two public housing units by over \$54,000 to recognize damage caused by mould. The

Nunavut Development Corporation is seeking to write off \$71,425 in debts it deems to be uncollectable, and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation is seeking to write off about \$895,000 in debts it deems to be uncollectable.

The specific amounts of each adjustment are presented in the bill itself.

Mr. Chairman and members, this completes my comments and I am pleased to take any questions about this bill. Thank you.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of (interpretation ends) Bill 44, *Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 2019-2020*.

The standing committee does not object to the overall purpose of the bill, which the sponsoring minister described in his opening comments. The standing committee notes that the bill does not include any write-offs of petroleum products inventory due to fuel shrinkage, which were included in the government's Write-off Act for the 2018-19 fiscal year, which was passed during the 2019 fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Individual members may raise questions concerning the operational practices of the various entities covered by the bill. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Are there any general comments to the bill? If not, I'll ask members to go to the bill itself, which is Bill 44, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2019-2020*. There are four clauses and I will pause after each clause to see if anybody has any questions. We are on the Write-off of Assets and Debts Act. Item 1 is write-off of debt, the debt owed to the Nunavut Housing Corporation that are listed in Part 1 of the Schedule and are written off. Are there any questions for this particular one? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the housing corporation item, there have been concerns raised in past years about the practices concerning how units lost to fire get rebuilt and how the housing corporation tracks which units in which community are slated to be rebuilt. I wonder if we can get an explanation of how the need to replace units is tracked on a community-by-community basis as it applies to this write-off. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll give a little preamble before Mr. Audla completes my response.

As I'm sure most members are aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation self-insures its units. With the amount of fires and damage, it would be a lot more costly if we actually tried to get a third party underwriter to insure our assets under the Nunavut Housing Corporation. We do put a million dollars a year aside

for the fire replacement fund, but the actual operation of that fund and how the units are allocated to communities, through you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Audla would be able to provide more detail. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our process, as the minister had mentioned, we do receive on a per annum basis \$1 million to repair or renovate units damaged by fire. Each and every year we work on the plan based on whether or not there have been units either damaged or in need of repair due to fire, and then we look at construction allocations for the next fiscal year and to determine whether those communities are captured within the allocation. If not, then the economies of scale sort of come into play.

Typically if we are going to build, let's say, a duplex or a triplex or anything less than a five-plex, the expenses do rise because of the smaller build. Let's say for example, we did an RFP not too long ago for a duplex in one community and the lowest bid on that came close to \$2.4 million for a duplex. There is something that causes concern with respect to the expense of just trying to build a duplex in a community where we weren't building anything else. It actually works out that it costs less for us to actually build in a community that has been assigned for construction allocation purposes.

In some cases you might not see actual replacement of these fire units probably within a four- to five-year time frame, but they are perpetually kept on the list as being allotted for replacement. They

don't lose those units, but it will be built in that community if and when the opportunity arises for the economies of scale aspect at play.

I hope that responds to the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the response. Just a follow-up on that response, Mr. Audla mentioned the list. Who has oversight over this tracking of what units lost to fire or to mould or what have you? Is it the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Housing Corporation who tracks that? Is it an operational thing? It would be useful to have something to refer to. In my own constituency we lost one unit due to age and it was a single-family dwelling. I don't know when we can expect to have it replaced, so that's why I'm asking. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The list, as Mr. Audla put it, is kept within the operational need of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. That being said, there are not definite timelines associated with it because the housing allocations get done on an annual basis with our capital planning process.

Like Mr. Audla mentioned in his initial response, as an example, if in Whale Cove there is a construction project either for staff housing or public housing

and there was a fire replacement fund, they would attempt to use the economies of scale of already having a contractor in the community. At that time they would look at replacing the fire damaged unit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If it is an internal listing, does it mean that MLAs or this committee does not have access to that list to see what is currently being tracked as needing to be rebuilt in communities across Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure Mr. Audla will give me a wink and a nudge if I'm not responding correctly, but as Mr. Audla mentioned, they would track which units that they have to replace, so there would be a list of units in a community or across the territory that need to be replaced, but they wouldn't be in any type of order of construction because that direction would be fluid based upon the contracts that are available in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Would the housing corporation be willing to provide a summary of that list or a list for consumption of the committee to see? I'm concerned that

communities that haven't had any public housing built in a number of years could be disadvantaged if you are waiting for a build cycle to replace units lost to fire, and I think it would help to contribute to better transparency around that fire replacement fund, which has been flagged as a concern as well due to the capital estimates process. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through Minister Netser, he will have that list forwarded to that committee. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main, if you could vacate that chair, please, because somebody else needs to use it. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am looking for clarification, as usual. Let's use Baker Lake for example. We found out last week that it currently sits 21 on the list for new construction. What if a unit, a duplex, whether it be fire or age or anything else, like an act of God, where the duplex is no longer occupiable at all, what does the NHC do to expedite the replacement of that unit? What is the process to expedite the replacement of the unit? Is there anything in place, a plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first phase of that plan is what we are doing here today in writing off that existing asset, and to the rest of the direction, it would probably be best

if Mr. Audla provided that level of detail. Thank you.

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

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When a community does lose a unit for whatever reason, be it fire or like you suggested, an act of God, the allocation methodology takes that into account.

Let's say the example you used; Baker Lake was 21 on the list. The next year that number will change based on the fact that Baker Lake had lost those units and that is factored into the whole formula of allocation. It does not necessarily guarantee or mean that Baker Lake will be a community selected for new construction. It all depends on where they are, where they have moved up to on that list, but it is always included into the formula.

At the same time, using the economies of scale, if the community of Baker Lake was selected for purposes of construction allocation, those units to be replaced are factored into the allocation and number of units to be built in that community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your responses. You mentioned how expensive it gets if there is no construction at all in a specific community that requires this type of construction of any kind. Is there any testing to see if that formula is still accurate of the current time? Like you mentioned, I think you said \$2 million

for a duplex this year. Next year it can be down to \$500,000. Is there a methodology or a formula used to test the market? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of how frequent it is and I am sure Mr. Audla may have that, but basically from the example that you just provided, it shows that they do go out to market periodically and put out an RFP to see what kind of bids get solicited, and then base that obviously on the budgeted amount that is reasonable to replace that unit, but if there is any further detail... Mr. Audla is saying no, so it sounds like I got it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, minister and officials.

I would just like to continue on with my colleague's questioning. I am a little bit confused now. From what I have heard and what I understand, when a community loses a unit due to fire, then it will not be replaced until the community meets the public housing allocation methodology criteria. Is that correct? Those would not be replaced until the community as a whole receives a high enough need to validate the construction of new units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to follow up with Mr. Audla's example that he gave

earlier. When they went out for an RFP for a duplex and the bid comes in at \$2.4 million, it is deemed not... It is crazy to move forward with that, but if that bid would have come at \$900,000, they would have built those units. It does have an impact on the formula, but it is not set in stone. If there is a fire replacement deemed, if a community already has a housing issue but they have not made the list for staff housing or public housing, but a reasonable bid is accepted, then construction would proceed. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, it is my understanding that fire-damaged replacement units are completely separate from the public housing allocation methodology process. There are two different allocation methods, one for new construction of public housing and a completely separate allocation method for construction of fire damage replacements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, it's all the same formula. When a community loses units to a fire or an act of God, it reduces the amount of available units in a community. The wait-list would obviously still be the same or potentially increase with the people who were left homeless from that incident, so it would change their ranking territorial-wide of where they would fit on the next allocation list. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Okay, so I think I understand now. There's only one new construction allocation method and it's the public housing methodology, so now I'm confused at a different level. If there's only one allocation method, why are there two separate pots of funding? Why are there a fire damage replacement fund and then a separate public housing unit fund? Considering there is only one allocation method, I don't understand why there are two separate pots of funds there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The fire replacement fund is our insurance fund. When a community loses units, it impacts our overall... If a community has 200 units and you lose five, then it only has 195 units. They're at a negative of what they needed even at the current level, so you need to bring that back up to par before you would have any allocation for additional units. I hope that makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That doesn't quite come across to me either. If the community has 200 units and they lose five to fire, their needs ranking priority is adjusted, but those five units won't be replaced until that community reaches the higher priority to get the new construction. Given that there's no fire damage

replacement allocation schedule and these are only being replaced by the public housing allocations that we see, I'm assuming that they would all come out of the public housing fund, given that it's just one sort of schedule or listing. I'm going to ask the minister to try to explain it in different words. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I probably oversimplified it and my apologies to the committee. Basically it's a fire replacement fund. The first priority is to replace those units, then that obviously has an impact on the allocation formula of losing those units in a community, but you want to make sure that those units are replaced so that, again, the stabilization of the analysis for the allocation committee. I hope that makes sense.

With regard to why there are two separate funds, to be honest, it just makes the appropriations a lot easier. If we were to go out and request... An example right now is there's probably a backlog of fire replacement units that need to be replaced. If I recall, at one point in the Fourth Assembly, we actually doubled the fire replacement fund for one year to help them catch up, so that has to be taken into consideration every time another unit is lost across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Any other questions for the Nunavut Housing Corporation on their write-off of assets? Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If a house is lost or

damaged due to fire, it is replaced. Would this also be the case for housing units that are too mouldy and need to be replaced? Does it also follow the housing corporation's policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that level of detail handy. Mr. Audla would probably be best poised to respond to that, please.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) If I understood your question correctly, (interpretation ends) the fire replacement or repair fund is to replace those that were lost due to fire, unrelated to mould.

The other write-downs that you see related to mould are because of the fact that those units were so infested with mould that it actually caused damage to the wooden frame or structure, as an example, the roofing framing and the structural walls on the outside, where to replace them or to repair them actually cost more than actually building something new. That is one example. There are not many of those, thankfully, but for the purposes of replacing units that have been damaged beyond repair, be it fire or be it mould, then we would go through this write-down or write-off process.

I hope that is the response that the member was seeking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a different question. If a house is deemed to be beyond repair due to excessive mould infestation and it is decided that the house will be written off, will the debt that is owed on that unit be written off as well? That is my final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is very case specific. It is basically a hypothetical question that I wouldn't be able to respond to, but in a nutshell, this exercise that we are going through here today is to recognize on our public accounts what our government assets are valued at. When you have a property, whether it be mould infestation or fire damage, we have to make that accounting adjustment. That is the purpose of the exercise here today. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek, are you done?

Mr. Kaernek: Yes.

Chairman: Thank you. Are there any more questions on items 2 and 3, write-off of assets for the Nunavut Housing Corporation? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have very few questions. I just want more information on a comment that was made by one of my colleagues regarding mould infestation.

I have heard people saying that their houses have mould, and I'm sure it is the same case in most of the communities.

What does the housing corporation do about mould infestation? Is it up to the local housing organization, or who inspects the house to see if it is inhabitable or if it can be repaired? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there was a question similar to that asked to the minister today where the local housing organization, when they do their condition ratings of a unit, that's where they would prioritize the renovation or the upgrades or whatever the term is I can't remember; it escapes me right now; repair and replace. That would determine what priority that that unit would get ranked in getting the repairs done.

That being said, there is some analysis of it where, like we're doing today, there's such an extreme level of condition deterioration that it had gone down in value so much that we actually have to write down the value of the asset to make it reflective of our public accounts. Thank you.

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

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As stated here in the briefing notes, it says two units with mould damage significant enough to write down. Is that pretty common, like two in a year or two in one fiscal year? I'm just trying to understand the average of how many requests are brought forward from the communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a great question. We do this every year, but I have never tracked the stats on it. I'm sure Mr. Audla would know much better than I. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla, go ahead, please.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's not common in the sense that we have started in earnest probably two years ago in looking at all our units in respect of mould and the level of mould and how much actual damage has been occurring to some of these units. As the minister had mentioned, we do our annual inspections and we include that in our condition rating and ensure that they're done on an annual basis. We look to the local housing organization to give us that list of units inspected and which ones they feel are in need of most repair based on the amount of mould. Over the past two years we carried out this exercise of mould assessment and remediation and have found during that intensive assessment of these units that there were some that needed to be either written down or completely replaced. It's just within the past two years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Audla. I just had maybe my own question with this. You've had the mould remediation in place now the past several years. Do you find that your department is getting ahead of the mould situation or is the mould situation growing? Just to give us a sense on how bad it is out in our communities, I'll go direct to Mr. Audla

for that, if you don't mind, Minister Hickes. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pretty confident that we are ahead of the curve on this now, being that for the past two years, we have assessed a large number of units and made the determination as to which ones within each of the communities have the highest rate of mould or occurrence of mould and we feel quite confident that we have addressed those with the worst cases. It is still ongoing with respect to the mid to lower term type of occurrences.

We have worked with other jurisdictions as well as to the best practices and best examples that are out there and have worked with the Canadian High Arctic Research Station as well. In that sense, compared to others, we are trailblazing, if I can say that term, and I'm quite proud of where we are with respect to being on top of it and I'm quite confident that we are ahead of the curve on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Okay, I have no more names for questions on the Nunavut Housing Corporation. The other two items on this particular bill are items 1 and 4. It's the Nunavut Development Corporation write-offs of accounts receivable. Any questions on that? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have just two brief questions on the Nunavut Development Corporation file and it's regarding the sales division in Mississauga, Ontario, and it makes reference to outstanding amounts oweable to the sales division and it mentions

customers that are delinquent, one that's delinquent and inactive and another one that filed for bankruptcy. My question is: what is the status of that sales division in terms of the Inuit art market? Is this something that we can expect to see more of in the coming years if the Inuit art market is deteriorated or is this just an isolated event? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. MacIsaac would have the level of detail that the member is looking for. Thank you, please.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. MacIsaac.

Mr. MacIsaac: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These write-offs and this type of occurrence is a typical situation that the NDC runs into every year. There are always doubtful accounts. There are always people or businesses going bankrupt at any particular time. Typically history has shown that they will put aside somewhere between \$150,000 and \$250,000 for these types of occurrences on a yearly basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When we see businesses who owe money to the sales division going bankrupt, what happens to the actual, physical Inuit art? Are they provided art on consignment? Are there assets that the development corporation can go and take back or is this not something that

can be done? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are at least a couple of different scenarios, and Mr. MacIsaac would probably be best suited to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. MacIsaac.

Mr. MacIsaac: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These debts in this particular case were a combination of art sold on consignments, which is art that the corporation would give to that particular store or gallery or whatever with the view that if they sold it, then the NDC would get a certain portion of it, and then the scenario is that it is art sold on credit.

As to your question regarding whether or not physical assets are somehow gotten during the bankruptcy, I don't really have an answer to that at this point, but legal counsel advised that these accounts were uncollectable at the time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have no more questions on the development corporation. I just have one question on the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation items here. For the two clients that are listed for this proposed write-off, Polar Supplies and S&G Taxi, what efforts did the NBCC make to collect on these loans from these two clients before they went into

bankruptcy? I'm just trying to understand how much energy was put into seeing these amounts recovered. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Ma would be able to respond to the member's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ma.

Mr. Ma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to Polar Supplies Ltd., they went into voluntary bankruptcy and as such, there was a receiver that was appointed to handle the affairs of that business. The assets that we held as security, we realized, went against the loan.

With respect to S&G Taxi, that's a sole proprietorship. We actually petitioned that business into bankruptcy. Again, a trustee was appointed to realize on the assets that we had as security to offset the loan balance owed to us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ma. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think this is my last question. On the Polar Supplies file, it stands in contrast to this S&G Taxi file because in the S&G case, you recovered quite a lot of money back from that business, but with regard to Polar Supplies it doesn't appear that the NBCC got that much back, despite all these physical assets,

property, equipment. Why wasn't it possible to recover more of the amounts in the Polar Supplies case? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Again, through you, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Ma could respond to the member's question, please. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ma.

Mr. Ma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was a very astute observation by the member.

I would say the primary difference, and our auditors had exactly the same question, in the case of S&G Taxi, there was one main asset, which was the building in Rankin Inlet. Off the top of my head, we realized just over a million dollars for that one particular asset. Even though we held more assets in the case of Polar Supplies in Kinngait, the assets were less desirable. When those real estate assets were sold, we realized actually a lot less than we would have realized in the case of S&G in Rankin Inlet. The primary driver was the value of the security assets in the particular community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Any more questions on the Nunavut Development Corporation or the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For the Polar Supplies Ltd. or any person that is stated in the bankruptcy, I'm

curious to know what the process is in terms of people reapplying for funding. Is there any kind of penalization, or what is the process? I'm just curious to know how that process is with that one. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Even though we're going through the accounting exercise to write these off, the debts are still owed, so they wouldn't be eligible for any further funding agreements until these debts were paid. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. I have no more names for questions for the Nunavut Development Corporation or the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, so I will ask members to go to Bill 44 in your legislative binders and it is tab 44. Bill 44, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2019-2020*. Clause 1. See Part 1 of Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Part 1: Debts Written Off. Total. \$71,425.33. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 2. Go to Part 2 of the Schedule. Part 2: Assets Written Off. Total. \$242,376. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Go to Part 3 of the Schedule. Part 3: Assets Written Down. Total. \$54,641. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Go to Part 4 of the Schedule. Part 4: Debts Written Off. Total. \$895,474.98. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 44?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 44 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that sometimes these issues can appear very complicated and the history behind them are sometimes very convoluted, but I appreciate the members' questions, their due diligence, and it does assist us with finalizing our public accounts. I appreciate all the members' questions and I appreciate the witnesses coming in. I know they're all very busy people as well too and we have kept them waiting a couple of times

now, so I appreciate their coming and helping me respond properly to the members. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. On behalf of the committee, I thank you and your witnesses for being here to answer our questions.

We will now move on to Bill 48. Minister Hickes, are you ready to do your opening comments at this time? If you are, please go ahead.

Bill 48 – Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2020-2021 – Consideration in Committee

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for the record, there will be a couple of witnesses coming in, Jamie Flaherty, the Acting President of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and Chris Bradley, the Chief Financial Officer of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and still with me as always lately, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Jeff Chown.

I would now like to provide you with an overview of Bill 48, *Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2020-2021*. Through this bill we are seeking authority to forgive about \$420,000 the City of Iqaluit owes to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I will first take a moment to explain to members the difference between forgiving a debt and writing off a debt.

As we discussed in relation to Bill 44, write-offs are downwards accounting adjustments to the value of the assets we report on our books. When the government writes off a debt, we are acknowledging it is highly unlikely that we will be able to collect it. If we do not

think we will collect a debt, it is inappropriate to count the amount owing to us as a financial asset. Accounting standards require us to adjust our books downwards to reflect this understanding. However, these write-offs do not themselves make the debt go away, as I just mentioned in the previous bill.

Forgiving a debt is different. When the government forgives a debt, we are agreeing the financial obligation to the government no longer exists. The debt is cleared, the obligation is removed from our books, and the entity that owed the debt is no longer on the hook. As with write-offs, the *Financial Administration Act* requires Assembly approval by way of specific legislation to forgive debts.

Bill 48 is an Act of forgiveness. Through it we are seeking the Assembly's approval to clear the debt owing by the City of Iqaluit to the Qulliq Energy Corporation. In 2010 the Qulliq Energy Corporation identified a meter error relating to the City of Iqaluit's water treatment plant. Specifically the meter had been reporting just 10 percent of that building's power consumption. This meant that due to hardware error, the Qulliq Energy Corporation had been significantly undercharging the City of Iqaluit for power since 2003.

Based on power consumption tests, the Qulliq Energy Corporation determined the city owed an extra \$550,000 for electricity it had consumed but not been charged for. For several years afterwards, the city did not pay this amount owing. During this time the Qulliq Energy Corporation continued to charge the City of Iqaluit late payment fees. Those late payment fees steadily increased to about \$420,000.

In July 2020 the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the City of Iqaluit came to an understanding. The city agreed to pay the principal owing to the Qulliq Energy Corporation of about \$550,000 if the Qulliq Energy Corporation waived the late payment fees that had built up over the years of about \$420,000. We are now seeking your approval of this arrangement.

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

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickey. Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening comments? Mr. Main, please go ahead.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 48, *Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2019-2020*.

The standing committee does not object to the overall purpose of the bill, which the sponsoring minister described in his opening comments. During the minister's appearance before the standing committee, questions were asked concerning the extent to which other situations of a similar nature have occurred in recent years, as well as the Qulliq Energy Corporation's approach to these situations. Members of the standing committee may ask similar questions during today's proceedings. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. I'll open the floor now for any general comments on the bill. Seeing none, we will go to the bill itself and it is Bill 48 with only one clause and it all pertains to the debt forgiveness for the City of Iqaluit. Are there any questions? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the technical side of things, meter multiplier error, so this stems from a major meter multiplier error that went back to 2003, so it was about a seven-year period when there was an error in one of these pieces of equipment. How many other, I will call it, major meter multiplier errors have been noticed or accounted for across Nunavut by the QEC? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I recall correctly, there were two other significant amounts under the same type of an issue. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In those cases, in those two other occurrences, were the customers over-billed or under-billed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was a very similar situation

where they were dramatically under-billed, and then when these notices went out when this issue got noticed, there was communication with the parties that were engaged and the other two entities made payment arrangements to repay the owing amount. The city was the one that disputed it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main, do you have another question? Go ahead.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) These other two occurrences, were there any late payment fees levied against those customers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's practice with private and commercial is if payment arrangements can be made, they can be made without penalties and interest accumulated and as long as the conditions are adhered to. That was the case in this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just to clarify that, in these other two occurrences, which we don't know where they were or who they were, it doesn't really matter that much, to be honest, there were no late payment fees levied on those customers. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Correct. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for clarifying that. In the briefing material it mentions that there was a meeting between the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the City of Iqaluit CAO and that there was an agreement to remove these late charges totalling over \$400,000. That was in 2017. Fast-forward two years, in March 2019, the QEC board of directors approved a resolution to allow the late payment fees to be waived. What accounted for the two-year holdup in this matter being resolved? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Bradley spent the weekend in Iqaluit versus going home because we weren't able to get to this bill, so I'm glad we have an opportunity to make his time well worth it. If Mr. Bradley could respond to that question, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Bradley.

Mr. Bradley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I forgot the question.

Okay. The issue of the time from 2017 to 2019 was caused by delays in our own internal structure. We spent quite a bit of time discussing with the city, trying to figure out how we were going to get

approval from the FMB for this particular write-off or forgiveness, as the case was, and it took us almost two years to get that permission. That's the only reason that I can think of that caused the delays. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Bradley. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the explanation. It's somewhat reassuring to hear that there was work that had to be done internally to get this approved. It is quite a substantial amount of not money, but quite a substantial act of forgiveness in terms of over \$400,000. I guess the question is in terms of ensuring that this is an act of forgiveness that is being applied equitably to all of QEC's customers across Nunavut. Is the forgiveness of these late charges something that individual customers can come in and apply for? Is there a form they can fill out or is it something that's simply unique in this case because of the mistake that was made by the QEC some years back in terms of that meter multiplier? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just confirming that the practice that I was familiar with is still being practised.

Mr. Chairman, anytime somebody falls into arrears with the Qulliq Energy Corporation, I strongly advise them to contact Qulliq Energy Corporation representatives to make a repayment

plan. Any penalties and fees would be frozen at that point, but if you go on and on and on without paying your bill, there are penalties and interest that are accrued over it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have any further questions on this. I'm given some comfort by the fact that the board of directors reviewed this matter and felt that it was appropriate to bring this forward in terms of forgiving the late payment fees.

That being said, I have seen situations where individual homeowners are cut off from power or load limiters are placed on their homes and for a lot less than these amounts here, \$500,000 on the principal and \$400,000 on the late charges. Treating the large customers and the small customers with a view to fairness, I think, is important. I don't have any further questions on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Main. Minister Hickes, you wanted to reply. Please go ahead.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just very briefly, with this instance with the City of Iqaluit, ultimately at the very beginning of it, it was an equipment error. Like the other two businesses that this happened to or two entities that this happened to, they made payment arrangements. They may or may not have paid it all as a lump sum, so that fairness is across the board

for corporate customers as well as private customers.

Like I said earlier, I strongly recommend anyone that has any outstanding liabilities with the Qulliq Energy Corporation to contact them immediately and make payment arrangements. That would allow not the forgiveness of the penalties to that point, but at least it would stop any penalties from being accumulated. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of quick questions. First, for the benefit of our listeners, I was wondering if you would be able to provide an explanation as to what exactly meter multiplier is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Bradley could respond to that, please.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Bradley.

Mr. Bradley: A multiplier is a factor that is applied to the meter. If you think of a meter and as it is turning and it is generating a number, if it comes up “1” and it is a retail that would be measuring one kilowatt per hour. However, if it is a business, the “1” would measure perhaps 10 kilowatt-hours and therefore the meter comes with a prescribed rate to be applied to that number. They’re all different depending on the businesses. They’re all different. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was my understanding that a meter multiplier works in unison with current and voltage transformers to reduce the current or voltage before entering the meter.

To get to my question, residents in the plateau seem to live in a time warp in that we have to adjust our clocks on a regular basis. I found out that this is due to the proximity to the power plant, which has a much higher voltage or current than residents over in Apex. Does this mean that QEC clients that are in this time warp zone that have the higher voltage or currents going into their homes have malfunctioning transformers producing inaccurate meter readings? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. You’re getting a little bit beyond this bill right now, but I’ll allow this question. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate the member’s inquisitiveness on this, but we’re here for a financial accounting measure. The member could probably write a written question or ask a question to the minister at a more appropriate time to get the technical information. I brought my finance people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names for questions. I’ll now ask members to go to your legislative binders to Bill 48, which is tab 48. Bill 48, *Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2020-2021*. Clause 1. Go to Schedule on page

2. Schedule of Debts Forgiven. Total. \$419,084.54. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree to Bill 48?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 48 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the comments. I know that this is out of the ordinary, dealing with something that's 17 years old as an issue.

I do appreciate the member's question about the technology aspects of the metering and I'm sure the minister was listening and I'm sure she's anticipating some questioning from the member on that topic.

I just want to again thank members for their due diligence on this and I appreciate the support. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. On behalf of the committee, I thank you and your officials for being here to answer the questions. Minister Hickes, are you prepared to move on to Bill 50?

Bill 50 – An Act to Amend the Liquor Act – Consideration in Committee

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be swapping out some witnesses. I believe I have Jo-Anne Falkiner coming in, Mr. Chown will be staying, and I will go to my opening comments right away. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. I am here to present Bill 50, *An Act to Amend the Liquor Act*. The bill proposes two minor amendments, both affecting Nunavut breweries under the *Liquor Act*.

Unlike most jurisdictions in Canada, Nunavut does not allow breweries to sell anything other than beer they produce under a brew pub licence. Limiting the type of liquor a brewery can sell in Nunavut is restrictive. It puts them at a competitive disadvantage compared to other licensed establishments that can offer a wider range of beverages to their customers.

This bill proposes to amend the Act and allow a brewery permit holder to apply for a cocktail lounge licence. With this amendment, Nunavut breweries can sell other forms of alcohol like wine as well as their own beer. This change will allow breweries in Nunavut to expand their customer base and improve their economic viability.

In addition, Mr. Chairman and members, the bill puts forward an amendment to broaden the selling abilities of Nunavut breweries by allowing them to sell directly to Nunavut liquor licensees. Our liquor legislation already allows licensees to purchase from Nunavut breweries but does not permit breweries

to sell to licensees, if that makes any sense, Mr. Chairman and members.

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? Mr. Main, please go ahead.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 50, *An Act to Amend the Liquor Act*.

The standing committee does not object to the overall purpose of the bill, which the sponsoring minister described in his opening comments. The standing committee notes the importance of the Department of Finance moving forward with its broader review of the legislation, which members anticipate considering at a future sitting of the Legislative Assembly. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to make some brief comments on Bill 50. I want to make it clear that I am making my comments as an individual member and I want to be clear; (interpretation ends) I understand and recognize that the scope of the bill is limited. However, I also want to be very clear that although I will not formally

oppose the bill, I am not comfortable with it.

Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Baker Lake noted in the House last week that a significant portion of police callouts in our communities involve alcohol. However, although such organizations as the Nunavut Association of Municipalities have called for immediate and stronger action against bootlegging, the government has indicated that it is simply continuing to review the legislation.

Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Gjoa Haven noted in the House last week that although the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act* was passed during the previous Legislative Assembly, it is still not enforced.

Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Iqaluit-Manirajak has noted the importance of better enforcement of court ordered restrictions on alcohol, but there has been little progress on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, although we are opening beer and wine stores, we do not yet have an adequate substance abuse treatment facility in the territory. The minister in his opening statement said that “This change will allow breweries in Nunavut to expand their customer base and improve their economic viability.”

Too often, on the backs of our social problems, alcohol has been the factor; family abuse, domestic abuse. We are filling up the jails and it would be very unwise of me during the pandemic of COVID-19; I would see myself as being very unwise on making a minor amendment in the eyes of the legislation

with having more access to alcohol at the grassroots level.

Mr. Chairman, like I said, I completely understand and recognize that these for-profit businesses have to be competitive outside of Nunavut. I recognize that. I understand that, but to me it is not a minor amendment. I am opening a door in the future for my people to have more access to alcohol. It is my belief that the government's priority should be addressing the problems that are caused by alcohol, not expanding access to alcohol for-profit companies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are my comments.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towtongie, for your comments. Any other opening comments? If not, I will ask members: do they have any questions to the principle of the bill in any aspects? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just on the issue of lobbying, and this is something that has come up before in terms of how does the Nunavut government deal with for-profit businesses regarding this legislative proposed change, where members of the Liquor and Cannabis Commission or members of the cabinet or senior government officials lobbied as to the need for this change. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Falkiner would probably be able to give a bit more detail on what level of engagement that was had at the liquor and cannabis board.

There were appearances made before the board to address some of these inequities in dealing with, and some unrelated measures. I have met with officials from NuBrew. A couple of these things might have come up in conversation, but it was other topics that we were mainly meeting about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm not sure. Maybe Ms. Falkiner would be able to give a better timeline. No? Oh. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Falkiner, did you want to add anything or you are fine? Your fine? Okay. Mr. Main, do you have another question? Go ahead, please.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The viability of a brewery industry in Nunavut was mentioned. What evidence or what proof has been provided that this legislative amendment is needed in order to ensure viability? Is this brewery on the verge of going bankrupt, or how do we know that this viability argument has any water, so to speak? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe "viability" might not be the right term used; "competitiveness" might be more appropriate. Like I said in my opening comments, it is another avenue of business that they are excluded from, that every other business with a cocktail lounge licence has an advantage over them, so it is just equalling the playing field. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Is this bill anticipated to affect the availability of beer or the pricing of beer in terms of the local market? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a difficult question to answer; it depends on the business or any brewery that is developed in the future. Giving them the ability to be able to sell directly to retailers, I know from our standpoint, it eliminates a level of administration that is redundant and unnecessary, taking up warehouse space, and basically we would be taking in product, delivering it to the retailer, then we would be billing everyone and the administration alongside that.

Like most other jurisdictions, manufacturers can deliver directly to the clientele. Through our legislation, we are allowing the licensees to purchase directly from the supplier, but we are not allowing the supplier to sell directly to the licensees. Back in 2006, when some amendments were made to the *Liquor Act*, it was an unforeseen omission that we are looking at correcting now. Thank you.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My final question in terms of the amount of

this product that is consumed in Nunavut, the briefing material provided to the committee indicated, I believe, it gave a listing of the top five most popular beverages and none of them were produced in Nunavut. Am I correct to infer that locally produced beer is a tiny percentage of the overall consumption? Most of the product is still being produced down south and shipped up here. I'm just trying to understand what percentage of the market is being captured by locally produced product, if there are any ballpark figures. That's my final. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have to go back and do a bit of research or I guess not me personally, but Ms. Falkiner would have to go back and do a bit of research on exactly what percentage of our sales come from Nunavut-brewed beer.

That being said, the last I have heard is we have been able to purchase and sell every bit that they have been able to manufacture, so I think there's still an opportunity for growth in that business and industry. I hope that answers the member's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions on the principle of the bill? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Oh, yes, I do. I think the minister had referenced a date, 2006. Was that when the *Liquor Act* was amended to incorporate breweries? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, as microbreweries and breweries and private breweries were starting to become more prominent across the country, Nunavut updated its legislation at that point but missed a few parts of it at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Next I would like to enquire if this was a lengthy process or if it was rushed and whether or not there was a cross-jurisdictional scan or review of industry best practices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically in a nutshell, the majority of jurisdictions, if not all, allow for brew pubs to have a cocktail lounge licence. It's a normal practice in that industry. It's just unfortunate that that portion was missed back in the original amendments almost 15 years ago. Thank you.

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

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question. I see the term "Nunavut brewery." That's the first I have heard of it. I haven't seen any other breweries in the Kitikmeot or Kivalliq. Where is this based? Is it spread right across Nunavut, the licensees? I know where it's based, but

are there other licensees in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know there has been expression of interest in the past of at least two other entities or groups or individuals that had enquired about brew pub licensing, but as of now, there's one licensed brew facility in the territory. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. You're done, Ms. Towtongie? Thank you. I have no more names on my list. I'll ask members to go to Bill 50 in their legislative binders.

Bill 50, *An Act to Amend the Liquor Act*. Clause 1. Agreed? I can't hear you guys very well. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. 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 50?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 50 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Hickes, closing comments?

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't really have anything to say. It was fairly easy, and I am looking forward to feedback from all members when we bring forward our *Liquor Act* in the next government. Hopefully I'm still here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Hickes. On behalf of the committee, I thank you and your staff and officials for being here today to answer questions.

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act – Consideration in Committee

We are now going to move on to Bill 49, and I will ask the minister responsible if she could proceed to the desk at the front there, please.

I would like now to ask Minister Ehaloak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree for the witnesses to appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak, for the record, if you could introduce your witnesses and then go into your opening comments, please. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce my colleagues; to my left, Deputy Minister Stephen Mansell, and to my right sitting at the witness table is Erin George, who is a policy analyst, and Amy Short, who is our legislative staff. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. Do you have opening comments? Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Good afternoon, my colleagues. I am here today to discuss Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act*.

This bill amends the *Labour Standards Act* to allow employees to take leave due to public emergencies such as COVID-19. While the details of the leave will be set out in regulation, it is expected that for COVID-19, an employee would be able to take unpaid leave in the event that they, an immediate family member, or a person with whom they are in care require medical treatment or investigation or is under quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19.

This bill also amends the *Labour Standards Act* to allow employees to

take leave due to family abuse. An employee would be allowed to take up to 17 weeks of leave if they, a family member, or a person with whom they are in care or relationship experiences family abuse. The leave would allow them to deal with the consequences of family abuse, including obtaining medical care, counselling, and legal or law enforcement assistance.

The proposed family abuse leave is in keeping with similar provisions existing in every other Canadian jurisdiction. It is also reflective of the broad nature of Inuit kinship relationships.

This bill will help support in their times of need, including when faced with public emergency situations and family abuse. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We are now ready and available to take questions.

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

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 49, *An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act*.

The standing committee supports the overall purpose of the bill, which the sponsoring minister described in her opening comments.

During the minister's appearance before the standing committee, questions were

asked concerning the government's timeline for introducing new regulations under the *Labour Standards Act* to give effect to certain provisions of the bill, as well as the government's timeline for introducing similar amendments to the territorial *Public Service Act* that would cover members of the public service.

Members of the standing committee may ask similar questions during today's or tonight's proceedings. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just very briefly, I think this is a great piece of legislation. It tackles the pandemic issue in terms of allowing employees to take leave in the face of this challenge, as well as the issue of family abuse. That's something that I think we all would agree is far too common in Nunavut. Anything that we can do as a government to further support victims of family abuse, I think, is good news. I'm pleased to see that this is something that's in front of us to debate and consider. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and the Department of Justice for producing this piece of legislation. Domestic violence is a major issue facing so many in our territory. I first brought up the need for domestic violence leave in 2018 and I'm glad to see that this legislation was produced. I

would further like to point out that this piece of legislation is above and beyond the other pieces of domestic violence leave legislation that is across Canada, and the fact that every other jurisdiction does provide domestic violence leave, but our piece of legislation is beyond that scope and incorporates all family abuse. I just wanted to recognize that and thank the minister for her efforts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 3, 39.18 (d), I find this to be too wide open, “to seek or obtain Elder counselling”; and I hope it will be covered in the regulation. Right across Nunavut we have elders that are just physically getting old without knowledge of their own culture or tradition. What I would like to see is “traditional knowledge holder,” with the ability to transmit culture and tradition. One of the areas that I have seen in Nunavut for counselling is the community of Clyde River. They have traditional Inuit counselling and elder counselling, but the way it is worded right now, I just want to comment that “Elder” is too wide open. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Final comment.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towtongie. If there are no further comments, I will now open up the floor to any questions on the principle of the bill. Anybody? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I’m interested in what parties have been consulted with on this piece of legislation. It’s a bill that would affect...

. It’s not about Government of Nunavut employees. It’s about employees under other employers, so the private sector and what have you. What stakeholders have been contacted to provide feedback on this, and as briefly as possible, what has been the feedback to date from organizations outside of the Government of Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. The Department of Justice consulted internally with all departments within the Government of Nunavut, including the labour standards officer, and as well, letters were sent to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the three regional chambers of commerce, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, and the Agvvik Society. Of all the people we contacted, the groups we contacted, we only received two letters and those letters were from an individual named Stephen Bird, who is a lawyer who represents various Nunavut employers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the feedback that was received, was it generally supportive or on the fence or against this piece of legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. I also forgot to mention that Baffinland was one of the other members who sent us a letter regarding the bill itself. These two individuals that had sent responses were in support of the bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The legislative proposal mentions that there are plans for future consultations. What efforts will the department make to reach out to private sector employers or other employers when you're drafting up the regulations under this bill? My concern is that if the private sector or employers are not included as you're developing the regulations, we may end up with something that is well meaning but very cumbersome or hard to apply in the real world in terms of outside of the...I'll call the real world outside of the Government of Nunavut. Do you have plans to do that if this bill goes forward and you're developing regulations? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Main for his question. During the drafting of the regulations, the Department of Justice will do extensive consultations with various groups and agencies to ensure that all their concerns are addressed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister, for giving me that assurance.

My last question is about looking forward to what impact this bill could make in the life of somebody who is being abused or somebody who is a victim because what can happen is they get victimized in their home life, but then that can also extend to their professional career. I have spoken with people who have had hard times holding down a job because their partner was abusive and would come into the workplace, was obsessively jealous or what have you.

In your perspective, minister, will this bill help victims of family abuse by being able to maybe participate in the workforce more? Will this help them be more independent financially and in terms of their careers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Huge impacts. I can attest today that I was a victim and at that time I had worked for the Government of Nunavut, I had a supportive family and I had a supportive employer. At that time there was no such leave, but I pulled through because of my children.

I know for a fact that I have family members and friends who have approached me during my campaigning as an MLA and said, "We need change. We need help." I can attest today that if this bill is passed, it will have huge impacts on those who are affected

because of abuse. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. Anyone else with questions towards the principle of this bill? Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question under page 2. We are dealing with the *Emergency Measures Act* and then we are dealing with the *Public Health Act*. Would this relate to COVID-19? I know COVID-19 has been a part of the public health measures. I need clarification on that, Mr. Chairman. Final question.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When it comes to the leave for the *Public Health Act*, under the public emergencies, the types of public emergencies are the *Emergency Measures Act*, the *Public Health Act*, and the *Quarantine Act*, and yes, COVID-19 would be considered under this Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question and it's on the Verification of family abuse leave, 39.23, "An employer may require an employee to provide the employer with reasonable verification with respect to the family abuse leave as provided for in the regulations." I'm just trying to put myself in the victim's shoes. How far would the victim have to go with

reasonable verification to their employer in order to receive or to get the leave approved? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Pedersen for his question. When it comes to verification, what would verification look like? We have not defined verification in the bill, but we will have specifics and it must be reasonable. An employer can request proof of the need for the leave, but the request must be reasonable.

More specific information about the required verification will be included in the regulations. As we're doing consultations, employers will give us some idea and recommendations as to what verification would look like and that would be detailed out in the regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. If there are no more questions, I will ask members to go to Bill 49 in your legislative binders. Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act*. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 49?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 49 on the orders of the day for a third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak, closing comments, please.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to personally thank all the members for giving us the opportunity to sit here today, and I look forward to these regulations, I look forward to working with the members on the regulations, and I am very excited for these regulations and especially as Mr. Lightstone mentioned, we need to support people who are vulnerable, who are victims, and it shows that this government is willing to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak. On behalf of the committee, I

thank you and your staff for being here to answer the questions for the members. With that, we will move on. Mr. Akoak.

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

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour. Thank you. Opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon. Item 20. (interpretation ends) 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 44, 48, 49, and 50 and would like to report that Bills 44, 48, 49, and 50 are immediately ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Akoak.

>> *Laughter*

The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

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

(interpretation) No. 21. Third Reading of Bills. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Ms. Ehaloak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act – Third Reading

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Labour Standards Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker (interpretation): All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 49 is ready for assent.

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 44 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2019-2020 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 44, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2019-2020*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 44 is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 48 – Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2020-2021 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Cambridge Bay, that Bill 48, *Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2020-2021*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 48 is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 50 – An Act to Amend the Liquor Act – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 50, *An Act to Amend the Liquor Act*, 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. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 50 is ready for assent.

(interpretation ends) Third Reading of Bills. (interpretation) I would like to remind the members that all bills will be signed by the (interpretation ends) Chief Justice of Nunavut.

Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for September 29:

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

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

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20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I have a statement to make.

Thank you. Before we proceed with the next item on the orders of the day, I wish to make a statement.

Speaker's Statement

As Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Chairperson of the Order of Nunavut Advisory Council, I am very pleased to make an announcement today concerning the awarding of the Order of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) On January 1, 2010 the *Order of Nunavut Act* came into force.

The objective of the order is to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the territory.

The Order of Nunavut is the highest honour of Nunavut and takes precedence over all other orders, decorations, or medals conferred by the Government of Nunavut.

The Order of Nunavut Advisory Council considers nominations to the order and makes recommendations to the Commissioner of Nunavut, who serves as the Chancellor of the Order.

The members of the Advisory Council are the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Justice of the Nunavut Court of Justice, and the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.

To date a total of 18 individuals have received the Order of Nunavut for their lifetime of achievements and contributions in such fields as public and community service, the arts, education, language promotion, spiritual leadership, and business development.

The most recent call for nominations to the order opened on December 13, 2019 and closed on February 28, 2020.

The council recently had the opportunity to meet for the purpose of considering nominations.

I wish to thank everyone who took the time to submit nominations.

Although many very accomplished individuals were nominated, the council ultimately decided to recognize one person for their many years of contributions.

It is my very great honour to publicly announce today that this year's recipient of the Order of Nunavut is Mr. Peter Tapatai of Baker Lake.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Tapatai is a successful businessperson with a distinguished record of public service.

Mr. Tapatai has been the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal.

Mr. Tapatai is the founder of Peter's Expediting Ltd. in Baker Lake and is renowned for his work with the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, including the creation of the iconic character "Super Shamou."

I am confident that I speak for all Members of this House when I say that this year's recipient of the Order of Nunavut is well known throughout the territory for his contributions to sustainable community economic development, Inuit entrepreneurship, and cultural pride.

I wish to conclude by noting that the investiture ceremony for Mr. Tapatai will be held at a later date to be announced.

We will now proceed to Item 22, which we did.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) We are very proud of Mr. Tapatai.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation ends) In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 83 – 5(2), this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, September 29, 2020, at 10 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:49*

