



## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Paul Quassa**  
(Aggu)

**Hon. David Akeegok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic  
Development and Transportation; Minister  
of Human Resources*

**Joelie Kaernerik**  
(Amittuq)

**Pauloosie Keyootak**  
(Uqqummiut)

**David Qamaniq**  
(Tununiq)

**Emiliano Qirngnuq**  
(Netsilik)

**Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

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

*Minister of Health; Minister  
responsible for Seniors; Minister  
responsible for Suicide Prevention*

**Allan Rumbolt**  
(Hudson Bay)

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

**Pat Angnakak**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and  
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of  
Energy; Minister of Environment;  
Minister responsible for Immigration;  
Minister responsible for Indigenous  
Affairs; Minister responsible for the  
Utility Rates Review Council*

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government  
Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq  
Energy Corporation*

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;  
Minister of Languages; Minister  
responsible for the Nunavut Housing  
Corporation*

**Craig Simailak**  
(Baker Lake)

**Hon. George Hickee**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial  
Management Board; Minister of Justice;  
Minister responsible for Labour; Minister  
responsible for the Workers' Safety and  
Compensation Commission*

**Patterk Netser**  
(Aivilik)

**Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

*Government House Leader; Minister  
of Family Services; Minister  
responsible for Homelessness; Minister  
responsible for the Status of Women*

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

*Minister of Education; Minister responsible  
for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Calvin Pedersen**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Cathy Towntongie**  
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield  
Inlet)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Monday, February 22, 2021**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickers, Hon. David Joanasi, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. David Qamaniq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Paul Quassa)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, I ask that Member Lightstone say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Member Lightstone. Please feel warmly welcome as the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut reconvenes.

**Speaker's Statement**

Before I begin, I wish to express my appreciation and before we proceed with the orders of the day, I wish to make a statement.

As Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, it is my pleasure to welcome members back to the House as we commence the first sitting of the year.

I wish to note that upon conclusion of the present winter sitting, there will be two remaining sittings in which to complete the work before the Legislative Assembly prior to its dissolution in advance of the next general election, which will be held on October 25, 2021.

As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we must continue to work together and, in so doing, serve all Nunavummiut who have entrusted us with the responsibility of representing them in this House.

(interpretation ends) I remind all members of the importance of conducting themselves in keeping with the Rules of the Legislative Assembly and showing respect for one another and this institution at all times.

The past year has been extremely challenging for our territory, our nation, and our world. Although we look forward to better days ahead, our prayers are with the families who have lost loved ones and the communities that have been enduring great difficulty.

On behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, I wish to pay tribute and express our gratitude to the frontline workers who have been doing so much to help our communities.

>>*Applause*

Although the rollout of vaccines gives us much hope, we are not yet through this dark time. (interpretation) I ask all of our territory's residents to be strong and to follow the guidance of our health professionals.

I also wish to thank those who have been vaccinated against COVID-19. By saying yes to the vaccine, you are protecting our elders, our families, and our communities.

(interpretation ends) The pandemic is not yet over and our proceedings in the House continue to reflect the need to respect such public health measures as physical distancing. Although we are not yet able to welcome Nunavummiut back to our Chamber, we continue to broadcast and stream our proceedings on television, radio, and the Internet. I encourage all Nunavummiut to join us in this way, and to follow the important work of this House.

(interpretation) As members have been advised by my office, our colleague representing Arviat North-Whale Cove is not able to be in Iqaluit for this sitting as a consequence of the travel restrictions that are in effect for his community of residence under the *Public Health Act*.

Consequently, steps have been taken to allow him to participate remotely in our proceedings. As this is a first for us, I ask for the patience of all members as we adapt to our changing circumstances and work through technical challenges.

I also wish to advise the House that the Member for Netsilik's arrival has been delayed until later this week due to bad weather, and the Member for Kugluktuk's arrival has been delayed due to illness.

I also wish to advise that the Member for Uqqummiut will be absent from the sitting for the foreseeable future due to a family health issue.

(interpretation ends) Earlier this month I had the great honour of presiding over the swearing-in ceremony for our territory's new Commissioner, the Hon. Eva Aariak.

>>*Applause*

I wish to take this opportunity to extend the congratulations of the House to Commissioner Aariak, and to pay tribute to former Commissioner Kusugak.

I also wish to thank the federal Minister of Northern Affairs for joining with us remotely to participate in the ceremony.

(interpretation) Before we proceed with the orders of the day, I wish to read the following message that I have received from our new Commissioner.

### **Money Message**

(interpretation ends) I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut the passage of the following bills during the Second Session of the Fifth Legislative Assembly:

- Bill 59, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022*;
- Bill 60, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2020-2021*; and
- Bill 61, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 2, 2020-2021*.

Sincerely Eva Ariak, Commissioner of Nunavut.

(interpretation) Let's begin. (interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Premier Savikataaq.

### **Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

#### **Minister's Statement 527 – 5(2): Congratulations to Re-elected NTI President**

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say “good day” to you. The coronavirus pandemic will eventually be over, so please be patient.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincere congratulations to Ms. Aluki Kotierk, who was recently re-elected as President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI). On February 8 Ms. Kotierk won and she will serve as president of the organization until December 2024.

As everyone in this Chamber knows, the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated have a long history of working together for the betterment of Nunavut Inuit. This work has not always been easy, but it has and remains critically important. Fostering this relationship and our shared priorities will always be one of our government's most important commitments. It is through our individual mandates as well as our dedication to our territory and our people that we are able to come together to amplify our voices and make our needs and goals known to all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, since becoming Premier, I've had the opportunity to work closely with President Kotierk. Her passion, commitment and dedication to her role and Nunavut Inuit are admirable. I know she has a strong vision for her work, and I am sure she will take the next four years to do everything she can to help Inuit across the territory.



Mr. Speaker, one of *Turaaqtavut*'s most important priorities is Katujjiqatigiinnivut, and ensuring that our government fulfills our obligations under the *Nunavut Agreement*. I want to restate our commitment to this work, and I look forward to meeting with President Kotierk and the NTI board next month to plan our next steps.

Colleagues, please join me in congratulating President Kotierk and wishing her all the best for her next term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

### **Minister's Statement 528 – 5(2): Notice of Budget Address**

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back to Iqaluit, everyone, and Mr. Main, welcome virtually.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to inform my colleagues that on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, which is tomorrow, I will introduce the 2021-22 budget that outlines our government's financial priorities for the fiscal year 2021-22. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

### **Minister's Statement 529 – 5(2): Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq 2021**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues and the people of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, during the month of February, Nunavummiut celebrate Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, Nunavut's annual celebration of Inuktitut language. This year's theme is Inuit Pinnguarusingit – Inuit Traditional Games. The celebration of Inuktitut fulfills a commitment in Inuunivut, a key priority area in *Turaaqtavut*, by strengthening the foundations for a fully functional and bilingual society.

Inuit traditional games have been a cornerstone in Inuit culture for generations, helping us develop life skills by building strength, endurance, perseverance, and strengthening ties between our communities. This year Nunavummiut are invited to join the celebrations by sharing their experiences and stories around Inuit games. Activities include elders sharing the importance of the games in the preservation and revitalization of Inuit culture and language, the traditional word contest, and the Qilaut song writing contest.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, Aajiiqatigiinniq, one of the government's eight guiding Inuit societal values, calls for decision-making through discussion and consensus. Therefore Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq now includes a government-wide collaboration of activities, beginning on January 28 with Culture and Heritage and Community Government and Services' joint launch of Inuktitut in Microsoft Translator. This tool increases the ability to use Inuktitut in all aspects of our lives, instilling enhanced pride in our language and culture.

Inuit can also celebrate Inuktitut by watching programs now available through Inuktitut broadcasting options.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavummiut are encouraged to promote Inuktitut everyday through stories, games, and participating in the various activities and using the hashtag #Quviasuutiqarniq on social media. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Minister Kusugak.

### **Minister's Statement 530 – 5(2): COVID-19 Response**

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Good day, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be back.

Mr. Speaker, as many of the members know, I began my portfolio as Minister of Health in the middle of this pandemic in an unusual way. I was on a charter flight to Sanikiluaq on that day. I brought the member for Sanikiluaq with me and I was going to meet with hamlet officials. When we were about to land, my cellphone rang and I was told that a case of COVID-19 was identified in the community, so we weren't allowed to disembark the plane. Here I just became the Minister of Health. It was Nunavut's first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the territory and it began a three-month outbreak response that would include Arviat, Rankin Inlet, Sanikiluaq, and Whale Cove.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, though this is not how I would have chosen to start my tenure as Minister of Health, I can say that I was extremely impressed at how professionally, quickly, and effectively my staff and all government departments responded to the outbreak. Everyone was prepared and ready to meet the demands to ensure the health and safety of Nunavummiut as well as the continuation of vital government services.

Mr. Speaker, I won't say the effort was easy. It took countless hours and staff working around the clock. For our rapid response teams and frontline staff, it meant being in harm's way and putting the health of Nunavummiut above their own. For that, they should be commended for their dedication and commitment to the care of all Nunavummiut.

**An Hon. Member:** Hear, hear!

>>Applause

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize the work that all Nunavummiut have put in to protect each other and our communities. They have worked hard to follow the public health restrictions. For eight months, they were key to helping keep COVID-19 out of the territory. When the outbreak happened, they were vital in helping bring it under control. I know it was difficult and scary for everyone during the uncertainty caused by community transmission and lockdowns, but they followed the rules and things got better.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize that like every jurisdiction around the world, we were not spared the pain of tragedy caused by COVID-19. I want all of us here today to take a moment to remember the lives lost to this virus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

### **Minister's Statement 531 – 5(2): Government of Nunavut Recognized as One of Canada's Top Employers for 2021**

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start, I want to wish a big, huge, happy birthday to my *panikuluk*, Hope Inuk, happy birthday, and also to our former colleague, Mila Kamingoak, and I extend happy birthdays to both of them.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, our commitment to creating meaningful employment for young people and continued support of Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq (development of skills through observation, mentoring, practise, and effort) is being noticed across Canada. For the fourth year in a row, we have been recognized as one of Canada's top and best employers for 2021 in two different categories:

- Canada's Top Employers for Young People; and
- Canada's Best Employers for Recent Graduates.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the results for the Canada-wide competition for best workplaces and programs for young people were announced in *The Globe and Mail* in January 2021 by Canada's Top 100 Employers Project.

Mr. Speaker, this is a proud moment for the Government of Nunavut. Our ongoing investment in leadership training, internships, and mentoring programs show our commitment and success in strengthening our human resource capacity.

Mr. Speaker, the following programs highlight our commitment to investing in people and were recognized as part of the award process:

- The Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program – developing Inuit for professional, specialist, and leadership positions in the Government of Nunavut.
- The Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave Program – sponsoring long-term education leave for Inuit employees to acquire post-secondary credentials necessary to qualify for specialized or hard-to-fill positions.
- The Summer Student Employment Equity Program – provides meaningful work experience and on-the-job training for secondary and post-secondary Inuit and Nunavummiut students.

Mr. Speaker, I kindly ask all members to join me in acknowledging all the employees who participate in all our programs and initiatives and to all the Government of Nunavut employees who contribute to making the Government of Nunavut one of the top and best employers in Canada. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of them. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasie.

### **Minister's Statement 532 – 5(2): Distribution of Digital Devices to Support Remote Learning**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the residents of South Baffin and Nunavut. I am very proud of our Legislative Assembly and the fact that the member from Arviat is able to join us through Zoom.

Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how resilient our students and schools are in challenging times. The pandemic has also demonstrated how a challenge like remote learning may provide an opportunity to look at things through a different lens, and to be innovative and flexible in how we meet the educational needs of our students.

Since March the Department of Education has made it a priority to ensure instruction for students continues. Nunavut students have accessed remote learning through learning and well-being packages, and regular communication with their teachers.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education has been supporting remote learning by purchasing Internet-ready digital devices, such as laptops and iPads. My department has purchased 5,000 devices for remote learning with funding from the Government of Canada. 2,300 devices have been received, with the remaining ones expected by the middle of March.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education has prepared and distributed 1,433 digital devices for all of Nunavut's grade 11 and 12 students and teachers, and throughout

February will be delivering another 983 devices for grade 10 students and teachers. The plan is to have these devices available in schools so that they can be quickly distributed should a community move into stage 4, such as Arviat. As more devices are received, they will be gradually distributed to our other grades to support remote learning.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I recognize the academic and personal challenges that have affected all Nunavummiut throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. With the purchase and distribution plan of these digital devices, my department will be able to provide students with additional support for their remote learning should the need arise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Nakashuk.

### **Minister's Statement 533 – 5(2): Application for Rapid Housing Initiative**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) COVID-19 has highlighted that not all Nunavummiut have equal access to basic housing needs. Our partners in the federal government recognize this, and we are in close contact with them as we work to access funding dollars to improve housing options for the most vulnerable populations. The corporation undertakes this work to fulfill *Turaaqtavut's* Katujjiqatigiinnivut priority, which establishes strategic partnerships with the federal government to meet the needs of our communities.

(interpretation) Our most recent approach was to apply for funds through the Rapid Housing Initiative. This is a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation program that offers contributions to regional and municipal governments to support the construction of new homes.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Housing Corporation applied for \$79 million under this initiative to increase our residential housing capacity. As a territory with a high indigenous population and a great need to shore up vacancy rates and relieve overcrowding within our short building season, we are counting on the federal agency to provide us with funds that will make a significant difference.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we are counting on the federal agency to provide us with funds that will make a significant difference. The corporation will hear the results of our application in April. I hope to have good news to share with my colleagues in this Assembly in the spring sitting. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. There are no more. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, Member Rumbolt.

I'm sorry. Yes, following Member Rumbolt's statement will be the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. Member Rumbolt.

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

#### **Member's Statement 776 – 5(2): New Health Centre in Sanikiluaq**

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Sanikiluaq and the rest of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend our government for a job well done in building a new health centre for the community of Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to announce that Sanikiluaq's new health centre opened its doors to the public earlier this month, and the community is very happy with the new facility. I had an opportunity to walk through the building and I was very impressed with the layout, the equipment, and the facility as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate our government for getting this project completed in a timely manner.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it is often said that a safe, comfortable and healthy environment supports our personal health and well-being. It is my sincere hope that having such a modern and well-equipped health centre will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of Sanikiluaq's residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

#### **Member's Statement 777 – 5(2): Appreciation of Response to COVID-19 in Arviat**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues, fellow MLAs.

Mr. Speaker, as events have shown which all members ought to be aware of, this COVID-19 pandemic has inordinately affected the riding I represent in Whale Cove and Arviat North as apparently more cases have sprung up since the original infections that occurred in November.

This pandemic has greatly affected our lives on many levels and many hardships have cropped up in the past few months. Due to the assistance, I wish to thank the different levels of government, Inuit organizations, private companies, and many Nunavummiut generally who have provided needed assistance and support to the effort to combat COVID-19 in Arviat and Whale Cove.

Mr. Speaker, we are tired at this time as residents of Arviat and this is leading to anger as people are tired due to constantly working to combat this pandemic, but we are still fighting. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Arviat residents sitting in lockdown today, I would like to say that we are frustrated and we are fatigued, but we are still fighting. (interpretation) Even though there are many challenges, I am happy to represent the people of Arviat and Whale Cove and I am very proud of my constituents for they are very able.

Although I have many questions about the coronavirus pandemic, maybe my questions will help the people of Nunavut understand the situation better. I think it would help not just the people of Arviat but all Nunavummiut when the pandemic is being discussed. Starting today I will have questions to our Premier. (interpretation ends) I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Even though he is very far away, he comes around very clearly. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

### **Member's Statement 778 – 5(2): Iqaluit Music Camp Wins \$1 Million**

**Mr. Lightstone** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Best wishes to our Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove as well as all of those in the community.

Mr. Speaker, on a separate note I am happy to share that on Friday the Arctic Inspiration Prize awarded more than \$3 million to seven northern projects. This year the Iqaluit Music Society won the grand prize of \$1 million...

>>*Applause*

...for their project "Imaa, Like This": Children & Youth Expressing Themselves through Music.

Mr. Speaker, their project is focused on teaching Inuit children music, employing Inuit youth as music instructors, mentoring Inuit youth musicians to become music leaders, and providing professional development opportunities for Nunavut educators and post-secondary students on integrating traditional Inuktitut music into their programs.

I would like to congratulate the team leaders Darlene Nuqingaq and Naomi Eegeesiak, as well as all the talented members of their team. Your hard work and dedication has paid off and will make a difference in the lives of many children for many years to come. It has been an honour to be a part of your two-year journey, and I wish you all the best of luck.

I would also like to say a big thank you to the Arctic Inspiration Prize themselves. Their organization brings life to northern initiatives in regions where it would not be possible otherwise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of the individuals who were just acknowledged. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

**Member's Statement 779 – 5(2): Mary River Project**

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Tununiq. Two of my grandchildren celebrated their birthdays yesterday, one turned six and the other turned eight years old.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer some thoughts on behalf of my constituents regarding the status of the Mary River project.

Mr. Speaker, as all Members of the Legislative Assembly are very much aware, the past few weeks have highlighted the challenging issues that are facing not only the people of Pond Inlet but residents of other impacted communities from the mining.

Mr. Speaker, as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Tununiq, I have the responsibility of representing all of my constituents.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as I have publicly stated on a number of occasions, there is support for responsible natural resource development. There is recognition of the important economic benefits that are flowing as a result of the project, and there is recognition of the importance of providing Inuit with training and opportunity to develop the employment skills with which they can earn a decent living for their families.

However, there is also widespread and continuing concern about the potential environmental impacts that may take place as a result of any approved expansion of the existing project.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my constituents have pointed out, the mineral riches under our land are not going anywhere, but there is risk of damage to our land and water and wildlife that cannot be undone.

Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents are also asking about what role the territorial government can and should be playing in the regulatory process.

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



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

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Although my constituents are well aware of the hearings that are being undertaken by the Nunavut Impact Review Board, the voice of the territorial government seems muted.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are wondering why the territorial government seems to be able and willing to impose restrictions on caribou hunting in this region to protect the health of the species, but does not seem able or willing to impose restrictions on the mining companies to protect our land, water, and wildlife.

Mr. Speaker, although I have recognized the jurisdictional complexities in this area, I strongly urge the territorial government to be more vocal and be clearer about its own role and authorities in this process.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a growing sense of frustration among many of my constituents regarding the way in which economic benefits from the mines are being allocated. Although I fully understand and appreciate that this Legislative Assembly does not have the authority to dictate to the Qikiqtani Inuit Association or other designated Inuit organizations in this matter, I am supportive of efforts to bring stakeholders to the table to work towards a greater consensus.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take a moment to express my appreciation to Pond Inlet's mayor for his efforts in this regard, and I will have questions during the winter sitting to the appropriate minister concerning our government's position and actions in respect to these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Member Simailak.

### **Member's Statement 780 – 5(2): Inuit Language Month**

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and my fellow residents of Baker Lake. I say "hello" to you and you are in my thoughts. Some people are going through hardship at this time and I empathize with you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as Inuit Language Month, when we are encouraged to celebrate and promote the use of the Inuit language in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that our government has organized a number of activities to celebrate Inuit culture and language, including a song writing contest and, this year's

theme, focusing on Inuit traditional games. These activities help to promote our language in a number of different ways.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there are many Inuit across our territory who are losing their Inuit language skills and some who have struggled to learn even the basics of the language spoken by their parents and grandparents.

Although our government's objective is to have the Inuit language spoken in the workplace, whether it be government, hamlet, or private companies, many employees struggle with making Inuktitut their working language.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that employees across the different sectors of Nunavut's economy be given opportunities and options to access language training and to strengthen their ability to speak and provide services in Inuktitut.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I am aware that there are a number of different resources available on the Internet, with various apps, databases, and language lessons. However, I feel that more needs to be done to promote these options for learning Inuktitut.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have much left to say, so I ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, employees need more encouragement and support to take courses and improve their Inuit language skills. At the appropriate time I will have questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Gjoa Haven, Member Akoak.

### **Member's Statement 781 – 5(2): Meeting Mental Health Needs**

**Mr. Akoak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to colleagues. Welcome and hello to the community of Gjoa Haven and my family. We are really doing our best to do social distancing. I have colleagues sitting beside me who are an arm's length away. I also have a colleague sitting beside me who is a few hundred miles away.

>>*Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we Members of the Legislative Assembly return to this House to address issues of importance to Nunavummiut, I would like to return to an issue that is close to my heart and close to the heart of my community of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, the need for mental health services across our territory, in every region and in every community, is critical. Mr. Speaker, our people are experiencing tragedy after tragedy, some of them leading to the loss of life and a legacy of suffering.

Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that the Department of Health has added a number of positions in recent years to its staffing list, including additional mental health workers and psychiatric nurses. Mr. Speaker, I also recognize that different kinds of counselling services are made available at different times.

However, I feel very strongly that we need to provide more holistic, more stable and concrete support to those suffering from mental illness. We need that kind of support to be based in our territory, consistent with our culture, language and traditions.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the health workers who are there to provide mental health care. They do what they can.

Mr. Speaker, I believe our government can do more. Mr. Speaker, over the coming weeks, I will be asking questions on this issue. Mr. Speaker, we must continue to find additional ways to meet mental health needs and support those with mental illnesses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Aivilik, Member Netser.

### **Member's Statement 782 – 5(2): Constituency Priorities**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I send my regards to the people of Coral Harbour and Naujaat who are following the proceedings.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on our first sitting of 2021, and it is our hope that the year ahead will be much better for Nunavummiut, and our thoughts are with the Arviarmiut as well. It has been a trying time for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, as we enter into the final months of our mandate, I want to take this opportunity to assure my constituents in Naujaat and Coral Harbour that their voices are being heard. Although we know that change comes slowly, progress is being made.

Over the course of the current and upcoming fiscal years, a total of 35 new public housing units are planned to be constructed in my constituency. As the MLA for Aivilik, I was proud to have been able to vote in favour of the necessary funding for these units, and I look forward to the LHOs, or local housing organizations, in the two communities to work closely with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to ensure that the needs of our residents are being met.

Mr. Speaker, regardless of where we sit in this House, we have the responsibility of representing all of our constituents.

As you know, I have been raising concerns since the beginning of our term with respect to the condition of Sakku School in Coral Harbour. I was pleased to note that information published by the government a few weeks ago confirms that the tender for the “major modernization and addition” project will be issued before the end of March, and I look forward to seeking an update on the status of this important project at our spring sitting.

Mr. Speaker, you and I both share the experience of having been in the position to ask questions in this House and to answer questions as well. Both roles are important, as you know, and I want to take a moment to assure my colleagues across the floor that they can look forward to hearing from me on a regular basis during our remaining sittings. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members’ Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Member Sheutiapik.

#### **Member’s Statement 783 – 5(2): Appreciation for Assistance with Husband**

**Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, everyone, and Iqaluit is the capital. I also send my regards to the people of Arviat. I am very pleased that I am able to rise in the House and I am well aware of the kind of hardship that you’re experiencing right now, Mr. Main. We experience different challenges at times.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge all the health care providers who have and continue to care for my husband, Brian, during these trying times. The level of health care we receive is amazing. It really is amazing. We take it for granted, I think. He has been receiving this for several months now, so I know for a fact that we do have a good health care system. He is alive today.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the immense love and support that you, everyone in this House, have provided me and my husband. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) You gave me a sense of hope when I received emails; a call. It’s this kind of hope during these trying times that we need as a territory. I don’t want to forget my family and friends, my two sons for sticking around with us here and in Ottawa.

I tell you that I couldn’t be happier to be home and being in this House, and I so look forward to answering the best that I can the questions that are coming because those are very important when we’re doing our budget process. I always think about those

questions. I look forward to our sitting. (interpretation) Welcome, everyone.  
(interpretation ends) I look forward to it. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list, so we will proceed. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Let's remember that we still aren't allowed to have visitors. We only have the Members of the House sitting. Continuing on. Oral Questions.  
(interpretation ends) Oral Questions. (interpretation) Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 1125 – 5(2): Response to COVID-19 in Arviat

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to direct my question to the Premier. I remain sitting, but I would have stood up if I was in the House.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in my member's statement I spoke about the coronavirus in both Arviat and Whale Cove and the challenges it poses, but my constituents are still experiencing hardship. We have to avoid visiting and the restrictions imposed by the Department of Health are still in effect in Arviat.

(interpretation ends) My first question for the Premier is: in terms of the ongoing COVID outbreak in Arviat, which continues to this day, what entity within the government is responsible for managing the response to the COVID outbreak, and which departments or officials are involved in that entity? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, (interpretation ends) Premier Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the people of Arviat, we empathize with you. I have not been able to go home for the past few months because of the coronavirus pandemic.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there are several departments involved in the COVID-19 response. The chief public health officer and Health are the main responders of dealing with the health issues of COVID-19 within the territory and they are doing a very good job at it.

Mr. Speaker, EIA has a role in it too with our COVID Secretariat. We are responsible for the overall response of COVID within Nunavut. There are other many factors of Nunavut that we have to respond to that are not health related. There is the business, the airlines, communications.

We just want an overall response to COVID within the government, but for the actual health and the pandemic, the chief public health officer and the Department of Health are involved. If there is a COVID case in a community, the Department of Health and the chief public health officer make the restrictions. They are responsible for the rapid response team. They are responsible for contact tracing. They are responsible for anything that might be in the order. The Department of Justice is also working with them to make sure the orders are all legal.

The Department of Community and Government Services work with all of the hamlets to make sure that the hamlets' questions or needs are relayed on to the right departments and that the government responds in a proper, effective, efficient and quick manner to help out any community that has COVID.

As EIA we also try to get outside funds from the federal government to help with the COVID response in the communities, and I must thank the federal government for all the help that they have done. We have received substantial amounts of funds to fight COVID within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Premier, for your response. I'll ask my next question in English. (interpretation ends) My next question is about which resources or what resources from outside the Nunavut government have been accessed to date in terms of responding to COVID-19 outbreaks in different communities. I'm asking specifically about the Arviat outbreak. What resources have been accessed to date? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The supports for Arviat have come from different organizations within Nunavut and outside of Nunavut. I would just like to name a few of them off and I would like to thank them for the help that they have given Arviarmiut: the Government of Canada funding, the GN's funding for food security and on-the-land activities, the NTI food security and on-the-land activities as well as the isolation kits, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, Agnico Eagle Mines, Food Bank of Canada, Canadian Red Cross, rapid response teams both on the ground and virtually, and the vaccination clinic.

I think the biggest "thank you" has to go to the Hamlet of Arviat. They have been doing so much for Arviarmiut and that is part of the reasons why Arviarmiut are still as content as they are. I know it's tiring and they get fatigued and all that, but I would like to thank and commend the Hamlet of Arviat for doing so much for Arviarmiut, and that's part of the reason why not so much in terms of human resources has had to go to Arviat, for the hamlet doing such a good job and a hard job for Arviarmiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Premier. I also thank the bodies our Premier named as obviously they have contributed tremendously, and to all those who have provided fiscal funding assistance, I thank them all. As well, our local hamlet government has provided a huge amount of help.

In listening to the response just now, I feel there is something missing in this regard in terms of assistance from the federal government and whether any agencies have travelled to Nunavut, as I am unaware if that is the case, or have the armed forces sent any personnel?

Our fellow northern Canadians, such as those in (interpretation ends) northern Manitoba (interpretation) who are frontline workers, is an example where the armed forces went to those communities to provide medical services and aid.

My final question to the Premier is: has this government made any preparations to request assistance from the federal government or from our armed forces? Will you be requesting their assistance for Arviat related to the COVID-19 pandemic? Has our government made any preparations related to this scenario? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Red Cross staff went to Arviat, and this was after the first COVID-19 cases in Arviat. I wondered whether the armed forces would go to Arviat. It's up to our chief public health officer. If he puts a request to the federal government, then that's where it would start. If the chief public health officer asks for help from the armed forces, then he would put a request in to the federal government. To date the chief public health officer has not put such a request for the armed forces to come to Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Member Angnakak.

### **Question 1126 – 5(2): Fiscal Situation**

**Ms. Angnakak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good afternoon” to you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Budget Day, and Nunavummiut are anxious to hear an update on the government's fiscal situation. When I asked the minister questions about the government's fiscal situation during our recent fall sitting, the minister informed the House that he was expecting to end the current fiscal year with the “largest deficit in

Nunavut's history." That's a direct quote, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us today if things have changed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to steal my own thunder from tomorrow, but yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

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

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I raised this issue during our recent fall sitting, I noted that the government has basically three choices: they could increase revenues, cut spending, or borrow more money. At that time the minister indicated that "nothing was off the table," another direct quote. Can the minister clarify his current position regarding such ideas as introducing a new sales tax or imposing a wage freeze on the public service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I said that nothing is off the table, nothing is ever off the table. We have to continue to look at, as the member mentioned, own-source revenues, expenditures, and potential borrowing opportunities, like the liquor tax that I've got that's in front of the Assembly right now to look at some of the own-source revenue opportunities that we have.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I'm not looking at anticipating a sales tax. We already have the highest cost of living probably in Canada, arguably. I'm not anticipating bringing a sales tax forward at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think lots of Nunavummiut would be very happy to hear that.

As the minister is well aware, the government's collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union expired in September 2018. That's over two years ago. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's collective agreement with its employees expired in December 2020 and the government's collective agreement with the Nunavut Teachers Association will expire at the end of June, just over four months from now.



Mr. Speaker, I do not expect the minister to get into great detail today about the specifics of the different positions of the different parties at the bargaining table. However, I do expect him to inform Nunavummiut and the Members of this House as to how likely it is that new collective agreements will be in place by the time that the current legislature dissolves in September of this year, so I will ask him to do so now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickee.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member highlighted that our negotiation teams across multiple different disciplines are very busy, have been busy and will continue to be busy for the next little while.

Mr. Speaker, as with any negotiation, I can't say with certainty that issues or any differences would be resolved in the immediate short term. I do anticipate that at least the ones that have been negotiating already, I would hope that they would be concluded by the end of this government's mandate.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important to add some security to our civil service, for one, especially when you're looking at the Qulliq Energy Corporation, where it's rate-based. The ratepayers pay any increases. We have to take a look at all options available and I have utmost confidence in my colleague, Minister Akeeagok, with his team negotiating from the human resources standpoint, and I do look forward to a successful completion of the negotiations in the short to medium term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

I'm sorry. As I stated, we are using a new system and there will be some hiccups, but we will proceed as planned.

Oral Questions. Member Kaernerck.

### **Question 1127 – 5(2): COVID-19 Vaccination Update**

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): I'm sorry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me start again. Good day, my fellow residents of Amittuq and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I will direct my question to the Minister of Health regarding coronavirus vaccinations.

My first question for the minister is this: how many communities haven't been visited yet by the coronavirus vaccination team? That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over half of the communities have been visited by the vaccination team, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll keep my questions short because this is our first day of sitting and it will be a long one.

For my other constituency community of Sanirajak, do you have a definite date now on when the vaccination team will be going to the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for Sanirajak for his question. I'll keep him informed of any schedule changes. We have a set date of March 4 and 5 for the first round of vaccinations. The date may change, as there are various factors, such as the availability of the vaccine, and we have to follow the weather, but the current dates of March 4 and 5 have been identified for our arrival in Sanirajak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second supplementary question, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that clear explanation. Now, if the date is suddenly changed, where can people check to confirm the dates you just stated, March 4 and 5? Can they check with the health centre? If the vaccination team doesn't arrive, where can they get more information? Is there a phone number or a website address or contact information to see if there was a sudden change in the schedule? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): It has already changed to March 5 and 6.

>>*Laughter*

We have it scheduled for March 5 and 6. Mr. Speaker, before the vaccination team arrives in the community, maybe a day or two prior, the community is informed of the team's arrival. Further, whenever possible, there would be an announcement on the local radio from Department of Health officials and sometimes when I am able to do so, I can also go on the radio and address any questions or concerns. I'm sure that that would also be the case in his community.

The community is advised in advance a day or two before the vaccination team arrives. If there is going to be a schedule change, the public will be informed through the health centre and possibly the local radio, along with our chief health inspector and our staff and

occasionally, when possible, I am participating in these radio shows and I am able to respond on the radio.

Prior to the vaccination date, these notices are given in advance, with notification begin given at the local health centre and on local radio, and if any changes were made or are being made, they will be notified. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Member Rumbolt.

**Question 1128 – 5(2): New Municipal Office for Sanikiluaq**

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

Earlier in my member's statement I talked about the completion of the new health centre. However, there are many other infrastructure needs in Sanikiluaq, and as the minister will recall, a major storm struck Sanikiluaq last year, causing significant damage to the community's municipal infrastructure. As the MLA for Hudson Bay, I was very pleased to have been able to vote last fall to approve the department's 2021-22 capital estimates, which included funding towards a new municipal office for the community.

Mr. Speaker, information published earlier this month by the minister's department indicates that a request for proposals for the design/build of a new municipal office for Sanikiluaq is scheduled to be issued on or before the end of March. Can the minister update me today on the status of the request for proposals for Sanikiluaq's new municipal office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My thoughts are with Arviarmiut and during this time my prayers are with you all. Good afternoon to all of Cambridge Bay and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, the building for the hamlet facility, the hamlet office, the Government of Nunavut office space options for Sanikiluaq are limited. However, Community and Government Services continues to explore options to address the Government of Nunavut's departmental accommodation needs as well as hamlet shortage of their office. With the completion of the new health centre, the Government of Nunavut is planning to repurpose portions of the existing health centre to accommodate both hamlet short-term office space as well as GN office space.

As for the tender, the RFP for the design/build was done in February of this month, with a target completion date to the end of 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Main...oh, Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been called many names since I have been here, so that's okay.

As a former mayor, the minister understands and appreciates the importance of municipalities having adequate and appropriate facilities through which critical services can be provided to the community. Can the minister confirm that the Municipality of Sanikiluaq is being consulted as her department moves forward with this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As a former mayor, I know it's very important for this government and any government to always be in communication with our municipalities when it comes to infrastructure or programs and services in our communities.

I can assure the member that when I became the Minister of Community and Government Services, I had informed my colleagues that we're going to work closely with our municipalities. They know their municipalities, they know what they need in their communities, and we're going to support them through the process. I can assure you that we will be in contact and constant communication with our municipalities when it comes to new infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister touched on my next question briefly in her opening remarks and so I will ask: as the minister is well aware, I have been raising concerns for a number of years about the general lack of adequate office space in Sanikiluaq. I believe that the construction of a new municipal office for Sanikiluaq provides the perfect opportunity to ensure that certain Government of Nunavut services, including the government liaison office and probation services, are adequately accommodated in the new building. Will the minister commit to ensuring that the design of the new municipal office takes into account the need to provide space for the delivery of designated Government of Nunavut functions and services in the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can assure the member that the new hamlet office...my colleagues within Community and

Government Services will take into consideration those positions that are in various buildings and various offices within the community of Sanikiluaq. We will take those into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Member Netser.

**Question 1129 – 5(2): Search and Rescue**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can you hear me? Thank you.

My question is also for the new Minister of Community and Government Services.

I want to begin by paying tribute to the many residents of our communities who serve as search and rescue volunteers. We thank them very much, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, one of the needs that have been identified by search and rescue groups in my constituency relates to radio equipment for use.

(interpretation) Here in Iqaluit we have VHF radio that is very convenient and you are able to hear people from long distances, as people here in Iqaluit know. If there's a problem posed by people, response time is very quick. It would be great if we have that in all our Nunavut communities. I believe they're called repeaters, the towers that are erected at certain distances. With those, you are able to receive people calling on VHF. I learned that although it's convenient, if you are stuck on the land somewhere, you are able to report.

Perhaps more use of these devices, some of us are still behind in the technology. If we have VHF radios in all communities, the money used for search and rescue, sometimes we have to send people from Trenton to do search and rescue. Perhaps if VHF was widely used, we would have used up less budget. The minister's budget includes \$920,000. Has this been considered by the department to have VHF radios in place in all communities for all the hunters in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Our search and rescue volunteers in our communities are very important. If a search and rescue volunteer group feels that there is adequate equipment or resources they require to do search and rescue within their community, they can work with our department. We want to make sure that they have the adequate resources to do their search and rescue within the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for agreeing with me. I understand that the department wants to work with the hamlets with respect to search and rescue. As I mentioned earlier, \$920,000 was put aside towards this. You seemed to mention that you will be working with the communities and interested groups to look into this in the communities.

We all know we have pilot projects in some of our communities. Perhaps if we look at one of our communities, I think it would be a good time for Coral Harbour or Naujaat, for example, to have a VHF pilot project as a starter. It could be considered in the planning stages because search and rescue becomes a worrisome issue, especially for boaters in the summer. Perhaps the department can look into this issue further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I will ask my colleagues and my department to take that into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Member Simailak.

### **Question 1130 – 5(2): Inuit Language Training**

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Languages.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement I addressed the issue of Inuit language training for employees. I do recognize and support the government's initiative in providing an Inuit language incentive bonus for government employees who are assessed for their abilities to speak the Inuit language.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how Inuit language courses are advertised and promoted for government employees and what consideration, if any, has been given to requiring Government of Nunavut employees to take courses in Inuktitut, to learn the language, or to improve their language abilities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank Mr. Simailak for that question. Regarding government employees who work on Inuit linguistics which the member referred to and how much usage occurs in the workplace, actually whether there is any kind of assessment that occurs with employee proficiencies and to ensure that HR staff can evaluate their qualifications to ensure they receive the benefits they qualify for.

I am talking about the Inuktitut language bonus here, and the evaluators travel within their respective regional communities to assess the language capabilities of their staff, and this includes their writing, reading and verbal skills. This is where language capability is assessed and further, it has to be done in the different regional dialects, so they work with the regional offices and HR headquarters, especially in looking at ways to incorporate improvements and that is part of their review work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Inuit language learning applications available over the Internet, some of them developed by the Government of Nunavut, including the Department of Education's reading and writing apps, and some developed by other entities. Can the minister describe what steps her department takes to support and promote these online resources and to ensure that Nunavummiut are encouraged to take advantage of these Inuit language learning opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. The government departments work with the Department of Education and EIA setting up these assessments and also promoting and celebrating the Inuktitut language and how we can promote the language more and to use education as an example.

Within the schools the elders' stories have been recorded on video and they get to watch that in the school and also language in the workplace. On a month-by-month basis the Department of Culture has people go on the radio about culture and heritage stuff and they work with different departments of the government.

Also, Inuit culture and heritage, I know I maybe calling it the wrong department. There are Inuktitut training programs available where you can be taught how to speak properly in Inuktitut. They have different programs that teach those things. There is a new one from Microsoft. The government did not fund that. Microsoft did that on their own, making an Inuit language app. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the government makes Inuit language learning courses available to its employees at different times. It is not clear what language learning opportunities are made available to employees of such other organizations as hamlets, housing associations, or private entities. Will the minister

commit to providing more options for Inuit language learning for all of Nunavut's workforce, both government and non-government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that great question. It's not run by the government. There is funding available from the Department of Culture and Heritage for the promotion of exactly that, either through writing or orally. It would be good to encourage non-government organizations to request money from that. There is a way to make the promotion of Inuit languages stronger in the communities and some of the programs are run by different organizations like the schools, Department of Education, and Nunavut Arctic College and also Culture and Heritage. They all have different programs that promote the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

### **Question 1131 – 5(2): Tax Rates**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance and they concern the issue of taxes.

Mr. Speaker, as was previously indicated by my colleague, Ms. Angnakak, tomorrow is Budget Day. Mr. Speaker, I'm very curious to hear what tax measures and proposals are going to be included in the minister's fiscal priorities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is well aware, Nunavut has two corporate tax rates: 3 percent for small businesses with revenue under \$500,000 and 12 percent for large businesses.

Mr. Speaker, when we compare Nunavut's tax rates to other Canadian jurisdictions, we once had the lowest rates in the country. Mr. Speaker, today we see that our tax rates for small businesses is higher than that of the Northwest Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and PEI. Mr. Speaker, our tax rates for small businesses is in fact higher than all the jurisdictions but Ontario and Quebec.

Although like big businesses like Walmart and the North West Company seem to be doing just fine, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on many small businesses across the country, including in Nunavut.

Although I do recognize that the Department of Economic Development and Transportation has introduced some measures over the past year to help small businesses, I firmly believe that tax relief must be provided as part of our response to the pandemic. I would like to ask: will the minister indicate whether this small business tax relief will be included in his budget tomorrow? If not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member is very much aware, COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact across numerous sectors across the economy. Thankfully, for most cases, the civil service and Inuit orgs and a lot of employees across the territory have not been impacted as dramatically as in other jurisdictions. That being said, we do recognize that there are challenges within the corporate system here in the territories, especially in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Mr. Speaker, at this point we're not looking at any additional tax measures corporate-wise. As part of our greenhouse emissions and carbon tax mandate, we lowered the corporate small business tax by 25 percent, which is quite substantial to start off with. Mr. Speaker, like I had mentioned in my response earlier, nothing is ever totally off the table, but one of the things that we have to maintain focus on is we have very limited opportunities to own-source revenues. We have to balance that with the cost of living and with the cost of doing business in Nunavut. I haven't been made aware of any concerns by any business entity on the level of corporate taxes that are currently administered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response. It's unfortunate that the small reduction in corporate income tax for small businesses is not going to be one of the initiatives announced in his fiscal priorities tomorrow, but I'm grateful to hear that the minister did indicate that the Government of Nunavut had previously reduced the corporate income tax for small businesses by 25 percent.

It is true that we did reduce our income tax for small businesses from 4 percent down to 3 percent, Mr. Speaker. That is very true. It is also very true that our own source revenue is extremely limited. That being said, I do believe that our small businesses are struggling. It is very difficult and costly to be an entrepreneur, and especially to start up a business, which is why I believe that utilizing or reducing corporate income tax for small businesses is going to play such a crucial role in our government's plan in mitigating the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, it has recently come to my attention that the Government of Yukon has reduced their small business tax rate from 2 percent down to zero. Mr. Speaker, in fact Yukon has joined Saskatchewan and Manitoba, who have also reduced their corporate income tax for small businesses to zero percent. Mr. Speaker, they have done this because small businesses and their employees are being hit hard by the effects of the pandemic. Mr. Speaker, by lowering taxes, it is intended to help them to recover from the pandemic and enable them to retain and hire more workers.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat again: I believe that such an initiative would greatly support our small businesses. I would like to ask: what is the minister's position on reducing Nunavut's small business tax rate to alleviate the pressures brought on by the pandemic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I applaud other jurisdictions that have been able to take that measure. Mr. Speaker, we have decided to go another route where we have supported our small businesses through economic development and transportation of \$5,000 grants. As an example, that would be a 5 percent tax on the first \$100,000.

As well, I think a very important initiative that has been rolled out across the territory is the essential wage subsidy program that we have rolled out across the territory, of which we have been making continual adjustments to the eligibility to make sure that the money that we have received in partnership with the federal government gets rolled out appropriately and as much of an impact as possible.

I think these measures far outweigh a short-term tax measure we would be taking. I do note the member's comments and I'll have some discussions with my officials, but I think we have done a very good job of supporting our small businesses. There are gaps, like with any program, and we will continue to work with my colleagues and with this government to fill those gaps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for committing to bring up this discussion with his officials within the Department of Finance. Again, I appreciate the minister bringing up economic development's \$5,000 grant and that one-time grant was, I'm sure, very much appreciated by our small businesses, but then again, it was only that, a one-time contribution.

I also applaud the minister for bringing up the federal essential wage subsidy program, which was also a great benefit, but I see this reduction in the small business tax rate to be crucial and I don't see this as a short-term, single-year measure as the other provinces, such as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Yukon, have made this a multi-year approach where they're reducing the small business tax rates, not for one year but for several.

When the minister does bring up these discussions with his officials in the department, would he also consider expanding this to be a multi-year approach, not just a short-term solution? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance and Chair of the Financial Management Board, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't presume how those conversations will go, but I did want to correct the member that the small business grants that were provided by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation were rolled out twice since the pandemic started. It was not \$5,000 in total; it was \$5,000 each time.

Like I said, I'll have some discussions with my officials to take a look at this as an option, but one of the things that we continue to look at and again that's before the House right now is a liquor tax so we can help increase some of our revenues in something that is more controllable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

### **Question 1132 – 5(2): Mary River Project**

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

Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my member's statement, recent events surrounding the Mary River project have been of great concern to my constituents in Tununig.

As I also noted, I have heard many concerns that the territorial government has not been sufficiently clear about its role in the regulatory review process concerning the proposed expansion of the mine.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, another round of Nunavut Impact Review Board hearings were recently held, and I thank all of the community members who have been contributing to the process, which has been made even more challenging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Can the minister update the Legislative Assembly today on his department's current position regarding the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Mary River expansion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government supports responsible, sustainable development within Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, the phase 2 from Baffinland there is going through the process that was mapped out when we signed our *Nunavut Agreement*. The land claims have dictated how development will happen within Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Impact Review Board is doing their duty. They're hearing interveners. They're hearing the pros and the cons. The Department of Environment was

a part of this process and I believe that all, if not most, of the concerns that the Department of Environment had towards phase 2 were dealt with. The process is still ongoing, Mr. Speaker.

The Nunavut Impact Review Board has not made a recommendation yet. They will be making a recommendation to the federal minister whether phase 2 should be permitted or not, but we are a part of the process and the NIRB process is the process that was decided on when we had our land claims agreement. I fully trust and I fully believe in NIRB doing the process for any development that will be going on within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for responding to my question. I understand and recognize that different departments of the Government of Nunavut have been involved in the Nunavut Impact Review Board review process for the proposed mine expansion. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, however, it is not clear who makes the final decisions about what position the Government of Nunavut takes on the various issues. For the record, can the minister clearly explain who has the final authority to approve the Government of Nunavut's submissions to the Nunavut Impact Review Board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Both the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Environment work together so that we have a submission that is supportive. As I stated, the government supports responsible, sustainable development within Nunavut, development that Nunavummiut want and development done in a way that is satisfactory to the majority of Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, whenever there's development, there are going to be some negative effects. We know that, but during the NIRB process, that's where they figure out how they can mitigate the negative process or the negative effects of a project. That's where, if a problem is identified, then the proponent can decide on how to deal with that issue that has negative impacts.

Mr. Speaker, the process is ongoing and as a government, we make sure that we have a uniform voice in any concerns that the government has. We want to make sure the left hand knows what the right hand is doing and that we speak in unison, in one voice on behalf of the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for responding to my question and for my next question, he will probably have a similar response, but I would like to ask it anyway.

(interpretation ends) As I noted in my member's statement, there are concerns in the North Baffin about the fair allocation of benefits flowing from the Mary River project. I again want to be clear that I recognize that the Legislative Assembly does not dictate to the Qikiqtani Inuit Association about the allocation of negotiated benefits from the mine project, and I again applaud efforts by the Mayor of Pond Inlet and other leaders to bring stakeholders together and work towards consensus.

For the record, can the minister clarify what role his department or other departments of the GN are playing in this process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct that neither the government nor the Legislative Assembly, the House here, will dictate on how the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and Baffinland share their benefits.

Mr. Speaker, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association negotiated an IIBA, an Inuit impact agreement. They negotiated the agreement for the current phase of production, and then they just negotiated the Inuit certainty agreement for phase 2. Mr. Speaker, if any of the members are not satisfied with the conditions of both, they can speak to their Qikiqtani Inuit Association director from their communities and pass that concern on.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement or disagreement between the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and certain communities is exactly that. It's between the Inuit of the communities and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. It's an agreement that was negotiated twice, I might say, the IIBA and then the ICA.

Mr. Speaker, we will not dictate to the QIA and to the communities on how they should negotiate or what benefits that they may get from the mines. Mr. Speaker, Baffinland is on Inuit-owned land and the QIA is responsible for the leasing and the royalties and the benefits they may get from Baffinland. Mr. Speaker, I encourage the communities to speak with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association about their concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members will note that the time for question period has expired and we will proceed to Item 7. Written Questions. Returns to Written Questions. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

**Item 8: Returns to Written Questions****Return to Written Question 074 – 5(2): Departmental Grants and Contributions****Return to Written Question 076 – 5(2): Aircraft Charters****Return to Written Question 077 – 5(2): Government of Nunavut Budget,  
Expenditures and Cash Flow****Return to Written Question 078 – 5(2): Long-term Care Facilities****Return to Written Question 079 – 5(2): Training Plans for Major Construction  
Projects****Return to Written Question 080 – 5(2): Trades and Career Training in Schools****Return to Written Question 081 – 5(2): Elder Care**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling the returns to written questions No. 74 and 76 to 81 that were filed during the October 2020 sitting of the legislature. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Returns to Written Questions. Replies to Opening Address. No. 10. Petitions. No. 11. Responses to Petitions. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

**Item 11: Responses to Petitions****Response to Petition 022 – 5(2): Petition for Racial Justice in Nunavut**

**Clerk**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling the response to Petition No. 22 that was filed during the October 2020 sitting of the legislature. Thank you.

**Speaker**: Responses to Petitions. (interpretation) Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Rumbolt.

**Item 13: Tabling of Documents****Tabled Document 342 – 5(2): Correspondence Concerning Sanikiluaq's Travel  
Restrictions**

**Mr. Rumbolt**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a letter from the Municipality of Sanikiluaq concerning travel restrictions the community continues to face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, this correspondence contains important information which I encourage all members to review with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. No. 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

#### **Item 14: Notices of Motions**

##### **Motion 098 – 5(2): Extension of Review Period for Bill 36, Mental Health Act – Notice**

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, I will move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Hudson Bay, that the period of time for the standing committee to report (interpretation ends) Bill 36 (interpretation) back to the House be extended by a further 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

##### **Motion 099 – 5(2): Extension of Review Period for Bill 52, Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission Act – Notice**

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, I will move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Hudson Bay, that the period of time for the standing committee to report Bill 52 back to the House be extended by a further 120 days. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Notices of Motions. There are no more. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

#### **Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills**

##### **Bill 59 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022 – Notice**

**Hon. George Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, that Bill 59, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Continuing on. No. 16. (interpretation ends) Motions. 17. (interpretation) First Reading of Bills. 18. Second Reading of Bills. 19. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Members, as there are no items before the committee, we will proceed to the next item. 20. Report of

the Committee of the Whole. 21. Third Reading of Bills. 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

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

**Clerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder that the Standing Committee on Legislation meets tomorrow at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

*Orders of the Day* for February 23:

1. Prayer
2. Budget Address
3. Ministers' Statements
4. Members' Statements
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Responses to Petitions
14. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motions
17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
19. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 59
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
22. Report of the Committee of the Whole
23. Third Reading of Bills



## 24. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 23, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 15:37*

