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Speaker: The Honourable Jobie Nutarak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Akulliq)

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(Amittuq)
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Elders and Youth; Minister of
Human Resources*

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(Arviat)

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(Nattilik)
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Minister of Energy; Minister
Responsible for Qulliq Energy
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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, May 25, 2004

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Honourable Jobie Nutarak, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable Edward Picco, Honourable David Simailak, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Let us pray.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon. Orders of the day.

Speaker's Ruling

I would like to take this opportunity to review for members some of the principles, guidelines, and rules applicable to debates in the Assembly.

Members of the Executive Council and regular members have different but equally important roles in the House. The rules and guidelines applicable to debate are designed to facilitate the orderly and efficient business of the House, while ensuring that all members are able to carry out their mandate as elected representatives. Question period is an important tool in this regard.

Marleau and Montpetit, in *House of Commons Practice and Procedure*, set out the following guidelines for question period:

1. Question period has a two-fold purpose: first, to illicit information from the government and second, to hold the government accountable for its actions;
2. time is limited, so questioning should make the most efficient use of the time available;
3. members should be given the widest possible freedom in the putting of a question; and
4. the Speaker, or in committee, the Chair, does not evaluate the quality of either the question or the answer.

The substance of these guidelines is incorporated into the rules of our own Assembly, which also provide that a question shall be concise and clear and shall refer only to a matter which may reasonably be assumed to be within the present knowledge of the

minister responsible. Further, a question must not repeat an earlier question which was answered, taken as notice, or to which an answer was refused at that sitting.

A further element that must be carefully considered is the role of the Speaker or Chair. The Speaker or Chair is not in a position to evaluate the quality of questions or responses. Nor should the Speaker or Chair be placed in a position where the substance of questions or answers is constantly being challenged on procedural grounds.

When answering a question, a minister may:

1. answer the question;
2. state that he or she takes the question as notice and respond to it orally on a subsequent day under the item "Returns to Oral Questions"; or
3. decline to answer a question.

It is important that the rules not be applied in such a way as to stifle legitimate debate on issues. Equally important is that the rules operate to prevent repetitious questioning that does not further the business of the House.

The issue that has arisen is the extent to which a line of inquiry or debate should be terminated by the Speaker or Chair when a specific question has been taken as notice. In considering this issue, one must determine what the purpose is of taking a question as notice. Taking a question as notice is not a refusal to answer a question. Rather, it is an indication that the minister requires time to either obtain the necessary information or to frame a proper response. Having said that, taking a question as notice cannot be used as a means to shut down questioning on an entire subject matter.

By way of example, a minister might be asked, "What is the minister's position on decentralization of government departments?". If the minister were to take the question as notice, it could not be said that having done so, no further questions may be asked of this or any other minister on the issue of decentralization. Such a finding would effectively eliminate all further debate on a legitimate matter of public interest.

By way of contrast, a minister might be asked the very specific question, "How many school buses were purchased by the government in the 2003-2004 fiscal year?". If the question were taken as notice, that specific question or questions, designed to illicit the identical information, could not be asked again until the government had provided a reply. However, questions relating to the government's policy on acquiring school buses would be permissible.

This issue arose on Friday May 21 in the context of questioning regarding the awarding of a contract for medivac services to a specific airline in the Kivalliq. I have had the opportunity to review Hansard in both English and Inuktitut. Because of the complexity of the debate, I will provide a ruling which is intended to guide future debate rather than rule on each specific question that arose.

The question which was taken as notice was put to the Minister of Finance. The minister was asked if cabinet had scrutinized the responses to the request for proposals and if cabinet had directed the deputy minister of Health and Social Services to award the contract to a particular airline.

Subsequent questions on the matter asked why the awarding of the contract had been considered by cabinet at all, whether it was the usual practice for cabinet to consider and award contracts, and whether there had been political interference in the awarding of the particular contract at issue. All of these questions, given the context in which they were asked, clearly related to the Kivalliq medivac contract. However, none of them seek the same information as the question which was taken as notice. Accordingly, they are permissible lines of questioning.

One question asked whether the direction given by cabinet on the awarding of the contract was different from the recommendation made by the department. This question presupposes the answer to the question taken as notice, in that it presumes that cabinet did in fact provide direction on the awarding of the contract. Accordingly, this question is out of order.

It is important to remember that the fact that a question may be asked does not entitle members to a response. Ministers may take any number of questions as notice and may even decline to answer questions, with or without an explanation. The appropriateness of doing so is a matter for the members and the public to determine, not the Speaker or Chair.

This issue was made more difficult by the fact that a government official provided a response in Committee of the Whole to the question which was taken as notice. It is understandable why this could cause confusion.

In the course of this debate a point of privilege was raised. The point of privilege arose in response to a decision by the Chair. Once a point of order has been ruled upon, the matter is no longer open to debate and cannot be raised again under the guise of privilege (Marleau & Montpeit *House of Commons Practice and Procedure*, page 543).

There are occasions when members will disagree strongly on issues, debates will become intense, and emotions will run high. (Interpretation.) My role and the role of the Chair in Committee of the Whole is to ensure an orderly, fair debate. In the course of fulfilling our duties we will undoubtedly make decisions that not all members agree with. This is to be expected. Members must accept those decisions and move on with the business of the House.

I find that there is no point of privilege for consideration.

Another issue that has arisen in this House during the past week concerns the citation of, and referral to, documents in the possession of members. The specific question here is the

extent to which members may quote from, or refer to, documents that have not been formally tabled in this House.

Two principles to be respected here are as follows. Firstly, where information is given to the House, the House itself is entitled to the same information as the member who may quote the document. Secondly, the ability of members to express themselves and seek information should not be unduly constrained by unreasonable procedural requirements.

This is another area of procedure where a degree of discretion and reasonable interpretation must be applied by the Chair, especially in light of our rules' lack of detailed guidance. I would also draw the attention of members to page 517 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, which illustrates the point: "There is no Standing Order which governs the citation of documents; the House is guided mainly by custom and precedents."

As a guide, documents that have been formally tabled in the House or that are clearly in the public domain may be quoted from freely without fear of points of order being accepted with respect to the ability of a member to cite them. These would include, to provide some diverse illustrative examples, such items as a Government of Nunavut news release; a territorial or federal statute; scripture; the constitution of Canada; or a local newspaper story to which all members have reasonable access.

It would be perfectly reasonable, for example, for a member to quote at reasonable length from the federal budget speech when posing a question to a minister on intergovernmental relations, notwithstanding the fact that the speech itself has not been formally tabled in this House.

It would also be perfectly reasonable for a minister to quote from a document tabled in the first Assembly, such as the *Clyde River Protocol*. There is no need for such a document from the first Assembly to be retabled prior to its being cited. To impose such a requirement would serve no reasonable purpose, especially insofar as the document is not an item requiring a decision of the House, as would be the case of a bill being re-introduced by the government.

The issue of correspondence is somewhat different. In some cases, a member may wish to quote from, or refer to, a letter that he or she reasonably believes to be in the possession of another member or members. This could include a letter sent to all members from a territorial advocacy organization.

In other cases a member may wish to quote from a letter sent by a constituent that only the member has in his or her possession. Certainly, all members may quote freely in their members' statements from correspondence that has not been formally tabled, provided that the correspondence is signed and the member is prepared to identify the author. An example of this could include a constituent's comments on a matter of public policy.

I would add at this point that some members of the House will recall that this issue of anonymous correspondence was clearly addressed during the first Assembly.

I would remind the House that ministers always have the right to indicate in a response to a question, whether during oral question period or during proceedings of the Committee of the Whole, that they have not read a document in question and decline to answer on those grounds, but the question is not itself out of order. However, detailed supplementary questions based on the contents of the document would not be permitted by the Chair, especially when the minister has indicated to the House that he or she is not cognizant of the document's contents.

In a case where a member later engages in a line of debate or questioning that revolves around a document that has not been formally tabled and is clearly not in the knowledge or possession of the members involved in the interlocution, then the Chair would rule that the document being quoted be tabled at the next opportunity prior to further interventions based on its contents being made. This ruling would be made in the interest of the business of the House not being unreasonably stalled.

Again, in some cases a degree of reasonable discretion on the part of the Chair is required in this area. For example, let us envision a situation where a member has previously written a letter to a minister on a matter of public policy and wishes to pose oral questions regarding the written response received by the member from the minister. Neither the original letter nor the response have been formally tabled. Would questions be out of order solely because not all members had necessarily seen either of the documents?

In the event of a point of order arising on the matter, the Chair would likely permit the minister the discretion to answer the question, while asking the member to subsequently table the documents involved for the benefit of the House as a whole. The Chair would again encourage members involved to table such materials in advance of their questioning so that all members have the benefit of knowing their contents.

To examine another possible situation, let us envision that a minister, in the course of responding to an oral question on a detailed budgetary matter regarding his or her department, reads aloud from briefing materials prepared for his or her use. The Chair would not entertain a point of order made against the minister on the grounds that the briefing materials themselves, which certainly could be considered a type of document, had not been tabled in the House.

The same approach would be taken if a minister were to make a point of order demanding that a member opposite table his or her written speaking notes on a motion.

I would conclude by saying that the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures, and Privileges may wish to explicitly address this area and bring forward recommendations for amendments to our rules. While the rules cannot be expected to provide detailed guidance to cover tabling requirements for every possible form of information that could

be referred to in the course of deliberations, a more detailed set of guidelines concerning the citation of written and signed correspondence could be introduced.

Information is, by its very nature, a flexible concept. For example, it would not be in the interest of open discussion in this House for the rules to impose tabling requirements on members wishing to refer to information coming to light in the form of radio or television broadcasts.

Circumstances may require that a document be tabled so that it is available to all members. This is within my discretion or the discretion of the Chair. Indeed, members may find that tabling a document brings clarity and context to the debate which is otherwise lacking. Members are also reminded that when referring to a document it is important that the document be identified with precision so as to minimize the possibility of confusion.

With respect to the matter at hand, the member was invited by the Chair to table the document in question. Given that there is clearly confusion surrounding the nature and content of the document, he may want to take the opportunity to do so.

The issues discussed are often difficult and are always a matter of discretion. No set of rules will ever be sufficient to address every circumstance. I am hopeful, however, that this ruling provides some guidance to members as they carry out their important duties.

So that was my brief ruling. Going back to the orders of the day. Item 2, "Ministers' statements." Mr. Kilabuk.

Item 2: Ministers's Statements

Minister's Statement 019 – 2(1): Hamlet Deficits

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to update the members of this House on the activities of my department in assisting municipalities with deficits and the financial difficulties they are experiencing.

My department's Community Development Division focuses exclusively on municipal operations, training, and increasing community capacity. Staff from our regional offices and staff from our Community Development Division are working together with the municipalities, offering assistance to ensure that all municipalities remain financially stable.

Over the past few months we have assisted several communities to develop and implement deficit recovery plans. These will see the communities gain substantial ground in recovering their deficits over the next 12 months. My department is proactively working towards assisting communities in avoiding deficits. Staff continue to conduct full municipal, financial, and operational evaluations in communities.

These evaluations are key in identifying capacity within our municipalities and allow us to assist communities in strengthening their abilities to manage their affairs in a more efficient and financially sound manner.

Over the next number of months, staff from my department will continue actively to assist the municipalities in addressing their operational challenges. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' statements. Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 020 – 2(1): Inuinnaqtun Interpreter Translator Program

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the House today about the development of an Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translator program at the Kitikmeot campus of Nunavut Arctic College.

As we all know, there is a need in Nunavut to have more trained Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translators, and I am pleased to inform the House that the Department of Culture, Language, Elders, and Youth has contracted Nunavut Arctic College to develop an Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translator program to address this need.

Nunavut Arctic College struck a committee to provide guidance in the research and development of the program. Furthermore, an access-year program outline has been developed to increase the students' knowledge in Inuinnaqtun. Courses for both the access-year and Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translator program have been identified.

The program is well underway and we anticipate delivery of the access-year program beginning September 2004. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' statements. Members' Statements. Mr. Peterson.

Item 3: Members's Statements

Member's Statement 087 – 2(1): Homelessness in Nunavut

Mr. Peterson: "Koana, Uqaqti." I rise today on the issue of homelessness in Nunavut.

It is all too easy to ignore this issue in Nunavut. Homelessness is largely invisible here; no one lives in cardboard boxes on the streets. This does not make homelessness any less serious. Our extreme climate means that people are given a roof over their heads whether there is space for them or not. Families make room for their loved ones even when they are already living in overcrowded situations. My colleagues have raised the complex issue of overcrowding and the social and health problems that are related to it in this House many times. The problems associated with overcrowding do not stop

Nunavummiut from helping their loved ones: families share their limited space and resources because they know that there are no other options available.

A roof over a person's head, Mr. Speaker, does not make them any less homeless. Often, the homeless feel like they are a burden to their family and end up moving from home to home. They have no stability.

It is time for this government to address homelessness decisively. It is time for this government to acknowledge the reality of homelessness. It is necessary to have shelters for the homeless in our territory. We need shelters that are staffed by caring workers who can help people get back on their feet by helping them gain access to social programs and build life skills.

It is difficult for people to access the government's existing programs if they do not have the basic stability of a dependable roof over their heads and help to access those programs. Mr. Speaker, the homeless in Nunavut do not need a hand-out; they need a hand up.

I will be asking questions on this issue at the appropriate time. "Koana, Uqaqti."

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Member's Statement 088 – 2(1): Triplet Girls

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate a young couple. On Saturday, at about 2:45 pm, they had triplets. I would also like to congratulate their grandparents, Agnus Kokak and Bennett Hikomak, and their families. Best wishes for you both and for your three new little girls. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Mr. Netsier.

Member's Statement 089 – 2(1): Member Absent from the House

Mr. Netsier (interpretation): Although I arrived with Mr. Mapsalak, he was quite ill today. So, he was not going to attend the session today, for your information. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Mr. Alagalak.

Member's Statement 090 – 2(1): Arviat Cod Fishing Derby

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the long weekend I would like to recognize the Arviatmiut. There was a cod fishing derby in Arviat. All of them really wanted to catch a good-sized cod and they really wanted to get the prize. There were very good prizes available.

I was very pleased this morning when I heard the elders had won the derby. The elders who won were Lee Angalik, from Arviat, who won a Bravo. His fish was 57 centimetres long. And also an elder who had gone to Arviat, Lizzie Ittinuar, won some cash. I was very pleased to hear that. I was very pleased to hear about the elders winning all the prizes, although they stayed on the ice for not too long. Billy Quqsuk and Lisa Ukkutaq, although they are elders, went fishing. I was very pleased to hear that they attended the fishing derby.

I would also like to congratulate and recognize all of the participants of the fishing derby as well as the winners. There were 15 prizes to be won, and I very pleased that Arviatmiut won the prizes. I would like to see this happen all the time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Mr. Kattuk.

Member's Statement 091 – 2(1): Beluga Whaling in Hudson Bay

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about whaling in Hudson Bay.

The Inuit of Sanikiluaq, I know, are very knowledgeable about beluga in that area because the beluga do not really migrate very far. That is in the traditional knowledge in the Sanikiluaq area. Back in the 1990s or at the end of the 1980s there was a concern about the number of belugas. We wanted to see a study done on belugas to find out where they migrate to, using recent testing methods.

Sanikiluaq residents wanted to find out whether these beluga migrate to James Bay or if they are the same stock. But to date, we have not heard any results of this study. These beluga whales that have been caught by Sanikiluaq residents, they have been tested and it was stated that they are part of the eastern Hudson Bay beluga.

There is currently a concern with the eastern Hudson Bay beluga. At the appropriate time I will be asking a question to the appropriate minister in regards to the Sanikiluaq beluga whales, to find out where they actually came from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Member's Statement 092 – 2(1): Workshop in Taloyoak

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to inform the Assembly about an important workshop that is taking place in my constituency, Taloyoak. This workshop is part of the Qamma Mobile Treatment Program, a project which was initiated to assist people that may have suffered as a result of a residential school experience. It is important to note that this program is unique as it is also geared to the families of those that have been impacted by residential school experiences.

The Taloyoak session of the program runs from May 3 to 28 and there are approximately 10 participants from the community of Taloyoak that are taking part. In addition to sharing their experiences, they are also working on setting up aftercare and are receiving valuable instructions on how to facilitate a similar workshop on their own.

I would like to wish the participants from Taloyoak all the best in the program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 093 – 2(1): Spring Seal-Hunting Incident

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We go seal hunting every spring all over Nunavut and in Pangnirtung. During the past weekend people were out seal hunting, but it was very different from years past because there was a son and father who reached whales but their boat capsized.

Fortunately, the son was wearing a floater, while the father almost drowned. The son caught him by his leg, and that is the way that he saved his father. I spoke with the father, Lita Kullualik, this morning. We would like to thank Jimmy Ittuququq Kullualik on behalf of the community of Pangnirtung and the other members of the Legislative Assembly for saving his father's life when their boat capsized out at sea. I would like to give thanks again to Mosesie and Silasie Nakasuk who picked them up out of the sea. Mr. Speaker, members, during the break I will be celebrating, with maktaaq that they caught, because these two were saved. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member statements. Hon. Louis Tapardjuk.

Member's Statement 094 – 2(1): Physical Activity Week

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to announce that this week is physical activity week. I would like to thank everybody for playing hockey. I am not too sure who it was, as I was the goalie, but because it was so hard, one of us got cut and had to have seven stitches on his finger.

The next time we are going to play hockey maybe we should exercise a bit before we start the game, because it is good for your body, mind, and soul to have physical activity such as this. I would like to thank all the members for being a part of this morning, a very good use of leisure time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements, Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 095 – 2(1): Speech and Hearing Month Fundraising

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to the members for not making it this morning. There are a couple of reasons. One, I was too sore from my physical activity that I did this weekend on my snowmobile; my body is not used to that anymore and I'm not as young as I used to be. The other reason that I didn't show up is because I wanted to make sure that the cabinet side won, and I know that they would have been in a foul mood if I showed up and we would have won. Just wanted to make sure they were in a good mood today.

I would like today to inform the House about an event taking place tomorrow here in Iqaluit. May is Speech and Hearing Month across Canada. It is established that one in ten people across Canada have some form of speech, language, or hearing problem. Many people have had to overcome significant personal challenges in order to be fully active in their communities.

Iqaluit's Royal Bank branch will be hosting a bake and book sale tomorrow from 10 am until 3 pm. All proceeds from this event will be donated to the awareness of speech and hearing needs within the community.

It is important that our healthcare system provide care for people living with speech and hearing difficulties. Audiologists and speech therapists are two kinds of caregivers whose services are in very limited supply here in Nunavut.

The Legislative Assembly is a place where language and speech are of paramount importance. For members of this House the ability to communicate clearly is a vital gift. I ask all members to join me in supporting the Speech and Hearing Month fundraiser and I encourage all members to either bake something, or drop off some books, or go and purchase something at the bake sale tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' statements. Orders of the Day, Item 4, "Returns to oral questions." Item 5. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize my cousin who is visiting from Yellowknife for the long weekend: Casey Adlem.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the House. Orders of the Day, Item 6. Oral questions. Mr. Arreak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 091 – 2(1): Clyde River Breakwater

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the minister responsible for transportation.

There was going to be a breakwater. The blueprint was already made, and they were going to do this over the next three years. They have started the wharf for boats. There was going to be a vehicle that was going to be used, but somehow the money was not available; the funding was not available after it was approved for the breakwater in Clyde River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Which community are you talking about please? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clyde River.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for transportation. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Yes, this summer we will review the survey on how much fish there is in that certain spot for the breakwater. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After you look at this will you be making the blueprints and getting the funding for this?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will be testing to see how many fish there are, and after that we will be working very closely with.... There will be, helping us, Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for this. I would like to ask another question: how many years would it take to build? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not certain yet, but I will take this as notice and I will come back to the member. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Curley.

Question 092 – 2(1): Number of Students Enrolled for the Translator Program

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College for his statement that they will be teaching Inuktitut interpreters. I feel that there are very few interpreters right now and yet we need more.

I would like to ask if, this spring and summer, for the program they would have to enroll; will there be new enrollment, or will there be more people that could be enrolled? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for education. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from the member.

The Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translator program that we're speaking about has been worked on with the Department of Culture, Language, Elders, and Youth. We believe that it's a good step forward to be able to put more Inuinnaqtun-specific translators in place, not only in government offices but in other locations. For example, we've seen a big need for Inuinnaqtun especially for the mining industry and so on. We want to put out information to people, especially in western Nunavut.

The enrollments themselves will be based on the number of people applying. The standard class would be between 10 and 20, depending on the number. As well, the access year is important because we need to be able to bring some of the standards of Inuinnaqtun up, depending on the level when the student applies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you for your explanation. So, this is going to be for Inuinnaqtun, and they will be trained. Where will this be held? Will it be to Iqaluit that they would have to go? From the Kivalliq we have to come to Baffin. There's already an

enrollment list that is already full. The ones that come from Kivalliq.... I would like to know why they don't have something like this in the Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The program that we're speaking about, the Inuinnaqtun program, is in the Kitikmeot campus program.

The college has been looking at other programs that may be available, for example, in Inuktitut. I was just there a few months ago at the graduation of the medical interpreter-translator program in Inuktitut, which is a specific program for medical terminology, and so on, in Inuktitut.

So, those programs continue under the college. They're based on need. For example, this program in Inuinnaqtun is a program sponsored with the help of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association as well as, as I said earlier, the Department of Culture, Language, Elders, and Youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I will ask this again. I know that there have been a number Kivalliq people that wanted to take this course, but it was apparently already full. They were told that they would have to wait for the next year or the year after. They are here in Iqaluit.

I would like to know why you don't use the Nunavut Arctic College in the Kivalliq to enroll these students that would like to take the training. Because there is not enough room here in Iqaluit. Why is that?

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Education. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It depends on the number of programs that each campus would be funded to run, number one, as well as the number of programs that are requested. On many occasions, depending on the number of programs that have been requested, there may not be, for example, the spaces the member has indicated, nor the budget to be able to run that program.

Their plan, as the member knows, is almost a year in advance. I would suggest to the member, Mr. Speaker, that if there is a need for this type of program in the Kivalliq, that is something that I would direct the college to see, if there is an opportunity to facilitate a program like the Inuinnaqtun interpreter-translator program in the Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Kattuk.

Question 093 – 2(1): Update on Whaling in the Sanikiluaq Area

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my member's statement I talked about whale hunting. I would like to ask the Minister of Environment....

In the 70s, I think, the people of Sanikiluaq were going to be given a quota for killing whales, belugas. They were not included in the eastern Hudson Bay stock. What we wanted in Sanikiluaq was that before we got a quota, we wanted a study done on the James Bay beluga to find out whether those whales were from James Bay or Hudson Bay.

I would like to ask the minister if he has any information on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of the Environment, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government is responsible for issuing quotas and doing their counts and studies on beluga whales. I know a little bit about what they have been doing in regards to doing studies on belugas in the Sanikiluaq area. Perhaps I can work with the member to find out information from the federal government's Department of Fisheries and Oceans so I could give him better information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the.... I feel that this is the concern of the people, and the people are usually very concerned when it affects their food. Is the minister saying that the federal government's biologists here offer the.... Find out what the information is....

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will work with the member and find out from the federal biologists the status of the study of the beluga whales in the Sanikiluaq region. I will work with the member to get some more information from Fisheries and Oceans on that. They will be doing a study on the mammals in the Sanikiluaq region.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's response. I think it was in the 1980's.... I think it has been about 15 years now that there has not been a study on the beluga whales in our area.

I just wondered if the minister or his officials have any information on the study that was done in the 80s. Perhaps the minister is saying that, it is just a comment that I am making.... Will the minister be working with me on that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Peterson.

Question 094 – 2(1): Capital Investment Plan by Region

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for the Power Corporation and it concerns the Power Corporation's capital investment plan.

I noted that in the Auditor General's report, she mentioned that the Nunavut Power Corporation has spent \$20 million since April 1, 2001 on investment and infrastructure buildings and so on and so forth.

I am wondering if the minister could tell the House if the Power Corporation has prepared a capital investment plan by region and by community for the next four to five years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there is a capital plan by community. "Ma'na."

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Well, that is good to know. I am wondering if the minister will provide that information to us.

But I am also wondering if the Power Corporation is prepared with assessment of the plan, the capacity of major centres, being Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay, indicating the year when those power plants will reach full capacity due to addition of major infrastructure such as hospitals we have been talking about, new schools, office buildings that we have.... Especially Iqaluit will receive lots of office buildings and major hotels. Has that assessment been done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that assessment has been done for all of the major centres, not all of the communities. "Ma'na."

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: That is really assuring. I know the investment plan is done, the assessment is done. As far as we know, the Power Corporation does not have any money for that. They have got some problems.

So, I am wondering now if the Power Corporation.... How they can finance by an expansion in the Nunavut communities in light of the Auditor General's assessment of their finances, since the Auditor General indicates that in terms of generated funds to finance the planned expansion or construction, if they cannot do that then they have to borrow. But if there is nothing out there that they can borrow, so.... They do not have the money. So, I am wondering how they can do all of this for the next five years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, priorities are set, based on whether considered emergency or situations or based on what needs there are in terms of emergencies or top priorities. "Ma'na, Uqaqti."

Speaker (interpretation): Last supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, you know that I am not from Iqaluit, but I am going to ask this question for Iqaluit because since I have been here I have seen a lot of major infrastructure. There is a big hospital coming, there are office buildings, I think their power plant capacity is 14 megawatts; it probably reached eight this winter. Only a few years after these facilities are built, new facilities will come onstream.

So, I am wondering if the new buildings come onstream and reach maximum capacity, 14 megawatts.... Does the Power Corporation have an emergency plan to deal with brownouts or all of those power outages in Iqaluit when it reaches its plant capacity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it's worked on based on a contingency basis. For example, in some communities we've had to bring in portable generators to be used on stand-by. I'm sure that kind of a situation would be put in place here in Iqaluit. The staff are working on a long-term plan. All of that is in the works. The staff know the limits of the station here and they have forecasted when that maximum would be reached in Iqaluit, and they're working on long-term solutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 095 – 2(1): Minimum Standard of Condition on Contracted Houses

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister Responsible for the Housing Corporation.

Last week the minister tabled copies of condition ratings for some houses that were leased in Arviat. Two of the units were at 57 percent before the leases were signed.

I would just like to ask the minister: are there any minimum criteria that they have in determining whether to enter into leases on units in any condition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Kilabuk.

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess part of the answer would be, okay, 100 is good condition. Then the scale is worked backwards, dropping down to whatever the figure is at the end of the day after the inspection. In talking with my staff, the conditions of each unit are treated, work schedules are also developed, and time lines set to have the required work done.

If we look at the documents I tabled, the 57 percent when they did the condition ratings was to show that there was quite a lot of work required for those units. And even at that, it doesn't necessarily mean that a similar unit elsewhere, per se, would be inhabitable. It may be, but the schedule and the work required are also determining factors, when they determine what is inhabitable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know if the minister is indicating that a unit may be substandard or uninhabitable he saying that they may still enter into leases as long as there is a work plan in place.

I'm just wondering, why was a lease entered into even prior to those units being at an acceptable standard. I know, Mr. Speaker, anyone could come up with a shack anywhere and say, I want to lease this to the government for staff housing. I know there are a number of shacks here in Iqaluit that I'm sure the owners would love to lease out and make a promise to fix it up over a certain period of time, given the severe shortage of staff housing here.

Is that something that the Department would do? Would that be acceptable for the government to enter into leases like that? Say a unit is not habitable, but there is a commitment to fix it up to make it habitable? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Kilabuk.

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I'll try and stick to the units in question and how they arrived at leasing these units.

The best information that I have was when they signed up the leases. A couple of factors were determining factors. One was decentralization, that they had to try and identify immediate access in that community based on jobs that they were expecting.

At the time, to be very clear, it was identified that the units were not going to be immediately occupied at the time they signed the lease. But, because of the expected jobs going into Arviat it was determined, when they signed the lease, they would have some work required on those units. Those were the determining factors in the leases. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The date on the condition ratings for November 2002.... Were there any timelines or anything, or conditions of release for work that was required be done within a certain time period? I mean if we're paying for decrepit, uninhabitable units....

Surely there was a work plan, as the minister indicated, to bring these units to an acceptable level within a certain time frame. I would like to ask the minister if he could indicate if that was the case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Responsible for the Housing Corporation, Hon. Peter Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it was the understanding that time was required to do the renovations. Schedules were also developed, but for whatever reasons the set deadlines had been extended on previously agreed-to dates. It had been based on a couple of factors, with the supplies and work required in those units, but they were scheduled and put forward at the time. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the minister if there are still any clauses within the lease agreement. If the work wasn't done and the houses weren't brought up to an acceptable standard by a certain time frame then the lease is to be terminated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In responding to that question, I want to make one thing perfectly clear. In cases like this one, where there is a high need for units, looking at the condition of the units was in the interest of both parties, to be flexible. The units required would also be the scheduling.

I can assure the member that on the question of terminating these leases, our department has been working aggressively over the last 15-30 days in reviewing our options on these leases. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Curley.

Question 096 – 2(1): Trades and Technology Program – Transportation and Boarding Covered

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education. It is in regards to the trades programs.

I would like to thank the minister for having got a trades-technology facility in Nunavut. At this time, many individuals still go out of Nunavut to attend trade school.

Can the minister assure me that these individuals.... Whether it be welding or heavy equipment training, is the air-travel still paid for by the government as well as the room and board? Do the students pay for their own meals and board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Education, Hon. Ed Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the trades programs, depending on what trade and where the student would go....

For example, if a student was training to become an electrician and they were sent to NAIT, which is the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, or SAIT, which is the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, their transportation is covered when they go there, as well as their accommodations. If a person was taking a program, for example, in Thebacha College in Fort Smith, then the same situation would apply.

In some cases the return travel and so on may be provided, based on the length of the program. In most cases, most apprentices under the trades program can do a lot of the work here. So, when they had to do the certification to get their inter-provincial or red seal, then on those occasions they are sent out of the territory and those costs are covered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut, the fiscal funding for that.... April 1 just passed us, and there are individuals who have gone down to Nova Scotia to attend trade school. I have heard that they have to pay for their own room and board. They have no full-time job. Why isn't your department paying for those individuals at school? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of the specific case of students in Nova Scotia. I'm glad that the member has brought it to our attention and if the member would communicate with the minister, myself, and the department, we'll be able to follow up and see what the story is.

As a rule, if students are sent from Nunavut to southern-based or out-of-territory, it could be the Northwest Territories, as I said earlier, then those costs are covered. In this case where students may be studying.... All students entering post-secondary institutions, as the members know in the House, are eligible for financial student aid under the FANS program.

So, the specific case of Nova Scotia students.... If the member could give us the details then I'll be able to follow it up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Peterson.

Question 097 – 2(1): Reason Hamlets Are in Deficit Situations

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

I was pleased to hear that his department is working on helping hamlets with regards to getting out of deficit. I'm wondering if the minister could outline, for the House and people that are watching TV here, what are the major reasons hamlets go into deficit in the first place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understood the question correctly.... There are some reasons why different communities go and run into deficit situations.

In most cases records have shown that some do overspend beyond their budgeted figures. Some bring in costly projects without having secured the funding required. There have been cases where a lack of proper staff with the required skills to responsibly operate the finances of some municipalities has led to difficulty. So, there are different reasons why communities get into deficit situations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary question, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Most hamlets hire senior administrative officers, assistant SAOs, or financial staff, or very well qualified people. It seems strange to most of us that they get into financial difficulties when they've got accountants working for them.

I wonder if the minister could outline what he means when he says full municipal financial operational evaluations will be conducted. What will he be looking for? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, I think, do not be surprised to see how some communities have had difficulties in hanging on to properly trained people at their financial departments. But that will be used to highlight and point out the strengths and weaknesses of the municipality, and they use it as a tool to try and avoid running into deficit situations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There seems to be a common problem with many organizations. I should mention that the Power Corporation did not have trained accountants. So, it sounds like a problem the hamlets have faced. Maybe, that is, a training program should be offered by Nunavut Arctic College, since there seems to be a common problem for all of us.

But I am wondering, can the minister tell us if they have plans to overhaul the, as I call it, arcane water-sewage subsidy program that we have inherited from the Northwest Territories? I know it contributes to these financial problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regrettably, I did not catch my colleague's first part of the question, but I can advise the House that MTO, the Municipal Training Organization, is working very hard to properly train the staff of the municipalities from these communities. But if I could get the member to clarify his question, please. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just clarify that I am referring to the water-sewage subsidy program that we inherited from the government of the Northwest Territories. There seem to be a lot of policies from the last government of the Northwest Territories that are bothering us these days.

But, I am wondering.... Could the minister comment on whether during the course of these evaluations his department would recommend that downloaded government programs be taken back by the government of Nunavut and delivered by governments rather than by hamlets? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, those options can definitely be explored between our department and the municipalities, depending, in most cases, on the request of the community and their wish to take on such responsibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 098 – 2(1): Fuel Rider Update

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for the Power Corporation. I certainly hope the minister is feeling better after his incident this morning. I imagine it was not a fun thing to have happen.

My question for the minister.... Earlier this session I asked the minister about when the fuel rider would be put in place and the minister said he would get back to us.

I understand that this has been reported: officials from the Corporation and the minister have publicly stated that there will be a 7.5 cent-per-kilowatt-hour rider put in place to offset the \$10 million of the overexpenditures, the result of the increased cost of fuel. And that the effect will be zero on the consumers, thanks to a subsidy put forward through the Department of Finance's budget. And it also states that once that \$10 million amount is reached, the rider will be taken off.

I would like to ask the minister just for an update on the question, that he said he would get back to me about earlier in the session, as to when that rider will come into effect and how long does he anticipate it to be in place before the \$10 million is collected? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Energy. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I remember taking that question as notice. (Interpretation.) I think that I already took that question as notice.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware that I just asked the minister for an update as to when, on that question, when or how long does he need to be able to find that information out of there? Have his officials looked into it yet? Or when? I know it's been over a week now, and there is still no response. So, I'm just wondering if we're going to hear it this week, next week, in the fall session, or when we're going to hear it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understood his question the first time.

No, I have not heard back from my staff yet. I will check with them again when we go into break and advise the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to getting that response from the minister. While he's checking with his officials, I noted that the last time, my question was as to when he plans on coming forward. But I would also like to ask them if they have any idea or anticipation as to how long it would be in place for.

I know that we budgeted \$10 million for this fiscal year and am wondering if there's going to be a requirement for further subsidy in subsequent years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will also get that information. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Kattuk.

Question 099 – 2(1): Policy in Place for Escorts

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

I would just like more information for the people that go to hospital and who have escorts. Is there any kind of policy or regulation? Do they follow the escort, because they are going to be looking after them while they are in hospital, or are they there to interpret? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of for Health and Social Services.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there are a number of times, for the elders, where they need escorts. If they are going for major surgery they will need an escort, or if they are terminally ill, or if they are too young, or if they are underage. To my understanding, that is what the escort does. If they are underage, if they are old, if they are elders, and if they are unilingual they are able to bring an escort.

If you come from Sanikiluaq, you go to Winnipeg. When you go to the hospital, they do have interpreters in the major places, they interpret during the trip.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question that I am asking.... We do have a concern in our community, especially for the people that are escorting a patient, when the doctor has to tell the patient that they are terminally ill, that the escort has to interpret and this is very difficult. Even if I am related to this person, if it is my brother, my father, I would be the one that would have to tell them. That hurts, when you have to tell somebody that they only have a certain time to live.

As I stated, we go to Winnipeg from Sanikiluaq. It is a good idea that only during the trip should the escort look after the patients. I am saying it is not right for this person, who is an escort, to be doing the interpreting when this is very serious. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The minister responsible for health. Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will look into your concern. I will direct my staff to look into this. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 100 – 2(1): Homeowner Savings – Other Options

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for finance.

I know that over the last week there were some questions raised and comments made back and forth in regards to the government's decision to cut the school tax, to benefit homeowners throughout Nunavut.

I know that in the minister's budget there, it indicates that there is roughly \$500,000 in savings, and they indicate that it is going to go to the homeowners as a result of this tax cut.

I know I did some looking into it myself here in discussions with the city. I understand that of the \$500,000 that was collected last year, here alone in Iqaluit it was \$410,000 that was collected. That leaves around \$90,000 for all the other 25 communities throughout Nunavut that was collected. Of that \$410,000 that was collected here in Iqaluit, 70 percent of that was not collected from homeowners.

So, I would like to ask the minister: were there any other options looked at to target specifically homeowners on this tax savings? Because it appears on the surface that it was targeted towards homeowners, but the big winners are the non-homeowners. Say, up to 70 percent of that money that was collected here is non-homeowners'.

I would like to ask the minister if there are any other options that were looked at to specifically target the homeowners for savings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Finance. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think in our discussions the last couple of days, I had mentioned that the savings from the education component of the taxes go back to the general revenues of the Government of Nunavut and the savings go directly to the homeowner; I didn't say that the funding would go to the homeowners. The benefit to homeowners is that they don't have to pay the education portion of the tax to the city or to the government. That is the direct savings to those individuals.

Now, in terms of allocations of taxable assessments between residential and commercial property tax in Nunavut, 66 percent of that was residential and commercial was 33.6 percent. So, in total throughout Nunavut, including Iqaluit, it was 68.2 percent for residential and 31.8 percent for commercial. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to clarify for the minister: I wasn't asking where the saving were going to go or any revenue was going to go. I know that there is no revenue being saved and given out; in this it's just a direct tax credit to the consumer.

I was asking the minister if there were any other options that were looked at instead of just cutting the credit all together, or the education component altogether. Maybe like the idea of having a rebate for the homeowner so that the people that are targeting this.... Maybe I don't know where she's getting her numbers from but in my checking with the city, 70 percent of it was commercial, 70 percent of the \$410,000 last year was commercial.

I would just like to ask if any other option was looked at to specifically target the homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Hon. Leona Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is one savings that we looked at. There are other incentives that are being looked at through the Housing Corporation, through the home ownership program, as far as trying to increase the funding for potential homeowners in Nunavut. That is one option that we looked at, and it's one that will provide some savings.

The information I'm getting in terms of the allocation of taxable assessments comes from the department for the entire Nunavut territory, not just the city of Iqaluit, and this benefit is applicable to all Nunavummiut homeowners as well as commercial lease holders, and not just the city of Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the minister if she would be willing to table a copy of the breakdown, by community, by residential and commercial, for all of Nunavut so that we can see first-hand and be able to look into it after. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Hon. Leona Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Mr. Speaker, I can look into that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd appreciate the minister looking into it. But, I'd like to have a little bit more of a commitment from her to table the information that is apparently there at her disposal so that the all the members of this House can see exactly, from the department's point of view, how much is being saved and where. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Hon. Leona Aglukkaq

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll make that commitment. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Peterson.

Question 101 – 2(1): Statistics on Homelessness

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to waste our eight minutes without talking to the minister responsible for homelessness. I rose to talk about the issue of homelessness.

I wonder if the minister can tell us if there are statistics that exist for homelessness in Nunavut, if that information is available, and if it could be tabled for us. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Hon. Ed Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of that which is available that could be tabled in the House will be provided to the member. Most of them are based on percentages on the situation of homelessness in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: That's good to know there are a lot of stats around. I'll have to get that information. Can the minister tell the House what he's doing to address homelessness in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible, Hon. Ed Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in the country, except for the federal government, to actually have a minister responsible for the issue of homelessness.

Minister Bradshaw is the current minister for homelessness in the federal government and, indeed, we've had an opportunity to have her in Nunavut at least twice. I've had an opportunity to meet with her.

Under this portfolio we've been working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

We just recently, in the last several months, have appointed a position that is dedicated to the file on homelessness.

We have accessed money through the SCPI fund to be able to facilitate some projects that are underway. For example, one of the residences that were built, several multi-plexes in Taloyoak, were accessed through the SCPI fund under the homelessness initiative.

We've been able to do some good work here in Iqaluit under the SCPI fund from the federal government as well as bring forward the issues around homelessness.

The member talked about earlier and just very briefly.... There are two categories for homelessness that the federal government of Canada uses. The first category is absolute homelessness and that's what Mr. Peterson talked about earlier. Absolute homelessness is what we see in southern Canada, Toronto for example, on Yonge Street, people on the street. Here in Nunavut it is what we call relative homelessness; they would freeze to death. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's funny they use these acronyms, an acronym like SCPI. We're talking about a serious issue and we have an acronym called Skippy.

I'm wondering if the minister could tell us what his department defines as homelessness in Nunavut, please. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't trying to be flippant. I'm being very serious when I'm talking about the issue of homelessness. The Skippy funds are supporting community partnership initiatives under the federal government, which this government has been successful in leveraging from to do a range of projects.

What we see here in Nunavut as homelessness, I believe is at the present time.... There are over 1,000 families on the waiting list for housing in Nunavut, and that in itself, I think, points out the seriousness of the issue in Nunavut. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Final supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was happy to hear earlier that the minister is working with the Minister of the Housing Corporation on a bill of homelessness in Nunavut.

Again, I would like to refer to the Auditor General's report, that the government had spent \$3 million on tenant improvements for a building it had already owned. At the average cost of \$200,000 per house, that would have built a lot of houses.

But I'm wondering, can the minister tell the House if there is a dedicated Government of Nunavut budget for homelessness initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of homelessness is found within the priorities of different departments.

Under the Department of Health and Social Services, the core funding, for example, for the homeless shelter here in Iqaluit is funded through that department. So, there is a line item in the budget.

As I said earlier, under the Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services we actually have a dedicated PY for the issue of homelessness. So, there are monies, again, there.

There are also monies that are being leveraged from the department in the Nunavut Housing Corporation as well as Health and Social Services to deal with some of the issues around homelessness. For example, under the strategy announced under the federal government we have just completed the Continuum of Care program here in Iqaluit for the issue of homelessness.

So, there has been quite a bit of work done. I can also point out that there have been several meetings on the issue of homelessness that I had an opportunity to attend a few months ago here in Iqaluit, which brought together several stakeholders. I will provide the member at the break a copy of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's *Housing: Hidden Homelessness and Health in Nunavut* which is a comprehensive review just completed before Christmas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 102 – 2(1): Update on School Inspections

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education.

Earlier in the session I asked the minister responsible a question regarding inspections in our schools, after the roof on the school in Inuvik collapsed. And the minister had made a commitment to provide me with that information as to when the schools' in Nunavut, not just for the roofs, but also the other technical inspections for safety and health, inspections were done.

I would like to ask the minister if he could provide me with an update on that, on when he expects to have that information available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Education. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated, last week I think it was, to Mr. Tootoo in regards to this question, those sections are carried out by the department that is responsible for maintenance of government buildings and so on. I am still just waiting for that information. As soon as I get that information, I will provide it to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that it is the same answer as I got the last time. Maybe I'll ask the minister: did he immediately request that information from the department responsible, and did they give him any indication as to when they expect to provide that information to the minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say in all seriousness that the requests by the members are handled expediently and indeed expeditiously. I would suggest to you that it is the case with that question, too. Those questions by Mr. Tootoo are always taken seriously by the government and by this minister. I would hope to have an expedient response, sometime before the end of this week, detailing the information that was requested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Question Period is over. Orders of the day. Item 7. Item 8. Item 9. Item 10. Item 11. Item 12. Item 13. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Premier.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 019 – 2(1): Letter to the RCMP Commanding Officer

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, a letter to Chief Superintendent John Henderson, commanding officer, RCMP V division, expressing concern regarding the safety of Nunavummiut and the telecom system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 15: Notices of Motions

Mr. Evyagotailak: “Koanaqtit, Uqaqti.” Notice of motion, extended hours and days. I give notice that on Thursday May 27, 2004, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Nattilik, that the Speaker be authorized to set sitting days and hours as the Speaker deems fit, to assist with the business before the House. At the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 16. Item 17. Motions. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: “Koanaqtit, Uqaqti.” Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is asking for unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 17: Motions

Motion 011 – 2(1): Extended Hours and Days

Mr. Evyagotailak: “Koanaqtit, Uqaqti.” Motion, extended hours and days: I move, seconded by the Hon. Member of Nattilik, that the Speaker be authorized to set sitting days and hours as the Speaker deems to fit, to assist with the business before the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. All in favour? Opposed? Carried. Item 18. Item 19. Item 20, “Consideration of Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters.” Bill 2 – Appropriations (O&M) Act, 2004-2005, with Mr. Evyagotailak in the Chair. First of all, we will take a 10-minute break.

Sergeant-at-arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:25 and resumed at 15:56*

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

Chairman: I would like the Committee to come to order. In Committee of the Whole we were dealing with the 2004-2005 main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services. We were on Page H-11. I would suggest that the Committee continue on page H-11. Are you agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Committee Motion 003 – 2(1): Deferral of Consideration of the 2004-05 Main Estimates of the Department of Health and Social Services

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I have a motion in regards to this. I move that the 2004-2005 main estimates of the Department of Health and Social Services be deferred.

Chairman: There is a motion on the floor to defer the Department of Health and Social Services' main estimates. It is in order. Do all members have a copy of the motion? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): The motion is straightforward. I am sure that most of the questions have been answered, but I think it was on Friday, on page H-9 and page H-11.... My question is in regards to these pages, in regards to contract services for medivac air services and the contracts for medical travel. The cabinet had deferred their responses, therefore I could not ask any more questions during the Committee of the Whole. So, I am requesting a deferral of the consideration of the department. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. To the motion. Mr. Premier. I am sorry.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the motion could include the concern of the member. It does not state the reasons why, but it seems like the deferral is for an eternity. Perhaps identify the budget line-items, and perhaps state how long the deferral could be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in regards to the motion and the Premier's comments to the motion. I think the mover of the motion made it pretty clear that the reason he was putting the motion forward is that there were some questions that were taken as notice, and he would like to wait to get that information before proceeding with the Department of Health and Social Services' budget.

I don't know if having that on the record of the motion is enough to satisfy the Premier's request for how long I'd be deferred for until those questions are replied , from what I understand from the movers' comments to the motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): If you want to amend this motion, all the questions that I have asked were taken as notice under 69-2(1) Medivac RFP award. It's also in the response in the records. If the other side wants to make amendment to the motion, I have no problem. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the floor I also had asked the Premier a question that was taken as notice as well. That's how it was ruled at the time, but it could also be one of the questions I wouldn't mind hearing the answer to prior to moving, as well, with the department's budget. If the members are happy to take a break and have the motion amended, it'll be a little more explicit, specifically on the motion. I'd be more than happy to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. To the motion, Hon. Ed Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a suggestion that if there's a concern with the department's budget, usual convention, a usual precedence, is that you'd continue with your budget debate. And when you get to the end of the budget deliberation with the department then you have an opportunity to say, we will approve the budget except for the department of health, or CLEY, or whatever the department is, if the following information is not forthcoming.

That gives you and the department an opportunity to be able to provide that information before the end of the budget debate. In the beginning of the budget debate we haven't even finished the pages in response to the budget, then you are causing a serious issue with the budget of the government.

I would suggest that we conclude the department and you would allow that as a member. They have the right to do that. Any member can take something from the budget, you can't add to it. So, when you get to the end of your budget debate you'd be able to say that there was information forthcoming from the department of health and it's not here; therefore and thus, we'd have a motion to defer that portion of the budget. That way, the rest of the budget can complete.

This way, you're starting off the first department. We haven't even completed the total budget, and we'll have to go back to it and so on. So, I would make that suggestion to the House and to the Members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Hon. Ed Picco. To the motion, Hon. Leona Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the question I took as notice, a question from Member Curley, I can have that information tomorrow. I'll have to get that translated, which we're just finalizing today.

Something I need clarification on just now: Member Tootoo asked that the question he asked of a separate minister be included in my response to Mr. Curley's question, which I think are two separate issues. When I took the notice from Mr. Curley, it was a similar question, so perhaps we can clarify that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: To the motion, stick to the motion, please. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of things. One, a question I asked the Premier last week.... He said he believed the question was taken as notice and therefore no response was forthcoming on that. I believe the ruling today addressed that so that's something I'd look for a response.

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo. Sorry, to the motion, I just wanted.... Each member can speak to the motion once, please. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I beg the Chair's indulgence, and he can correct me if I'm wrong. But just on it that, that it's a separate response. It's a separate response on a question that was taken as notice. It doesn't have to come from the same minister. I'm still looking for that information; it was taken as notice. So, I still look for an answer on that question to include in the response that we're waiting for, for the deferral of the budget. Once that information is forthcoming then we can go back to the budget.

Mr. Chairman, also, in Minister Picco's comments on the budget, I don't believe they were 100 percent accurate.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Tootoo. I'm sorry. I'm going to give Mr. Curley the closing remarks to the motion. To the motion, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: My point of order is this: that my motion was in order to defer, subsequent to my comments that information that I required, with respect to my question, is not being tabled by the cabinet or the minister responsible for finance. Subsequently, one of the members, the Minister of Education, put forward a different proposal altogether, which is separate from my motion. I believe that his position would have really created difficulty for me in following up questions with respect to pages H-9 and H-11.

So, on that basis I made time to follow up questions if I'm not totally satisfied with the response from the Minister of Finance. It will not, in my view, withhold any further because substantial questions are being answered, and we need a bit more time. That's all. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. To the motion. All those agreed to the motion, raise your hand. Raise your hands.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: All those opposed, raise your hands. All those opposed, raise your hands. All those abstaining, raise your hands, please. The motion is carried. Okay, thank you.

Would you like to move on to the Department of Education's main estimates? Are you agreed that we will move on to Education's main estimates?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: I now would like to ask the Minister of Education to make his opening remarks.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here today to review the Department of Education's business plan and main estimates for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. The Department of Education has a wide range of responsibilities from early childhood activities, schools, post-secondary income support, as well as adult learning.

The Department of Education will see an overall increase in its operating budget next year of \$6.8 million. The greatest part of this increase will be allocated to the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program, to social-assistance food allowance, and to the impact from the FNT collective agreement.

I would like to point out that the department had to absorb a \$3.6 million overall reduction carried forward from the 2003-2004 budget.

In spite of our fiscal difficulties we made progress over the last year. On the school side, enrollment is up. The number of grade 12 graduates continues to increase and the curriculum work is proceeding.

The discussion document entitled *Developing a Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy* was released in November of 2003. The Department of Education, with various stakeholders including Nunavut Arctic College, are to prepare a strategy for cabinet that will address the full range of adult education and training requirements and provide direction for adult programs in for the future. The Department of Education works closely with Nunavut Arctic College and contributes \$14.528 million to the base funding. The department also provides \$1.877 million for the community teacher education program. The department supports complete financial and program reviews of the college to ensure seamless programs for adult learning.

The department recognizes that reform of the education system is required in order for Nunavummiut to reach their full potential. The major instrument in this proposed reform would be a new education and school act. The new act must address issues with schools

and bring the education system into line with the direction advocated by parents, district education authorities, educators, and other groups. Extensive consultation will be required to ensure that the views of all groups are considered in drafting our proposed legislation. The budget for our policy and planning division was increased to reflect that priority.

Inuktitut curriculum is the priority for the Department of Education. The following three items were foundation work completed to support curriculum development.

1. Student assessment framework and classroom practices.
2. Multiple options and consultations to identify high school programs in addition to academic pre-trades, Inuit culture and heritage, and performing arts.
3. Encourage homework and support strategies.

The Department of Education will complete the Inuktitut curriculum development strategy for K-12 and table that strategy in the fall of this year. The department will also table the three-languages-of-instruction models and implementation strategy this fall of 2004.

In 2003-2004 the Department of Education received an increase in the grant program under the Financial Assistance to Nunavut Students, or FANS: \$1.965 million to meet the increased number of students sponsored by FANS.

The Department of Education is also pleased that this increase was added to our base in 2004-2005. The Department of Education enhanced the income support program with a 10 percent increase to the food allowance, totalling \$1.6 million dollars. This increase is an important enhancement, leading a review of the income support program to ensure it meets the needs of all Nunavummiut.

The needs in education at the college and income support are great. This presents many challenges to our government. There are many competing demands for funds and important priorities. The budget proposed for 2004-05 advances the important work of the Department of Education within the financial constraints that the Government of Nunavut faces. I am confident that we will continue to improve programs and services as time goes on. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your attention, and I will be pleased to answer questions from the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Picco. Do you have any witnesses that you would like bring to the table?

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would invite the witnesses to join me at the committee table.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to bring the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in. Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today is my deputy minister of education, Ms. Pam Hine, and to my immediate left is the director of finance for the Department of Education, Kathy Stinson.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the Chairman of the standing committee have any comments? Please proceed, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Health and Education, I am pleased to have this opportunity to make some opening remarks as we begin deliberations on the budget of the Department of Education.

Members of the standing committee know that the Department of Education's operations and maintenance budget for 2004-2005 has been increased by \$6.8 million dollars from the 2003-2004 O and M budget.

On the issue of education reform, committee members are aware of many needs under the current system, especially regarding the number of teaching staff, support staff for students with special needs, counselling staff, cultural instructors, and integrating the knowledge, experience, and wisdom of elders.

Members of the committee look forward to reviewing developments in the department's planned reform of the education system as announced by the minister earlier this week. Committee members have noted that the number of positions under the department has been decreased, with employees of the district education authorities no longer being counted in with Government of Nunavut employees.

Members were disappointed to note that base funding to DEAs has been cut. Members encourage the government to provide more, and not less, support to DEAs and their employees at the community level.

Members of the committee have noted that despite forced growth in a number of Nunavut communities, funding for programs and services for young children has not been increased. Members encourage the minister to provide support to community organizations that wish to develop proposals to access those funds that are available for early childhood initiatives.

Members of the standing committee strongly agree that providing adequate support to Nunavummiut who are continuing their education at post-secondary institutions, and through trades training and apprenticeship, is an important investment in our future. The committee encourages the minister to give regular scrutiny to strategies and initiatives that will encourage more trades training to be provided within Nunavut.

Members of the committee have expressed some concerns regarding the adequacy of some income support programs. One such concern is the difficulty that many disabled individuals have experienced in accessing support. Members have also raised questions about the territory's call back of the national child tax benefit supplement from income support recipients and request that the minister give further consideration to this issue.

Members of the committee are very pleased to hear that the minister has acted upon their comments regarding the current inadequacy of food-allowance rates and will be increasing these rates by 10 percent in the near future.

That concludes my opening remarks. Individual members may also have questions and comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Before we proceed, I would like to remind members of the following: according to rule 77(1), you have 10 minutes to speak. And according to rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may speak more than once to the matter under discussion, but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken. I suggest to members that, wherever possible, you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the department's estimates.

Do members have any general comments? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to welcome the minister's staff here. I know that they've had their work cut out for them for the last number of years, and I'm sure that they realize that they still have their hands full, along with the minister as well.

I know for the last number of years I have been a strong advocate for support for our education system and for ensuring that adequate resources are in place to ensure that our young people get the quality and standard of education that they deserve and have a right to.

One of the things I noticed is the minister had indicated that the greater part of his budget increase of \$6.8 million had to do with financial assistance for Nunavut students, the food allowance going up, as well as the impact of the collective bargaining on the payroll for the teachers.

I just want to say that I'm very very disappointed by the fact that there is no money for forced growth for the schools. From my understanding of a cursory school operations funding, overall decreases in the budget and also where.... You know, it sounds nice where they have an overall Department of Education increased budget of \$6.8 million. It really doesn't do anything to address the needs of the teachers and the students in the classrooms, in giving them additional resources over what they've had to work on in the past. And all through how their funding is allocated, as the minister has said himself, it is an inadequate, outdated formula for allocating that funding.

There is talk of reform in here, which I'm sure everybody is very happy to hear. Just talk of reform and not doing anything to put additional resources to the classroom is very disappointing on my part, and I'm sure on the part of the professionals, in the classrooms out there, teaching.

He talks about, in his opening comments, the fact that school enrollment is up. In every other budget address we've had, it has gone to great length to indicate where there have been increased teaching positions. In the minister's opening comments in the budget address there's no comment at all as to increases in teaching staff, no comment to funding directly for schools and classrooms.

We know that some of our classrooms and students don't even have textbooks; they have to photocopy stuff just to be able to have them. To me, in this day and age, to a government whose top two priorities over the last five years.... It's appalling, the fact that that is still the case.

I know it's probably no fault of the staff, and I'm sure that the minister asked for more than what he got. As is the case, he had to, he indicated in the opening comments, take a reduction, absorb \$3.1 million out of their budget because of cutbacks, because the government doesn't have any money. It's got to address this thing at a time when education is supposed to be a priority.

We all want to see it improve and get better. We want to be able to have our young people get an education that gives them the tools to do the jobs that we need them to do here in Nunavut, so that we can have a homegrown workforce. As long as we don't address those issues and concerns, we are never going to be able to achieve that. I think that is something I'm going to be looking for over the next little while, to make sure that there are steps being taken to address that.

He talks about, in his opening comments, of a new education act. One of the things that I'd like to see the minister be bold enough to do is what they did in the Northwest Territories, and with the recommendation that I made to the standing committee a number of years ago on the consultation for the Elections Act: to legislate class size over a number of years to be able to give them the opportunity to come up with the resources to be able to accommodate that over time, as well as recognizing the fact that it can't all be done in one year.

To me, those are things that show a commitment to improving the quality of education of our young people. As long as they just get lip-service there are no new teachers, dwindling cuts to budgets.... To be honest with you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I know it's of no fault of your own; to the general public out there it almost seems that it's just lip service. We have to move past that. We have to find ways to be able to come up with the resources, the commitment to put it there to make sure that it does what we say we want to do with it, and not just talk. And I've said it before, in regards to education: it's time to put our money where our mouth is. We have to be willing to do that.

I'm sure that when they sit around the table and debate in cabinet, in their budget development meetings, there is everyone fighting for their own little piece of the pie. I think there should be a collective commitment to look at finding ways to be able to put that money in there to make sure that there are improvements and increases in the resources that are available for the education system, not just other things that you're stuck with, like collective bargaining. There's no problem coming up with the money for that because it was a collective agreement. It is not our fault.

We come up and put the money for it but all of a sudden, if we want to have a better system, better resources.... Well, let us come up with the money for it and find ways to do that and work together to do that because it is our future that we are talking about here. The future of our territory, the future of our young people who are the majority of the population in this territory.

When you look at the education levels, the dropout rate, the unemployment levels, the suicide rates, those are all indicators as to why we have to take this seriously, and do something about it, and put that money there. I think that we have had four years, five years of saying it. Well, let's quit saying it; let's do it. If it is not going to be in this one then I would love to see the minister bring recommendations forward in the act and call for things like that to take place. Legislate the class size; that way teachers and educators in our school system are not feeling frustrated because they can't do their job, because they have got too many kids.

The whole idea of special needs in the classroom is another issue that is out there. When you have a class that has a high number of special-needs students in there, that affects the ability of the teacher to be able to address the concerns of the whole class.

Another area that needs to be looked at a while is the whole program funding, something that I mentioned over and over again in this House. This per capita funding that we provide funding to our schools with is inadequate. It is not adequate for us as a territory; that is an argument to the federal government, yet we are providing that same formula to our schools.

So, I would like to see something in the new education act to address that, if not sooner. But, I do not think that we can continue to wait. We need to address these issues, the sooner the better. That is it for now, Mr. Chairman. My time is up but depending on how things are going, I might have some more comments after. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. General comments. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I concur with a lot of the comments that my colleague, Hunter Tootoo just made and so I won't repeat all that. But, I think it is vitally important that as we as a government find a way to get kids to school and keep them in school, not just grade 3 but all the way through to grade 12. That is very important. We have got to get the kids to school and keep them in school. Education is something that is

very important to all of us. It will represent a part of our long-term plan to get out of the problems we find ourselves in nowadays.

As I have said many times when I talked to kids in school in Cambridge Bay, they can take everything you have away from you, but they cannot take away a good education. So, we have got to find a way to get the kids in school, keep them in school, interest them.

The formula.... I am not sure what the education formula is. I have heard a lot about it, but I am not sure how it works. I am hoping that the minister can explain the principles included in the calculations to get teachers.

I have argued many years, on behalf of mayors in Nunavut, lobbied that we need high school counsellors in our highschools to help the kids when they get to those important years, teenage years, that decide whether they drop out or stay in school, and help them see the future a little bit. A lot of kids go through difficult times at home and in their communities, but sometimes a little bit of counselling in the schools.... Somebody to help them direct their energies to studies, keep them interested when you get them into colleges, universities, technical, and trade schools.

Maybe earlier in education career-kids can be identified. As you know, there's the academic stream and there's the trades-technical stream. Maybe a little earlier in the years of education, maybe in grade 6 or 7, see if they're interested in becoming scientists, or maybe they're interested in becoming heavy equipment operators, or mechanics, or carpenters. We need lots of folks with journeymen trades. Not everyone is going to be a doctor or scientist, but we have to look at these kinds of things earlier on and throughout the course of their schooling.

I think that we have to raise our expectations for our students and for our territory. We should have an education system that is second-to-none. We should support our teachers, support our educators, give them the best tools possible that they can use to educate our young people.

We talk about diamonds and gold in our territory, but our human resources are probably more important than anything else we have because if we can educate people, they can take that education and do things with it. They can develop businesses, run governments, make decisions that will benefit us all in the long-term. When I mean long-term, I'm talking about the next 50 to 60 years.

So, we have to look at this budget carefully, help the minister with some input, assist his staff to make some decisions that will benefit our communities and benefit our young people and then stick to it for the next year and the time of this Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. General comments. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister for appearing before us. I feel that education is very important for the people of Nunavut, for the parents and the young people. I would like to say that those people are always thinking about education here in Nunavut, and this is a very important department. I feel that we're going to have important decisions. We would like to support the minister and his officials. The deputy of the department has lived in Nunavut for quite some time, and has her own children.

Secondly, what I'm saying is that there are a lot of teachers that need to be recognized while we're members of the Legislative Assembly. We give them so many hours to look after our children and to teach them. For that reason, what I'm going to be saying here in this House is that I would like to give them our appreciation.

What I'm saying here is that for so many years, not quite 100 yet, education has been happening here in Nunavut, in the communities. Where are we today with education, in educating our children.... We used to live in igloos with no schools. We took elementary school, some of us here in Nunavut communities. Maybe about two or three years later we were able to do a lot of stuff.

There are a lot of people here in this House that went through elementary school, commerce programs, post-secondary, and other higher levels of education. Some of us didn't take those educational opportunities, but if people think that if we don't understand what's happening, that's unfortunate, because that's the way it is.

What I'm trying to say here is, the elders out there have to be able to have a place, and then the elders should be given the opportunity to teach. It shouldn't just be if you can speak English and Inuktitut that you can be a teacher. I think that we can use our elders, and we have to believe in their abilities. I think they can do it. They could work in the schools. Some elders are now working in the schools. The unilingual people, they are not involved because they don't have the understanding. But, if we are to welcome them into the schools, to meet with them, then give them the opportunity, not just to take them out on the land, but as well to teach them to be involved in teaching.

During the committee, the minister stated that if we have some, that is only "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit." That is not the only "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit." If the elders were given the opportunity to go into the schools, to tell stories, to teach the young people, and to have a day of that kind, because we usually have special days.... They could be invited to special days for elders to teach the bad children.

I have seen a lot of young people coming into this House to find out what the proceedings are all about. Elders are like that too; we should welcome them.

In regards to the department, I would like to say I think the only difficult part of the education system for the children is that some of them are not disciplined, or they are usually late, or they don't attend school. If they don't come to school regularly, then they

give up. I saw this weekend an individual who said to me that their children don't attend school.

I think it is not just the fault of the children, or the students. It has to be looked at by the DEAs themselves, why this attendance is not followed regularly. As well as to talk with the elders to find out how we can help with the attendance of school children. We know some of the reasons why there is a lack of attendance, or why there are a lot of dropouts. We have to try to make the elders understand that with children, they cannot go to bingos all night long, or they can't go gambling all night long, because they have to look after their children in the morning to make sure that they go to school on time. That is our responsibility as parents.

What I am saying is that the Department of Education is trying to do their best to try to keep the kids in school and as a government we give licences to gambling places and stuff like that. The money that is supposed to be used for food for their children is being used for gambling. They go to school without eating in the morning because they don't have the money, and then they give up.

As politicians and locally as the DEAs we have to be able to work together. We have to talk to them because it is not going to come about on its own. We have to collectively deal with it. If we don't talk about it then we don't fix anything. We have to try to find the problem about non-attendance.

Some of them don't go back home because there is nothing to support them in the home. Then, when they become teenagers they do all kinds of stuff. I think that should be looked at again, as far as I am concerned. Because the department has a lot of things that they are doing to assist the students out there in the education system; they have to be able to provide the parents with a tool. Like the member for Cambridge Bay stated, all students will not want to become teachers, or lawyers, or social workers; we have to provide them with other alternatives.

I would like to direct the department, instead of just looking at the education system.... They have to be able to have a trades school so they don't have to always go down south to go to trade school. There should be a trades school here in Nunavut for carpenters, miners, and all the other trades jobs that are out there.

There has to be a policy direction. They can't be just worked on by the consultant. That's not the way, that's not the answer. Cabinet, collectively, has to work on this. That's the vision that I feel I have, that's the direction in which the department should go.

I will be addressing the minister in regards to education during the question period. I feel that.... If you could just look at this for other regions as well.

I would also like to give my appreciation to the minister and his department about the income support that was increased by 10 percent. I feel that the minister is directing it for

food; I really appreciate the minister and his officials for that ; instead of using it for gambling, they could use it for food.

I would also like to mention, as he is the minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, that some of us don't know anything about the Nunavut Arctic College, such as the president and the governance council.

I would like to state to the minister that the calendar programs.... A lot of people are happy about that. If they could only give us more regions those kinds of programs would be a lot better for the people of Nunavut. The young people could benefit as well, instead of just one region, because our young people would like to be involved with education as well.

I would like to say to the minister: I would be very happy if, so that it would run properly, you could give some advice to the governance council on the kinds of policies that they should be following. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to make a brief comment and to say that I am very happy that Minister Picco has taken the portfolio of the Department of Education. He is very proficient in speaking in Inuktitut. He understands the needs that we are talking about.

What I want to say is that there should be another review or study on the people of Nunavut when they go to the decentralized communities, from other communities, to take a job as a Nunavut employee.

Some of them just moved to another community to try to make sure that they get a better education. If they don't have a grade in one community then they go to another community to be able to go to a higher grade.

If that study could be done by the department it would be very good. I don't think it's got anything to do with the curriculum system, but they don't really have any concrete information and so then they move to another community to get their children a better education or a better curriculum in another community.

They have to have a better understanding of the curriculum system because there's a problem out there. Say for instance, in grades 7-8-9 they usually go back down to a lower grade and the student then no longer wants to go back to school because they keep lowering the grade. And there is also bullying in the school. There are various reasons that the students go down to the lower grade. It must be very hard on the students. There doesn't seem to be any support for them, and I would like the Department of Education to look into that. I know that we're not directing it to the ministers because they don't have full knowledge, but I just want to let them know that this is the case for the majority of students in Nunavut.

Another item, Mr. Chairman: I would like to give my appreciation to the minister. When I was campaigning to get elected I wanted to get the income support increased, and I am happy to say that this has been done by the minister. I give the appreciation for that.

In Arviat last winter they had a hard time in trying to acquire funding for income support and there are a lot of people in Arviat that have lived in the inland. They didn't have any country food so they had no choice but to buy from the store. I am happy to say that income support for food money has been increased, and I really appreciate that.

I would also like to say it should be considered that some communities during some winters have an abundance of caribou meat, where some don't have as much as the other communities. So, could the income support could be adjusted somehow; if there is an abundance of country food, to be able to adjust it to be able to provide more food for the have-not communities. The communities that don't have as much country food should be consulted, to give more to the have-not communities than the others. I know we'll find out again this coming winter that it might happen that way.

And at this time I would like to give appreciation to the minister, and thank you for letting me have my comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. General comments, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although I don't have that many general comments to make; I'll make mine brief.

As Mr. Curley stated earlier, some of us did not have formal education. I'm very glad that we have come a long way. Back then we went through difficult times. Life has not been easy for us because we had to leave our families to attend school at another location. It was very stressful for me, but I am very pleased at where I am today.

In the last five years I have not been living in my community. Due to schooling I have lost some of my Inuktitut language, and I have lost some of my kinship terminology. But, I am very proud to say that today my family members are very understanding in my home community.

The Department of Education.... I am very pleased and proud of the department because the teachers, literally, are taking care of my children while I attend the session here. Our students are taken care of in schools, and we are very proud of it.

But, at times the students have to face peer pressure and bullying, which is visible in some schools. In spite of that, I could say that when I was a student the culture was totally different from the current school system now, according to the acts. When I was going to school, if I did something wrong the teachers had the authority to reprimand me. But nowadays, what we see today, the students, even if they do something wrong....

Because of the laws, we have to abide by the laws, you cannot do anything to the students. Even if the students do something wrong they are not reprimanded.

Mr. Chairman, the education bill.... I anticipate the tabling of the education bill, and I will work to the best of my ability to support it. I will give my full support to the education bill. I would like to fully participate during the process so we can build capacity for our younger generation.

Also, back then, we used to have different subjects such as heavy-equipment operators and so on. We had to attend those kind of trade schools outside of Nunavut. Back then you trained to be a mechanic, but with the new technology you need computer technology to become a mechanic.

For that reason I am sure the minister can consider getting a trades program in Nunavut by working with Arctic College officials. We definitely need some form of trade school in Nunavut for students who have completed grade 12. So that we can give more opportunity to Nunavut individuals to further their education, it's becoming evident now that we definitely need a trade school. So, I would urge the minister to consider establishing a Nunavut trade school.

Also, in regards to income support programs.... Although it's been mentioned, I would like to make a comment on it. The income support program.... Not too many people at the local level understand the policy of the income support program, especially the clients. Perhaps the income support workers at the local level can be made to understand the policies or can be made to understand what kind of authority they have within the policy. Perhaps give support to the communities so that income support clients can have better knowledge of all the policies, because the majority of the community residents don't understand them.

If there was this individual who escorted his father on medical travel, and he was unable to get his full income support because he was escorting his father.... He could only receive a part of his income support. So, I would like to find out what the policy is; if I am to follow my father on medical travel, and if I'm on income support, they would cut my income support and I would be given only part of the income support that I was eligible for. One individual came to complain to me that his income support was cut because he followed his father on medical travel as an escort. So, the community has to be made to understand these policies.

Mr. Chairman, that is the end of my general comments. Thank you.

Chairman Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. General comments. I have no more members on my list. Sorry, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that when my colleague from Arviat indicated that he was happy that the minister was now at the helm of the Department of Education.... Mr. Chairman, with all due respect I would like to reserve my happiness to

ensure that he has more success with this portfolio than he's had with a couple of his other portfolios in the past. So I'll reserve my right to be happy until after we see some results.

Some of the other things that I wanted to mention.... I know it's been an issue over some of the challenges facing the education system, and this one is having some kind of a standardized system, or something to be able to evaluate where our students are. Whether that be through any kind of a standardized curriculum, or something.... I know that's something the department is looking at. I hope that they continue to look in that area to try to develop something there that will work for our students, so that we can measure the success of the system and identify potential weaknesses within the system as well.

Any system that is developed, I kept in mind right from the beginning, that is used as a tool to evaluate our system.... I think that's something we always have to continue to do: to try to look for ways to improve what we have. I hope the minister and his staff use that approach in developing some type of standards to evaluate our system in the reform process that they're going through.

Another thing I think is important, I know that it was raised throughout the campaign by individuals I'm sure not only to myself, to the minister, and I'm sure to other members as well, is the idea of an Inuktitut, or a cultural school. One of the things that I believe this government has said is it needs to do is to look for partnerships and work with partners. I think this is an area where we have the opportunity to work with a partner like Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, to have them come up with a proposal to develop some framework for a cultural school.

I think that our first priority as a government.... I know that the minister is quite aware that there are quite a number of concerns and problem areas within the department. That should be our first priority to focus our attention on. Address those needs before tackling new initiatives at the department. I just suggest the idea that there is a potential to work with someone else, to have them deliver something like that. That, I know, could be greatly appreciated by many young people across the territory.

We know that our system is basically an academic system right now, and you need to be diversified. The mines are coming: mineral exploration. There's going to be a high need for trades. We need to diversify our system in that way.

I don't think our education system and our Department of Education are the experts in working on a cultural school program. Maybe an organization like Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated might be more appropriate to develop something like that, and to find the ways in which we can work in partnership with them on that. That would probably run a lot quicker and smoother if it was developed through there as well, Mr. Chairman.

One of the other areas I talked about earlier, and I know that the minister has indicated, is that the formula is inadequate. And just to have it on the record, I know one of the things and concerns that have been voiced in the past is allocating the teachers for the schools

through the formula. If whatever type of formula is used.... There has been a concern coming from the administrators, from people within the system, and from the district education authorities to take the councillors, the principals, the support staff, and the administration staff out of the formula so that it deals strictly with teachers and educators within the system.

I know the other people are administrators, and they run the schools. They don't teach the programs, and I think that's where we to.... That could be a way to help focus and to be able to put more resources into the classrooms. I think that's another suggestion I'm sure the minister is working on; I know that he's aware of it. I just wanted to make sure that it's on the record so that he doesn't forget.

Mr. Chairman, another area that is of great concern.... I know here in Iqaluit it has been raised; it has also been raised by other members in the past. It is in regards to childcare and a preschool program. I think that's something that could go hand in hand. If you look here and I'm sure in other communities, soon, especially in the decentralized communities where it's going to be growing, there is going to be a greater demand for childcare.

I know here the waiting list is longer than the spaces available. I'd really like to see the department look at developing options to be able to help deal with the crisis here. I think that a preschool program that targets children from 3-5 within the school system could help alleviate some of that problem in the daycares where they don't have the room. That would take those children out of the daycare system and put them into a preschool program and make available spaces for the younger children that there is no space for.

Another area of concern: I don't know where to direct it to, and I'm just making note of some areas I mentioned earlier, about increases and decreases over previous years. The DEA contributions is a decrease in funding, although if you look at it through some of the numbers between the main estimates and the business plan, I guess they are a little confusing.

I'd just recommend that the minister take back to where it will have consistency in how they present the numbers, some numbers where it uses this year's main estimate amount to the previous year's either revised estimates or the main estimates. In different cases, it's just the optics of it I hope, it looks like there's been an increase. If you look at the original amount or the revised amount, depending on which one is used, there's actually a decrease. I think there needs to be some consistency, not just picking the higher or lower number to make the optics of it look good.

Let's just show the true numbers to give a better, less confusing, accurate picture, that the final numbers have some consistency used in numbers. Sometimes we're not using the main estimate number from 2003-04, sometimes the revised 2003-04 estimates, depending on which one's higher or which one's lower. And it seems to be there in a number of cases throughout the business plan and the main estimate. I would just like to

ask the minister if he could suggest for clarity and consistency that the same numbers be used throughout the whole business plan as compared to the main estimate.

That's it, Mr. Chairman. I know I'm going to have a few questions for the minister and his staff as we go along. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I have no more members on my list for general comments. We will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting with page G-5. Members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page G-5, education branch summary. Directorate. Total, operations and maintenance: \$1,162,000. Members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Depending on which number you look at, I guess, the main estimates from last year showed \$725,000 under compensation and benefits, and the revised amount is \$670,000 in compensation and benefits. It was an increase of \$905,000. I'm just wondering if the minister could explain the increase there. Was there an increase in PYs?. Was there an additional directorate staff put in place? Or was this just strictly a result of collective bargaining? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you. The member is correct on the amount of the increase based on the bargaining. I just wanted to take this opportunity, if I may just to refer back to his earlier comment on the minister and how he would hold his praise, as it were, until the minister had an opportunity based on these other two departments.... I can say two things in the Committee of the Whole that I wouldn't say in the full House, and those two things are these:

We brought in the strongest tobacco act ever in Canada. We've opened up more new facilities; the new mental health facility, more psychiatric nurses, the first Nunavut-wide homecare program, as well as the nursing program. I could go on, but I won't. You will never be blamed for doing something when you haven't done anything.

So I would like to have some members' questions on education specifically by saying the member is correct. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I should thank the minister. It's not often that he makes an indication that I'm correct on something. I would like to ask him if he could clarify what I'm correct on.

I asked if it was as a result of collective bargaining, or was it a result of increased PYs. So, which one am I correct on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may, I'll go through what the changes are for the member. The difference is \$185,000. From the \$720,000 to the \$905,000, there are monies that are increased. The benefit calculation.... And that includes for the deputy minister's office, the two assistant deputy minister support positions and the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit coordinator, as the member has indicated. And those would be just salaries for the actual increase.

It is the benefit calculation that the member talked about. The member is correct. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also in this area, under grants and contributions, there is \$100,000 for the district education authority contribution. I'd like to ask: one, why is it in this area, when all the grants and contributions to the district education authority contributions are in a different area of the budget? So, I would just maybe ask why that a separation on that.

When I talked earlier about the confusion between numbers and all, if you look at the.... I'll point out when we get to the appropriate section in the main estimates that they're between the main estimated amount for last year and the revised amount in this year's amount. Depending on which number you use there is an increase or a decrease. I think if you use the budgeted amount, the initial budgeted amount from the previous year, there is a \$200,000 decrease.

So, I'm just wondering if \$100,000 of that was moved to this area? Or is this new funding altogether, and there's actually a \$200,000 decrease over last year in district education authority funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$100,000 is actually a territorial-wide amount of money given to the district education authorities for special-needs students. I guess one of the reasons why some of it is directorate is because there's a special-needs component. Again, it's a contribution to the district education authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that further on, when we get into school operations, there is a district education authority contribution in there. It's new here. Then is there a decrease in that amount under that area of \$200,000 over the revised number from last year. Does this \$100,000 come out of that \$200,000, or is this an all new \$100,000 that wasn't included in last year's amount anywhere? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we get further on into the budget over the next couple of days in the department.... That money was an over. Some of the members of the committee will remember when we discussed these in the committee, that was an over contribution to the district education authority in one community. They were over compensated by that amount and that's why that amount was taken out. Some of the committee members will remember that question, therefore and thus this amount that was taken out from that line item.

The \$100,000 that the member asked again.... The member is correct; it is new money in there. The reason why it is in the directorate is because it is a territory-wide amount. And if there is a need for special-needs students we would have that \$100,000 available as extra help that could be brought forward from the Department of Education, for example, if a DEA came forward with the needs. That is the reason why the money is held in the director's branch in this case.

The subtraction of this amount that the member talked about is not actually a decrease in the amount of funding given out. It was because one community had received twice the amount of the allocation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for saving me asking that question when we get to the appropriate place.

Just on this funding.... I know that there has been a big cry for special-needs support within the classrooms. How would someone go about applying for this funding? Is this funding that they apply for? Is there a cap per community? Is there a cap per school? I am just wondering if the minister that is there can explain how that works because I am sure that there is a great demand for that. I will leave it at that before I go on to my next question.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department realizes that there are huge needs out there in our communities for children with special needs. On top of the other

monies that are already in the budget, that the member had talked about, this additional \$100,000 would be available.

So, if there are issues occurring in any given community where there are children with special needs, who need extra help, there is extra funding to be made available. This money is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. It is in addition to all the other monies that are found within the budget for special needs.

Individual DEAs would have an opportunity to go, for example, to the regional education office in their region. And that request would find its way to the director or to the ADM, the DM office, for approval. That is how the process has been and that is what we would hold that money in place for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on this, the minister had indicated that there is a huge demand for special-needs funding out there. Is there any criteria to put in place because there is special-needs funding, whether it be for someone that has FAS, or FAE, the other thing in there related to fetal alcohol problems, things with people with hearing impairments, speech problems, any other kind of special needs that could be out there, if someone's physically or mentally challenged.

Is there a criteria? Could this funding be applied for by any one of those areas for people? Because, I will use an example here in Iqaluit I am aware of.... I am sure the minister is as well.... There was, a couple of years ago, a school that was looking for support, like a half-time special-needs assistant, or a classroom assistant, and they had a number of students in their school that were physically or mentally challenged, that required more than.... You know, just that one student required more attention than the allocation for the school on a regular basis.

I am just wondering how that would be determined. Are there any things that would be included, not included, like a teacher or a principal that would bring the request to the district education authority that was then forwarded on for any type of special-needs problems that they may have in the classroom? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Issues about fetal alcohol syndrome, FAS and fetal alcohol effect, are some of the areas where this money could come into play.

As I said earlier, it's new money. And as the member said in his opening comments on the budget of education, like most of the budgets that we are dealing with they are budgets brought forth by this government to give the ministers and so on an opportunity to massage the budgets and bring forth new initiatives.

I was able to find an extra \$100,000 in the budget for areas of special needs that the member is talking about that we've heard in the past. That is why that new money is in there. We're working out some of the criteria screening right now for the application process. After the budget is complete, that would be in place and the district education authorities, or the DEAs, would have an opportunity, probably in the fall, the new school year, to be able to look at their special needs and have an opportunity, above and beyond what's already allocated in the budget for special needs, to be able to apply on this \$100,000.

I would agree with the member that it isn't very much, based on the needs that we have there. That's one of the reasons why we hoped to be able to bring forward some of the changes, that we talked about in the committee, in the Department of Education and the budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm very delighted to hear that the minister himself found this money out there to put towards that. I commend him for that; I wish him more luck finding more money. I think he's going to need it.

On his last comments he indicated that the DEAs' criteria weren't yet developed. They'd be able to apply for that in the fall. He had indicated that this funding won't be available until the next school year, and it would have to be used between the fall and March 31 next year. And that the schools or DEAs would not be able to apply for access to any of this funding for the remainder of this fiscal year, which is pretty much a quarter, a third of the year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess what I'm saying is that new money within the money we talked about.... I think we clarified that point.

But, I can't release any of those funds until the budget itself is clean and complete. I'm thinking if we finish the budget within the first week in June, let's say by June 3-4-5, then the monies that are allocated within the framework itself, those would be available. But by that time, most of us, for example outside of Iqaluit... A lot of schools are finished then; school year has ended. Here in Iqaluit, it goes on until the twenty-sixth of June, but many of our schools are finished, and many of our communities' DEAs wouldn't be meeting.

That's why I suggested that in the fall, in August and September when the enrollments are looked at in the new school year, a particular DEA may say we have a special-needs case here, and we need some extra funding, and then we would be able to look at the Department of Education.

Those monies will be available, as I said earlier, based on a first-come-first-serve basis, after the approval process that is in place for the department on the allocation of the \$100,000 for special needs. I would expect the uptake on the program to be this fall, but it would be in place, of course, if not accessed, up to the fiscal year ending which is, as the members know, March 31. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm confused, I guess. I know that the minister has indicated that this wouldn't go until the whole budget is approved in June. My recollection.... I know it hasn't stopped the government in the past from spending money prior to that; once we approve, here in Committee of the Whole, this page, it's pretty well saying that it's out there, it's going to go ahead.

I'm just wondering.... If that's the case, past practice is if there were district education authorities.... If we approve this today, if the district education authorities wanted to call up their regional office tomorrow and ask for funding, basically it's there?

I'm just wondering if I could ask the minister if they would be willing to do that, in keeping with how things have been done in the past on spending money. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I would not agree with the member on the process that he's outlined.

The reason why I would suggest that is because of what happened today for example. Even though the Department of Health and Social Services budget was approved, line by line, page by page, right up to when we got to H-9 or H-11 or whatever the page was, then the budget was deferred. If we approve this budget page by page by page we may get to the point, which is the prerogative of the House to do. We may get to the point where every page in education is approved, until the last one, and we could defer the budget.

That wouldn't be fair to say at this point or juncture that people can access money because one page is approved. Therefore and thus, I'm suggesting that when the budget itself is approved then people could access that money and that would be a fair comment to make.

I just want to make one other point, Mr. Chairman. I forgot to mention to you and to the House that in the gallery with us is the president of Nunavut Arctic College. Some members had asked in their opening comments about who is the president. He is with us right now: it's Mac Clendenning. He's sitting right behind Minister Tapardjuk. Welcome, Mac, welcome to the gallery. And for the members' information, there he is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, it's good to see you back to normal; the minister is not agreeing with me on something, which is fine. We can't always agree on everything.

I can understand his point, Mr. Chairman, that once the Department of Education's budget is approved that funding will be available. Not the whole budget, but....

I would like to ask the minister when he plans on having the criteria made available to the district education authorities once the department's budget has been approved. I'm sure there will be at least 27 district education authorities looking for that information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Again, Mr. Chairman, one of the creative things we've tried to do to within that budget is bring in these new dollars. I know it's a small amount. I would hope that the criteria for the program itself, of \$100,000, would follow the standard criteria of the program when we looked at contributions to district education authorities.

So, I would suggest to you, shortly after the education budget, as the member has pointed out, was approved then we would be able to have the information provided to the local education authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask a question on grants and contributions but the minister and my colleague have already answered it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, my question is really on that specific item. I really was interested in whether or not you have policies, guidelines. I don't want to just refer to guidelines for your department and education councils; is there a policy guideline being planned for this item?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Page G-5, education branch summary. Directorate. Total, operations and maintenance: \$1,162,000. Members agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one thing I forgot on that.... Actually, the minister had indicated that he's going to provide information to the DEAs throughout Nunavut, but would he commit to, at the same time, providing it to members of the Legislative Assembly as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Yes, I will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just so I know.... It's not a small amount in the way of dollar figures, but under purchased services it's just doubled from the previous year. I'm just wondering if the minister could explain what that is for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That line item is a transfer into that area, up to \$9,000 for other expenses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering how come if it's just a transfer from one to the other.... There must be a reason for that. Give an explanation as to why. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's under the area of purchased services. So, when you see something like that \$9,000, small amounts of money within the \$160 million budget, those are small transfers in a line item. In this case it would be under purchased services. Those purchased services could be, for example, advertising, an extra \$9,000 for advertising which would be, for example, advertising for teachers, staff, education supplements, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to clarify that. Would the purchase of consulting services be included there? Would that be included under compensation and benefits? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: No, that line would be under contract services. I believe, when you look at the amounts, that there is actually a category for contract services, when you hire someone on a contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Hon. Minister Picco. Total, operations and maintenance: \$1,162,000. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page G-7, education grants summary. Policy and Planning. Total, operations and maintenance: \$1,305,000. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask the minister.... In his opening comments he made a comment for proposed reform for a new education-school act. I wonder Mr. Chairman, if the minister could outline his consultation plans that he has, or will have in place for the development of a new education act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe in the next two years of this Assembly there will be a piece of legislation with the importance that we have with the new education act.

It was already talked about in this budget already, an allocation for extra PY. The total consultative plan for the education act itself, I said in the House at committee, I would be tabling that in the fall. I would be doing that in October, beginning the round process of consultations. The reason why I'm saying I would table in the fall is because I want an opportunity to meet with all the DEAs. I'll have an opportunity this fall; I will be calling a meeting. We'll be meeting with the chairs of each DEA as well as having an opportunity to visit more schools and so on.

At the same time, my Advisory Education Program Council will be in place and we would be able to use a multi-task, multi-faceted, aggressive approach on the education act.

So, I would be in a position this fall, I would suggest October, to outline a time frame and the process for consultation so that the act would be ready for February of 2006 in the Assembly. And I believe we need to be able to take our time and do a good job with the act. We have got some really good work, and we have it already on the act, through the other process. We need to be able to add to that and augment what has occurred already. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is good to hear, that there is a plan. I am just wondering.... The minister is referring only to the IDEA. There are a lot of individuals in communities, such as hamlet councils.... There are parents, there are the kids themselves that probably need to be consulted.

So, I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, if the consultation process will include other people besides the IDEA, including some of the folks that I have just mentioned. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member is correct. There will be numerous checks and balances as we move and roll out the process for the new education act.

Part of that will be the education authorities. At the same time we are talking about education authorities we are talking about the representatives of affair. There are consultative processes that give the members of the House a chance, as well as the minister, for example, at having an opportunity to meet with mayors through the NAM, the facilitation through the NAM meeting and so on.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that when I bring forward the communication program, and the plan, as well as the district education authority education act consultative process, I would hope that there would be multi-task and multi-level giving us an opportunity not only logistically, but financially and administratively... They will be able to do consultations and be able to be in every community and so on. That is why we put the extra PY in place within the policy and planning branch of the department.

So, I can say to the member: it will be all-encompassing, and I would suggest that the members of this House will also have an opportunity through the Standing Committee on Education to have input with me on that process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to hear that minister say it is going to be all-encompassing. I believe the last consultations were also going to be all-encompassing as well, and we know what happened there.

So, I am hopeful that the minister is able to be true to his word that it will be all-encompassing and will take into all consideration everybody; I should also mention teachers and those folks should be involved in it.

But I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, if the minister could tell us if he has any other plans for legislation for this year. If you could comment on that, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the first few weeks of being appointed I met with all of my senior managers within the department and talked about some of the things I'd like to come into being, changes in the income support program in the food allowance.

There are several regulatory changes that I would like to see in the income support program itself, that I would like to bring forward under education. The education act is another part of the program that we have talked about, as well as some of the areas around curriculum resources and language of instruction. This is part and parcel of the reform program.

The government itself.... When you look at the legislative agenda or the legislative calendar for the Government of Nunavut there is the education act. The income support program itself, that is something I would hope to be able to bring into the House at some point, but I want the department to focus on one piece of legislation so that it actually gets done and done right.

Some of the issues that have happened on the last consultative going-around.... Although the education act was widely consulted there were some concerns from different groups. And that is why I am saying I want to give the department time to be able to do that, in consultation, to be able to facilitate the act with as much input and at the same time to get the act passed.

At the end of the day, that's your hope and your outlook as the minister. So, on the legislative calendar, there are some areas, for example income support.... I would hope to be able to do those after the education act. That act would take precedence at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that the minister is mentioning income support because he must recall that I did have a conversation in Cambridge Bay, I think within a couple of weeks of his taking over, about income support.

As everybody knows, there is a lot of money that goes into income support, and based on the folks that get the money, you know, a lot of them need it. They need that help, but there is a way to take some of that income support money and help folks get the jobs that are available in our territory.

I suggest to the minister that they look at a new policy to maybe create a worksite assistance program. Use some of the income support funds to underwrite or subsidize the cost of travel instead of just giving people money to sit at home and not be productive. There are a lot of these folks that would be more than willing to travel to some of these other communities to work, or to mines to work, because there are jobs available.

And then if you put those folks to work, of course they will be paying taxes with it. After taxes, they'll have more money and disposable income to bring back to the community, to be able to generate other economic activities and maybe generate the creation of some new businesses.

The other week I tabled a document called *An Assessment of the Income Impact of a Transportation Subsidy for Employment in Mining Industry on Remote Communities*. There's an order of magnitude calculation and all the members got this. So, I tabled it for a reason: so the minister could read it and his support staff could also read it and give it some consideration.

So, I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, if the minister, subsequent to when he went to Cambridge Bay and since I tabled this document, has given any further thought to how the income support program could be used to help create a remote worksite transportation program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member's comments. After I spoke with the member I also heard from several of the other members, including some of the colleagues in cabinet. I have prepared a list of regulatory changes as well as structural changes to the income support program.

I will be, hopefully, implementing the majority of those in October. There are some costs associated with those changes. But the restructuring of the income support program has begun with the increase in the food allowance, as well as some of the areas surrounding what is considered income under the program, as well as some of the issues around the national child benefit that's been already heard here in the House, and some other areas that we need to address.

Those are the types of things that we hope to be able to look at in the fall: some of the structural changes to income support; and make income support flexible but at the same time make it available to the stakeholders that it's meant to be there for.

Some of the members have talked about the cost of living. If you can't look at the structural changes in place, as the minister at this present time, based on budget considerations, what you can do is look at reform ideas and bring those forward in the fall. That's what we're working on. I would suggest to you that some of the structural changes to income support and a revamping of the income support program has been done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

You are correct. Then we will be able to move forward. I appreciate your support on that issue. Mr. Kilabuk was indicating to me that there are a lot of good things done by this minister already. Thank you, Peter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize now why the clock stops when we finish talking: so the minister can chew up our time.

It's good to hear. I think the government has to be flexible with some of their programs. And of course, income support is one area that can help folks raise their standard of living and be productive; they will take advantage of the opportunity I'm sure. Travel where work is, and then get good money back home, send the money home to their families.

So that everybody knows, income support is welcome and appreciated but the cost of living is tremendous, and it will only be, for a single person, I think, \$265 a month. That's just not enough for a person to have a healthy diet in this part of the world.

I'm also wondering, Mr. Chairman, if the income support program could be used.... If we could piggyback other things. A couple in Cambridge Bay for example.... Any community could supplement the income support if the person goes to work. If the money could be used to put people to work on an hourly basis, then supplement it with the money a local business would have to pay for an employee. That kind of stuff is being looked at as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm reminded to try to keep my answers very brief and to the point. So, I would suggest to the members that when we get to page G-14 where income support is, we'll have an opportunity to discuss this in more detail.

But the member is correct: that's some of the things that we are looking at under structural reform of the income support program. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no more further questions on this page. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this area in the policy and planning, the minister indicated that he has an extra person there to look at setting up the strategy for

the well communicated education act process development that his department's going to be undergoing over the next couple of years, few years, who knows how long it'll take.

The minister also indicated earlier on that he's going to set up, I forget the term that he used, a working group, or a group of people to assist the minister and the staff in developing and looking at ways to try to improve and come up with a new education act.

Can the minister indicate how he plans on recruiting those people. Is he going to be looking to members of the Assembly to submit nominations, or is it going to be a hand-picked bunch of people, by either himself or the department, that's going to be looking after this? Or is there going to be an opportunity for all members to be able to submit names from people in their communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the process of that.... After meeting with my senior staff, after being appointed about six weeks ago.... So, to look at opportunities within the existing framework and be able to look at moving forward to some of the changes....

Some of them we've already talked about: education reform, the education act. One of those was the education advisory council to the minister, and that would be inclusive.

I was thinking that the advisory council.... I've sent out a call letter to the FNT members, to the teachers. I've sent out a call letter to early childhood educators so early child education people would be involved. I've asked instructors from Nunavut Arctic College. I have a representative from NTI onboard.

I haven't gone to the general public. I'm asking the professionals in the field because it's dealing with curriculum resources, and the education act, and so on. That's the idea of the education advisory council to the minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Hon. Ed Picco. Committee members, I now recognize the clock, and we'll report progress to the Speaker. Thank you, minister and your officials.

>>Committee recessed at 17:54

>>House resumed at 17:56

Speaker (interpretation): Orders of the day. Item 21. Reports of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Evygotailak.

Item 21: Reports of Committee of the Whole

Chairman (Mr. Evyagotailak) (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 2 and the main estimates and would like to report progress.

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

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Who will second the motion? Mr. Kilabuk. The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 22. Third reading of bills. Item 23, "Orders of the Day," Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder for some meetings. There is a meeting tonight in Nanuk room for the Standing Committee on Ajauqtiit, the meeting following the term of this sitting. There is a public meeting tomorrow in the Tuktu Room with the Standing Committee on Ajauqtiit and the language commissioner of Nunavut.

Orders of the Day for Wednesday, May 26

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

17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The House stands adjourned until Wednesday May 26, 2004, at 13:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms

>>*Session Adjourned at 17:59*

