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Speaker: The Honourable Peter Kilabuk, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Pangnirtung)

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Peter Kattuk
(Hudson Bay)

Hon. David Simailak

(Baker Lake)
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Hon. Louis Tapardjuk
(Amittuq)
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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------|
| Opening Prayer..... | 2189 |
| Ministers' Statements | 2189 |
| Members' Statements | 2196 |
| Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery..... | 2203 |
| Oral Questions | 2204 |
| Returns to Written Questions | 2222 |
| Tabled Documents..... | 2223 |
| Notices of Motions | 2225 |
| Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills | 2225 |
| Motions..... | 2226 |
| Orders of the Day | 2229 |

A.

Daily References

Tuesday, November 21, 2006.....2189

B.

Ministers' Statements

113 – 2(3): Economic Statement (Simailak)2189
114 – 2(3): Minister Brown's Absence from House (Picco).....2196

C.

Members' Statements

277 – 2(3): Members' Absence from House (Evyagotailak)2196
278 – 2(3): Kugaaruk Family Re-united for Christmas (Mapsalak).....2196
279 – 2(3): Coral Harbour Girls' Soccer Team (Netser).....2197
280 – 2(3): Youth Parliament (Tapardjuk).....2197
281 – 2(3): Congratulations to Grade 12 Graduates (Arreak)2198
282 – 2(3): Election to the House (Arvaluk)2198
283 – 2(3): Fact Finding Tour of Diavik Mine and its Important to Nunavut (Peterson)2200
284 – 2(3): Officials' Visit to Kimmirut (Akesuk).....2201
285 – 2(3): Habitat for Humanity Iqaluit – First Annual Invitational Golf Classic (Tootoo)2201
286 – 2(3): Gjoa Haven Empowering Seniors Conference (Aglukkaq).....2202

D.

Oral Questions

329 – 2(3): Mistakes Learned from First Education Act (Tootoo).....2204
330 – 2(3): Further Fiscal Reductions (Peterson).....2207
331 – 2(3): Compassionate Travel Assistance (Mapsalak)2209

| | |
|--|------|
| 332 – 2(3): Baffin Medical Travel Update (Arreak) | 2211 |
| 333 – 2(3): Table Recommendations on Medical Travel (Barnabas)..... | 2214 |
| 334 – 2(3): Over-expenditure by Health and Social Services (Tootoo) | 2217 |
| 335 – 2(3): IQ Considerations in Decentralizing Medical Travel (Arvaluk) | 2220 |

E.

Returns to Written Questions

| | |
|--|------|
| Return to Written Question 017 – 2(3): GN Contracting Practices (Clerk) | 2222 |
| Return to Written Question 018 – 2(3): Correctional Facilities & Other Matters (Clerk) | 2222 |
| Return to Written Question 019 – 2(3): Appeals Under the NNI Policy (Clerk) | 2222 |

F.

Tabled Documents

| | |
|--|------|
| 147 – 2(3): Nunavut DEA Coalition (Tootoo) | 2223 |
| 148 – 2(3): DEA/GN Contribution Agreement (Tootoo)..... | 2223 |
| 149 – 2(3): Kitikmeot Regional Seniors’ Conference (Aglukkaq)..... | 2223 |
| 150 – 2(3): Gjoa Haven Seniors Society Report on Empowering Seniors Conference (Aglukkaq)..... | 2223 |
| 151 – 2(3): Interim Financial Report (un-audited) of the GN for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2006 (Simailak) | 2223 |
| 152 – 2(3): GN Responses to the Recommendations by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability on the Report of the Auditor General (Simailak)..... | 2223 |
| 153 – 2(3): Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Meeting – March 24, 2006 (Akesuk)..... | 2224 |
| 154 – 2(3): Petition on Unwanted Presence of a Potentially Dangerous Offender (Picco)..... | 2224 |

| | |
|---|------|
| 155 – 2(3): Statutory Requirements for Tabling of Reports and Other Documents, November 2006 (Speaker)..... | 2224 |
| 156 – 2(3): Inuktitut Translation of the 2006 Report of the Auditor General on the WCB of the NWT and Nunavut (Speaker) | 2224 |
| 157 – 2(3): Final Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission (Inuktitut and English) (Speaker)..... | 2224 |
| 158 – 2(3): Response to Petition 04 – 2(3) Tabled June 13, 2006 (Clerk)..... | 2225 |

G.

Motions

| | |
|--|------|
| 21 – 2(3): Legislative Assembly Appointments – Notice (Tootoo) | 2225 |
| 20 – 2(3): Airline Service in Nunavut (Barnabas)..... | 2226 |
| 21 – 2(3): Legislative Assembly Appointments (Tootoo)..... | 2228 |

H.

Bills

| | |
|--|------|
| Bill 26 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2007-08 – Notice..... | 2225 |
|--|------|

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, November 21, 2006

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. James Arvaluk, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Mr. Patterk Netser, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable Edward Picco, Honourable David Simailak, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to welcome you back to Iqaluit. I would especially like to welcome Mr. Arvaluk. Welcome to the House. Before we begin, Members of the Legislative Assembly I would like you to know that Mr. Curley who is the member representing Rankin Inlet North will not be able to attend this Session due to medical reasons. Thank you.

Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Simailak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for unanimous consent to waive Rule 34(6) to present the Government of Nunavut's Fiscal Update and Capital Estimates to the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The minister is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 34(6). Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Minister.

Minister's Statement 113 – 2(3): Economic Statement

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Members of the Legislative Assembly. (interpretation ends)

INTRODUCTION

As members are well aware, government spending underwrites almost all social and economic development activity in our territory. So, today I want to bring the Legislature and all Nunavummiut up to date on the current fiscal situation of the Government of Nunavut, since it has a direct bearing on our lives and livelihoods. I will also be announcing a series of financial management decisions and introduce the Capital Estimates for the fiscal year 2007-08.

Nunavut is full of opportunity. When I presented our government's budget last winter, I spoke about hope. In that speech, I spoke about our desire to harness Nunavut's great potential by creating investments to make our future brighter.

Indeed, our hope for the future is brighter today than it was last winter. We have already witnessed the opening of the territory's first diamond mine (Tahera) and two new gold mines have also been approved (Doris North and Meadowbank). The Meadowbank mine alone will provide some 200 jobs and contribute about \$200 million per year to the Nunavut economy, representing a 20 percent increase in our GDP. The Mary River project, which could come with its own railway and deepwater port, has enough high grade ore to keep generations of Inuit working. And these developments are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

There are many promising exploration and development projects, including additional diamond and gold mines, silver, zinc, copper, iron, sapphire, and uranium prospects, as well as oil and gas development over the longer term. There are also sustainable offshore shrimp and turbot fisheries, as well as tourism, which is enticing domestic and global visitors to explore our enigmatic and beautiful land.

Yet with all this untapped potential, until it is all harnessed, we have some challenges to face head-on. While we continue to be filled with hope, we must pay heed to our responsibility to manage within our means. We have a responsibility to be sound fiscal managers.

Anyone who rents a household knows that you have to have enough money coming in to cover off all the money going out to pay the bills. Unless you have sufficient funds, you end up paying for groceries, furnace oil, or the phone and power bills on your credit card. And that simply is not sustainable.

This is essentially the situation the Government of Nunavut finds itself at today. We are living beyond our means. Even though our revenues for 2006-07 are now estimated to be over \$1.0 billion – \$5 million higher than estimated in the 2006 Budget, our revised expenditure projections are also \$6.1 million higher. The net result is that the gap between our income and spending is widening. Instead of the original budgeted deficit of \$7.6 million, we are now forecasting a deficit of \$8.7 million for this fiscal year.

In addition, we will be bringing forward supplementary appropriation bills for your consideration during this Session. These appropriations include:

- \$3,797,000 to cover the over-expenditure incurred last fiscal year by the Department of Health and Social Services;
- \$17,535,000 in supplementary appropriations and maintenance funding, of which \$16,028,000 is energy related; the remainder is for additional funding for daycare centers, wait time reductions and Nunavut Arctic College nursing graduates; and,

- \$7,596,000 in supplementary capital funding, of which \$5,795,000 is for the construction of public housing under the Nunavut Housing Trust. Additional funding is also provided for the purchase of health equipment.

Mr. Speaker, as worrisome as our overspending is today, our projections for the future are cause for even greater concern. There is no end in sight to government deficits in the near term. And, that will have a negative impact on us all.

Without adequate financial resources, government cannot provide the services and programs that Nunavummiut need and deserve. We cannot carry on this way. Just as ordinary households cannot live beyond their means, neither can government.

To avoid even larger deficits down the road, we need to take action now. Securing and strengthening the financial health of Nunavut is the key challenge we must face, and which Nunavummiut need to understand. It is important for government to keep the people fully informed, openly, honestly, and promptly.

So, today, I want to outline new financial management practices for our territory. I am introducing measures which are both stringent and sound.

EXPENDITURE MEASURES

We will start within government, getting our own house in order while we continue to exercise restraint.

In September, Cabinet agreed to identify \$10 million in savings, which represents one percent of government operations, for the remainder of this fiscal year. This was a first good step in attempting to keep our expenditures in check.

All departments have been asked to bring forward expenditure reduction proposals that can be implemented in the short term to make an early start towards our new fiscal goals. However, even more needs to be done.

That is why we have asked all government departments to identify and freeze all currently vacant positions that do not negatively impact the delivery of necessary programs and services.

REVENUE MEASURES

Individual citizens must also do their part. Today, I am announcing two measures that will contribute to deficit reduction through our tax system.

Firstly, the payroll tax in Nunavut will rise from one to two percent. The tax is calculated on the gross salary of all employees in the territory, and is paid for by employees. This tax was developed to target transitory workers who do not reside in Nunavut but earn large salaries and then leave.

Raising the tax by one percentage point brings us in line with the NWT – which already imposes a higher levy on workers. This will generate approximately \$5.3 million in additional revenues.

To offset the impact of this tax increase on Nunavummiut, we are raising the Cost of Living Credit from \$750 to \$900. This change will be positive for taxpayers who are permanent Nunavut residents. The average claimed credit is expected to be \$506.

Mr. Speaker, the second change targets smokers. The burden smokers place on the health care system is well documented. Given the high rate of smoking among our population, it is not surprising that health care costs in Nunavut keep rising each year. For too long, tobacco has been a health hazard to our people. We have the highest rate of smoking and smoking-related illnesses in the country.

We know that higher tobacco taxes encourage people to quit smoking and discourage young people from starting. And that's something I am sure all people in this territory want to see.

At the moment, the tax on a carton of cigarettes is considerably less in Nunavut than in the Northwest Territories: \$31.20 here versus \$42.00 there. This is something we are going to change.

Effective December 15 at midnight, the tax rate for each manufactured cigarette will increase from 15.6 cents per cigarette to 21 cents. This equates to an increase of \$1.35 per pack, or \$10.80 per carton.

As well, we are changing the taxable price of cigarettes and loose tobacco from 9.52 to 15.56 cents per gram. This will increase the tax from 8.6 cents to 14.0 cents. We anticipate these changes will raise an additional \$2.5 to \$3 million a year in revenues.

Mr. Speaker, increasing taxes is never a politically popular decision for a government to make. However, there is little doubt that government is on a path that requires making some unpopular decisions now. Those decisions must be made, and will be made, for the good of the territory and for the good of all Nunavummiut.

I should point out these projections are based on the current Territorial Formula Financing Grant with an annual escalator adjustment of 3.5 percent. The uncertainty about the outcome of the ongoing discussions with the federal government on TFF compels us to remain fiscally prudent in our fiscal outlook.

FEDERAL TRANSFERS

In April 2006, the Council of the Federation's Advisory Panel on the Fiscal Imbalance released their report. This was followed by the federally appointed Expert Panel's report on equalization and formula financing in early June.

The Council of the Federation recommended that, “Nunavut receives extraordinary investment in the areas of housing, infrastructure, and economic and social development.” The federal expert panel also recommended a new approach to territorial formula financing that would reflect the differences among the territories, and fill the gap between expenditure needs and our own fiscal capacity.

I believe both reports provide a good starting point for reviewing Territorial Formula Financing. And I am optimistic they will be given serious consideration by the new government in Ottawa.

As recently as this past summer when Prime Minister Harper visited Iqaluit, he talked about the potential of the north and its critical importance to Canadian sovereignty. He outlined his vision of the north not as it is, but rather as it could be – a north that is stronger, more prosperous and liberated from the paternalistic policies of the past. The Prime Minister pledged to help Nunavut to achieve this dream.

The government and the people of Nunavut welcome this recognition and support. We are eager to play a vital role in the life of our great country, just as we are determined to build a self-reliant territory.

Officials in my department have been engaged in discussions with their federal counterparts about how we can realize our territory’s vast potential. We have pointed out that, as the newest jurisdiction in Canada, Nunavut is still in its infancy and cannot achieve its full potential on its own. In the short-term, Nunavut will continue to require strategic investments from the federal government.

We have also reminded Ottawa that Nunavut has been working from a position of disadvantage since its creation. The initial grant to Nunavut was inadequate to meet the most basic needs of our citizens in areas such as housing, health, education, and infrastructure. We believe the transfers for the territory needs to be increased as part of a catch-up effort and to enable us to make strategic investments to further develop Nunavut’s economic potential.

We are optimistic this matter will be resolved with the federal government’s action to address the fiscal imbalance. We are encouraged that the federal government now appears to recognize the problem.

Achieving fiscal balance among federal, provincial, and territorial governments is essential in providing our government with adequate resources for reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation. We have made it clear that Nunavut expects comparable and equitable treatment. I am confident that an adequate arrangement can be reached soon.

I look forward to discussing these issues at the upcoming Finance Ministers' Meeting. We will be looking to our partners, the Government of Canada, and our Prime Minister for support.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, no one should expect that changes will be made to our current Formula Financing arrangements during the 2006-07 fiscal year. Any changes will not be reflected in our Formula Financing transfer until at least 2007-08. All the more reason for the prudent measures I have outlined today.

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

Mr. Speaker, I will now introduce the *Capital Appropriation Act* for 2007-08.

The 2007-08 capital estimates, and the 2008-12 five-year capital plan have been changed to reflect the recommendations in the *Pinasuaqtavut* document. Here are the highlights of the major changes to the capital planning process:

1. All major multi-year projects will now be based on a prioritization method. This means that all departments will compete on an equal basis for funding of new capital projects;
2. An annual base target has been established for small capital projects that are \$300,000 or less. This is based on departmental historical spending for small capital projects, such as mobile equipment. As well, any unspent funding for minor capital will lapse at the end of the fiscal year. This will reduce capital carryover requests for future years and provide departments with some flexibility to allocate funding to other minor capital projects for emergency requirements;
3. All major capital projects included in the five-year planning horizon will ensure training initiatives are undertaken to maximize the use of local labour in communities for large construction projects. This change meets the recommendation of the comprehensive review of the NNI policy for the training and development of the local workforce; and,
4. All major capital projects substantiation sheets will be reviewed by the CGS Technical Division to ensure the following factors are considered:
 - a. Project scope and budget;
 - b. Completeness and accuracy of forecasted costs for other incremental housing and O&M costs, which includes the facility operating costs; and,
 - c. Impact of community capital projects on community resources.

In addition, appendix IV of the 2007-08 capital estimates includes all funding of capital projects from third party funding. This will provide members with a complete picture of all capital projects to be undertaken by the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the \$200 million Nunavut Housing Trust has not been included in the 2007-08 capital estimates. Nor has it been included in the 2008-12 capital plan and that's because Financial Management Board only recently approved the project delivery strategy. Funding allocated for the construction of public housing in 2007-08 from the trust will be through the supplementary appropriation process.

I am pleased to advise members that the Qikiqtani General Hospital will be substantially completed in February 2007. The Financial Management Board has completed its review of the lease agreement proposal submitted by 3379442 Canada Incorporated to lease the facility. The board has directed the Departments of Community and Government Services and Health and Social Services to proceed with the purchase of the facility because it provides the Government of Nunavut with the best value on this investment.

As it stands, we are planning to spend \$91.8 million for 2007-08 and \$404.8 million over the five-year planning horizon. This includes the cost to construct previously approved multi-year capital projects, funding for new projects that are considered to be emergency, and third party matched funding and departmental base targets for minor capital and mobile equipment.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut will continue to reflect the priorities that have been set out in the *Pinasuaqtavut* document, by maintaining a sound fiscal position while maximizing the benefits from the financial resources that are available to us. This is the only responsible thing to do.

While the measures I have outlined today are difficult and necessary, I encourage my colleagues and Nunavummiut to keep focused on a very different future. Even though the situation might sometimes seem bleak, we need to remember that our young territory is still experiencing growing pains and that the long-term picture looks bright.

Nunavut harbours a wealth of largely untapped non-renewable and renewable resources that can generate jobs, economic growth, and social development to meet the needs of our young and growing population.

The territory also benefits from a young and growing population, a rarity elsewhere in the country. If we harness this valuable resource, and equip our youth with the necessary skills and education, they will achieve both their individual and our territory's potential.

Achieving this vision will not be easy and it can not happen overnight. However, no one should doubt our ability or determination to see our dreams realized.

The sheer fact that we have successfully created Nunavut is testament to our tenacity, and to what we can achieve when we work hard and when we work together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 114 – 2(3): Minister Brown's Absence from House

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the members that the Honourable Levinia Brown will be absent from the House on November 21 and 22, 2006 to attend meetings in the Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. There being none. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak. Please proceed.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 277 – 2(3): Members' Absence from House

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know and also the members, some members are unable to be here. David Alagalak cannot be here as well as Peter Kattuk. They will be here tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Members' Statements. Member for Repulse Bay, Mr. Mapsalak.

Member's Statement 278 – 2(3): Kugaaruk Family Re-united for Christmas

Mr. Mapsalak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we approach the holiday season, I rise today to share with the House the inspiring story of how one Kugaaruk father will be very pleased to see his wife and six children this coming Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, the Senior Administrative Officer for the Hamlet of Kugaaruk, Mr. Elwood Johnson, has managed to lead a campaign to raise \$25,000 for the Oqsukittuq family to be able to go to Edmonton for a holiday reunion.

Their father, Harry, has spent the last year recovering from a brain aneurysm that kept him in Edmonton away from his family to rehabilitate.

The kind hearted donations made by the people of Kugaaruk and Repulse Bay and other businesses will now make it possible for Mr. Oqsukittuq to reunite with his wife and six children for Christmas after this long separation. Christmas is a very special time for families and I was happy to personally donate to this special cause.

Harry is slowly recovering; he has regained some of his memory and speech but is still relearning how to walk.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Harry a full recovery and in thanking the people of Kugaaruk and Repulse Bay for their generosity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, member. He is the Member for Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk. I apologize; I correct that, Mr. Mapsalak. Members' Statements. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Netser.

Member's Statement 279 – 2(3): Coral Harbour Girls' Soccer Team

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of Coral Harbour soccer team. (interpretation ends) I rise today to congratulate the girl's soccer team from Coral Harbour.

The team was recently voted by Sport Nunavut as the team of the year. They have demonstrated what can be accomplished by complimenting one another and playing as a team, and my constituents at home are extremely proud of what they have accomplished: first by winning the regionals, and then the territorials, and we all know that they won the bronze medal over in Alaska at the Arctic Winter Games recently held this year.

I want to personally congratulate Ashley Etuk, Reena Amitnaaq, Kailie Kaludjak, Shawnee Nakoolak, Brittany Pudlat, and my little daughter, Olivia Netser, and lastly their dedicated coach, Marilyn Bruce.

I want to encourage the team to continue to show good work and outstanding performance, and be a role model to the younger athletes that look up to them for leadership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Netser. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Member's Statement 280 – 2(3): Youth Parliament

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Office of the Legislative Assembly, or the Office of the Speaker for the Youth Parliamentary Session. It was very beneficial to the youth who took part, especially for my riding. Those delegates are now planning along with Minister Simailak that these youth need a good future and this youth parliamentary exercise was very beneficial to my constituents.

Also, while I'm up, I would like to welcome and congratulate Mr. Arvaluk for being elected for the Tununiq riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 281 – 2(3): Congratulations to Grade 12 Graduates

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to congratulate Mr. James Arvaluk and I'm happy that I won't be the only James around in this House.

So Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to congratulate the students of grade 12. Although there were three graduates, I know that the other students will follow along their footsteps.

I would like to congratulate Juusipi Idlout, Sanali Naatanai, and Barney Kalluq. Those are the students that had graduated and I encourage all the students of Nunavut to complete their grade 12. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. And your first one for today, Member for Tununiq, Mr. Arvaluk.

>> *Applause*

Member's Statement 282 – 2(3): Election to the House

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very good to be back.

Mr. Speaker, I'm both humbled and honoured to rise today in this House on behalf of my constituents in Pond Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I was privileged to swear my Oath of Allegiance and my Oath of Office as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Tununiq. In doing so, I am mindful of the serious responsibilities that I have assumed on behalf of my constituents and my accountability to them.

Last month, I was proud to have been nominated to stand for election in the by-election to fill the seat that was formerly held by our friend and colleague, the Honourable Jobie Nutarak. I am humbled by the support that I received from the residents of Pond Inlet, and I intend to honour the trust that they have placed in me.

(interpretation ends) I would like to take a moment to offer a few words in memory of our late friend, whom I was proud to have served with in the First Legislative Assembly. Jobie was a community leader. His wisdom and experience will be missed by people in Pond Inlet. I intend to live up to his high expectations that I know he would have placed on his successor.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that you will permit me, for a moment, to offer some candid words of a personal nature.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is out of time. Mr. Arvaluk, would you like to ask a question?

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I would like to get unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is asking for unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Go ahead, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I hope that you will permit me, for a moment to offer some candid words of a personal nature.

As you know, Pond Inlet is my home community and the home of my elders. When I moved back to the community two years ago, I sought the guidance of my relatives, elders, and long-time colleagues. I found their advice invaluable in addressing a number of personal issues, which I have struggled with for many years; going back to my days in residential school.

I believe that we need to take personal responsibility for our actions. I also believe that we need to do what we can do to contribute and give back to our communities. Over the last few years, people in Pond Inlet challenged me to do so, and I accepted their challenge in my work with the Hunters and Trappers' Association, the Hamlet Council, and the Toonoonik Co-op.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with you and all Members of this House over the course of the next two years. I believe that we can accomplish great things on behalf of the people of Nunavut if we work together.

I look forward to vigorously representing my constituents and articulating their aspirations and concerns to the best of my ability.

When I stood before the public and asked them for their support, I listened carefully to what they told me. I heard of the need for new infrastructure in the community. I listened to parents and elders who told me of their dreams for their children and grandchildren. I heard the voices of the youth and their goals for the future.

It is these voices that I will listen to during my time here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 283 – 2(3): Fact Finding Tour of Diavik Mine and its Importance to Nunavut

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House about the recent fact-finding tour of the Diavik Diamond Mine that the Premier, Minister Picco, Minister Akesuk, and I participated in on September 19, 2006. I thank them for taking the time to travel to Yellowknife for this important event.

Mr. Speaker, we visited the Diavik Diamond Mine site at the joint invitation of the mine and Kitikmeot Cementation and Mining Development. The latter entity is the largest Inuit-owned underground mining company in the north. The 51 percent Inuit partners are Kitikmeot Corporation in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the Diavik Mine is a world-class engineering and mining project located just south of the Nunavut/Northwest Territories border. Many northerners and aboriginal-owned companies were involved in construction of the mine. Through Impact Benefits Agreements, the mine provides training, employment and business opportunities that help Kitikmeot and northern communities.

Mr. Speaker, Kitikmeot Cementation and Mining Development, in partnership with Diavik Diamond Mine, completed an Underground Mine Training Program this year for Kitikmeot and NWT residents.

By all accounts, Mr. Speaker, it was a great success. The diamond mining industry projects that there is a demand for 300 underground miners over the next decade. The average cost to train an underground miner is \$40,000 per student. It is a career that many young Nunavummiut should consider.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, warmer weather caused problems with the Lupin winter road. This shortened the re-supply period to the diamond mines in the Northwest Territories and for the Tahera Diamond Mine in the Kitikmeot. As a result, all the diamond mines operations were seriously affected, including Tahera Corporation. We learned during the Diavik tour that it cost the Diavik Diamond Mine more than \$59 million to fly in the additional fuel and other materials that they needed to remain operational this year.

Mr. Speaker, the Diavik Diamond Mine has indicated that they are very interested in the discussions to advance development of the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project. I urge the Government of Nunavut to demonstrate leadership and impress upon our federal partners that the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project is a project that will benefit Nunavut, the north, and Canada as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Minister Akesuk.

Member's Statement 284 – 2(3): Officials' Visit to Kimmirut

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year one of my constituencies, Kimmirut, was visited by numerous organizations. First of all, the leaders of Nunavut and the leaders of Northwest Territories went to Kimmirut to meet with the people, or the Hamlet Council of Kimmirut, and also the leader of the government in the Yukon was able to visit my community as well.

It is understandable that these leaders in the three territories are starting to recognize the smaller communities such as the Premier of Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon...were able to visit our community, and I would like to say that I would like to appreciate them for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Akesuk. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 285 – 2(3): Habitat for Humanity Iqaluit – First Annual Invitational Golf Classic

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome you, and all my colleagues back to our beautiful capital. Finally we got some snow.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with members the success of a fundraising event that I took part in earlier this fall. Mr. Speaker, The First Annual Invitational Golf Classic was held in Hull in October to support Habitat for Humanity Iqaluit.

There were approximately 150 participants and I would like to thank each and every one of them, and more than \$40,000 was raised in this event. I'd like to thank all of the sponsors for participating in it. Without their help, it wouldn't be possible. And I would like to especially thank the title sponsor of the event, and that was First Air. Without their support the event would not have been possible.

Mr. Speaker, every member knows that Nunavut is facing a housing crisis. More than 3,000 new units are needed to address current levels of overcrowding throughout the territory. Like our game, Mr. Speaker, there is no hole-in-one solution for this problem. Just like our game, right, Mr. Picco? Although we tried.

I would like to acknowledge, also, the hard work that is done every day by the local housing organizations in the communities, but the reality is, and I think if we can follow up on the Minister of Finance's statement, the funding is limited.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to congratulate the Minister responsible for Homelessness for taking home a prize. Unfortunately, I didn't manage to win anything, but my honourable colleague won a prize for the biggest divot. Unfortunately, you know, Mr. Speaker, we

don't dig basements in Nunavut because that divot could have been used as an official ground breaking ceremony.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

>>*Laughter*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. The member is asking for unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, colleagues and the Minister responsible for Homelessness.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in this House to support the volunteers who are working to make Habitat for Humanity a reality in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, the golf tournament was based on team play and it will truly take a team effort from the government, the private sector, and the countless volunteers that are helping to pull this project together to address the housing issues in Nunavut.

I would like to again make a special appreciation to all of the board members on the Habitat for Humanity Board for the Iqaluit chapter for all of the hard work that they did in organizing this event.

I would also like to mention, as it is a team effort, I would like to acknowledge my team members in that tournament that it was Mr. Tim Neilly from Iqaluit, a good friend of mine from Ottawa Mr. Darcy Moore, and also a former resident of Iqaluit, Mr. Jeff Kilabuk. They were my team mates in that tournament and it was a lot of fun. I thank them for their participation.

And at this time Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating the sponsors of the First Annual Invitational Golf Classic and Habitat for Humanity Iqaluit for making this event a success, and I'm sure we all look forward to next year's event as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Nattilik, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Member's Statement 286 – 2(3): Gjoa Haven Empowering Seniors Conference

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation):...*interpretation unavailable*...I would like to thank the elders of Gjoa Haven for organizing their Elders' Meeting for Nunavut. George

Porter has worked very hard to get the meeting going in regard to a healthier lifestyle. I would also like to thank the government for participating in this elder's meeting in Gjoa Haven. They also talked about their programs.

I would like to thank a person from Yellowknife who participated and gave a workshop to the elders in Gjoa Haven. He was the first to organize this kind of a program.

I would like to thank the community of Gjoa Haven to hold this special meeting. George Porter and also the rest of the council, I would like to thank them. I will present the minutes from that meeting to the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. Members' Statements. Thank you. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome my wife, Jean, sitting right behind me. She is able to be here with me this time around. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two young ladies from my community who are here. They were chosen to go to Nunavut Youth Abroad this spring and I had tried to make them come here before they went down south.

Helena Bolt is sitting on your right there, and Tracy Evyagotailak, my daughter. They are the ones that are wearing our traditional clothing from the Copper Inuit style. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak, and welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to welcome to the Gallery an old friend of mine, a former adult educator with me, who worked in Arctic Bay as well as in Kimmirut as an adult educator and has been living in Iqaluit for many years; Ms. Maureen Doherty.

Maureen has been a community activist in a large way, a volunteer with different groups and organizations, and will be soon leaving Iqaluit for southern climes. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome her to the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister Picco. Welcome to the Gallery. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Thank you. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 329 – 2(3): Mistakes Learned from First Education Act

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

I would like to ask the minister, because I heard on the news this morning a report on how the new *Education Act* is developing and my question for the minister I guess is just wondering: has he as a minister, as a government, as a department, learned from some of the mistakes that they made the last time in developing an *Education Act* where one of the things that we did in the First Assembly was to dissolve the Divisional Boards of Education promising to develop more power, control, and authority down to the local District Education Authorities?

My question to the minister is: have we learned from that and are they planning on following through with that commitment in developing the *Education Act* that he plans on bringing forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Education, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct. In the recent past, there have been several meetings with local District Education Authorities. I have met with all the DEAs in Nunavut in special session with them.

As recently as two weeks ago, I met with the DEA Coalition, which is representatives of all the DEAs in Nunavut, here in Iqaluit to discuss their concerns about the devolution of different types of administrative, as well as financial and logistic opportunities within the current structure of the existing *Education Act*, and to see where we could implement some changes within the new *Education Act*.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess the short answer is yes to the member's question. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on the DEAs and that in a minute, but does the minister know if the DEAs receive 100 percent of their funding from the Department of Education? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Education, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is fair to say that the majority of the funding for a District Education Authority does come from the Government of Nunavut. However, DEAs do have the opportunities to access other sources of funding. For example, they may come from community organizations and groups who have done fundraising efforts on behalf of different schools.

Mr. Speaker, there is also money under other federal programming. For example, some DEAs apply for Brighter Futures' monies that they actually get access to. There are also local fundraising activities carried out on behalf and for different schools, which the District Education Authority may have an opportunity to participate in.

I would suggest to that probably 90 percent of funding for most DEAs comes directly from the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister had indicated that not all of the funding comes from the government for the District Education Authorities, and also the fact that he said they had learned their lesson from the past, and were looking at devolving responsibility, power, and control to the District Education Authorities at the local level, and I guess, as an indication of that, he had said, is allowing, by the department, a forming of a coalition, which was something that was sought after a number of years ago, and this has finally come out.

But, if that is the case Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister, if that is the case, that they don't get all their funding from the government, from the Department of Education, and they are committed to devolving control and power and responsibility down to the DEAs; when they set up this coalition each of the DEAs wanted to contribute \$500 towards the administration of the coalition. A directive was issued by the Department of Education for the DEAs not to do that.

To me, it would seem like a contradiction in terms that we're, "Yep, we're doing all this wonderful stuff." But here they've wanted to do something to help develop their coalition so that they can adequately work together, and the Department of Education issued a directive saying that no, they couldn't.

So I would like to ask the minister if he could explain that for the Members of this House and the DEAs that are probably or will be listening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is an excellent student. He remembers lessons that have been taught, and he's learned them well. However Mr. Speaker, for the record we have to clarify something. The member would like to start off with the preamble and he mentions 17 wonderful things, and you may agree to one, two, or three of the 17 that he says, and I don't have time, you don't have time, the House doesn't have time to go through each one of them.

So he likes to ad lib and add things on here. For clarification purposes let us suggest this: the member mentions a divot. I never used my debit card the whole time I was in the tournament, so I don't know what he is talking about here. It goes in point of what he just said.

In respect to what the DEA coalitions have asked for, last spring I met with all the DEAs and I suggested to them, at that time, it would be good if they actually had four or five representatives amongst themselves, that they could pick that, and I could work with them, instead of having to get all the DEAs together at the same time.

That's where the impetus came from for the DEA coalition. What I've suggested to the DEAs is that...they've asked for more control over hiring, for example. Mr. Speaker, we have a *Public Service Act* in place; we have collective agreements in place. A lot of the powers that the DEAs have asked for are already in the current Act, but they would like to maybe go outside the scope of that current Act, and be able to deal with some of the other logistic issues that they would like to deal with.

That's what we're attempting to do within the new Act. When I met with them two weeks ago that's what I suggested to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I'd like to thank the minister for his answer and also for the wonderful compliments that he passed on.

I guess I could ask the same question again; the minister did not respond to my last question. The DEA Coalition, as a coalition, all the DEAs decided that they wanted to contribute each \$500 to the administration of this coalition so that it could actually do something, so that they could work together.

And the Department of Education, as the minister said earlier, does not fund 100 percent, the DEAs sent out a directive which I will be tabling copies of later today instructing them, 'No they could not do that.'

So my question, my last question was and this question as well without any preambles or 14 other different things was: why did the department use these strong-arm type tactics in

telling the DEAs that they could not contribute \$500 of their funding to help administer this coalition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. To the question, Minister responsible for Education, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Mr. Speaker. Just again, the very quick answer is that the meetings of the coalition have been funded through the Department of Education. The Coalition is an ad hoc group, they don't have a bank account, they don't have a secretary-treasurer; there are no by-laws or agreements and so on.

So before the government can allow every DEA in Nunavut, there's 25 of them, to contribute \$500 to something where there's no account, there is no secretary-treasurer, there's no administration, there are no by-laws there are no rules in place; that would be asinine. So what we're suggesting is before any of these things occur, if the coalition wants to move forward into a society status, for example Mr. Speaker, then there is a mechanism to be able to transfer money or make an allowance to.

In this case, Mr. Speaker there is an ad hoc group that we are funding, bringing four or five of those representatives together, that they have selected amongst themselves. And where that goes to from here, how that coalition grows is to be determined. So hopefully that help answers the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister . Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 330 – 2(3): Further Fiscal Reductions

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance about his fiscal update today.

Mr. Speaker, in the minister's fiscal update, he mentioned there was a one percent savings reduction announced in September. I'm wondering, in light of that, that's for this fiscal year, but going forward into 2007-08, can the minister enlighten us whether there's going to be additional percentage fiscal reductions for the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Finance, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, I cannot respond to that because we are considering different ways of how to cost-save and we are working with the other departments within the government.

Yes, we are looking at ways of how to save money for next year or the year after that. So I cannot really respond to those, but they are presently under consideration at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that information. I'm sure he's probably got a percentage figure in mind that the employees of the Government of Nunavut probably aren't going to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, about 30 percent of the Government of Nunavut's total spending is on compensation and benefits for its employees. I believe the number in 2006-07 is \$317 million. The minister mentioned in his fiscal update that there's a hiring freeze being proposed. I'm wondering if the minister could tell us if other measures have been considered such as attrition of the public service, wage, and benefit freezes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, with your other questions today, we have not considered them as to how we're going to be dealing with the future. I still don't know what's going to happen in the future, but with all your questions posed, we have not considered them to date yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Your second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer.

Mr. Speaker, the minister told us that the payroll tax has been increased from one percent to two percent, which would generate approximately \$5.3 million in additional revenues to Nunavut and that there's going to be a cost of living credit that they will expect to be \$506 per Nunavut resident.

Can the minister tell us what the net benefit is, the difference between the additional revenues, and the credits back to our citizens? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are increasing the credit to \$900. Based on past years, we expect the average credit will be around \$506 per employee in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer, but I already had that information in his fiscal update. I was looking for the net total benefit for Nunavut; the difference between the taxes that we generate and the credits for Nunavummiut. And perhaps he'll answer that when he answers my next question.

He had mentioned that there is no end in sight to the government deficits in the near term. If the government implements all their measures, through the deficit reduction plans, increase their taxes, and other such things, can the minister give us an indication of how long these measures will be in place before the deficit problems are eliminated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We believe that we will have \$5.3 million once the payroll tax has been increased. And also for your second question, and again, I cannot respond to that because they are now under consideration, as we speak, by the deputy minister, the staff, and his officials, within all of the Government of Nunavut.

So we are all considering as to how it will look financially in the upcoming year. We are now doing research on that. As I stated earlier on, the end is not in sight yet as to how much we would do, but I cannot respond to you how long it will be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Question 331 – 2(3): Compassionate Travel Assistance

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

As I stated in my Member's Statement that this father for two years now has been hospitalized for two years in Edmonton and he had not seen any of his children the whole time because it is very difficult to find money to go down.

Social Services is able to pay for families or escorts of children who are disabled when they are being shipped outside of the other communities.

My question is: for those situations when an individual from Nunavut who had not seen their children for that long; he had not seen his family members and it can affect him; can the Department of Social Services be able to provide services for those kinds of clients, especially making support assistance to the family members so that the family members can go down and see the family member who is incapacitated in bed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If they are in a hospital outside of Nunavut for one year, Health and Social Services can assist the family to go see their relative. That is our policy. It is not for the whole family. For instance, it is just Churchill or Chesterfield for disabled kids that they have over there, the parents can go see them at least once a year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do I understand that your department can provide some assistance or support for that kind of situation, either for the spouse...do I understand correctly that you can send one individual person to go see a patient or their family member who has been in the hospital for a long time, or for that long? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current program that we have in place allows for parents to see their children once a year. From a certain age I believe they're entitled to travel twice a year to see a child. For any adult that is living in a homecare-type facility outside the territory or within the territory, the family is entitled to a trip, not the family; a parent or parents once a year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps there was no service or program for that kind of service. In the communities there are hardly any employment opportunities, especially when the small community is trying to raise money, it gets very emotional.

So for patients like that, no matter where the patient is in the hospital, whether it be in Edmonton or somewhere else, and if the patient is in the hospital for that long, is it impossible for the Department of Health and Social Services to provide airline support to the spouse? Do you have a similar kind of program for people or clients like that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. If you understand the question, Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For individuals that are living in residential care facilities outside the Nunavut Territory or within the Nunavut Territory, if

you are in the care for an extended period of time, the Department of Health and Social Services will pay for the spouse, or a mother and a father to see the child, or the adult.

In this particular case, I'd have to look at the situation because I believe the person is on medical and not living in an extended care facility. So depending on the situation again, we would have to look into that to see what assistance we can provide.

I do know that in the cases where people are in hospitals, it allows for escorts to those facilities, or allows parents to come and visit their children or their spouses that are living in long-term care facilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister get back to me with a response once she finds out if they can provide that kind of support to clients to make sure that they can see their family members outside or in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will speak to the individual and get the individual's first and last names today, and then look into the matter. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Question 332 – 2(3): Baffin Medical Travel Update

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services regarding the same question that I keep asking.

The Transportation Office for the Department of Health and Social Services in Pangnirtung, and also my question is for...she said that on June 9 that they were going to rectify this problem, but I have heard this week complaints about this, and I heard complaints coming from the patients weekly that this has not been rectified yet.

Can the minister update us now with regard to the Patient Transportation Office? Has that been rectified? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is in the process and has done a review of the current medical travel booking system in Pangnirtung. Many of the concerns that were raised over the spring were addressed.

Since that time, the department has also done a review of the referral system; specialist referral systems, the booking referral systems, whether it's Ottawa, Iqaluit, or here. We are looking at making improvements on booking with specialists in Ottawa, the timing of it, the clinics, and back.

We have also looked into the services being provided by the airlines. We examined all the concerns that were raised and I think people have made the assumption that all the problems are a direct result of Pangnirtung office providing the service and when, in fact, many of the concerns were not a direct result of the people providing the service in Pangnirtung.

Some of the concerns are related to the boarding home in Ottawa, some of the problems related to the office in Iqaluit, some of the problems related to the airlines, and so on. So there is a combination of concerns and they were not all directly related to the Pangnirtung transfer.

During the transfer to Pangnirtung, there was some confusion out there as to the changes, but I think we have worked those out and we continue to look at the current referral system and through the Baffin to Ottawa office and here.

So there are improvements being made, and if there are other concerns that the member has he can forward those to me and I will look into them on a case-by-case basis because every situation is different. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The booking system that the minister is referring to...she said that she would solve the problem, but that is not the only problem either.

I feel that the problem should be solved right away so that the people out there can phone Pangnirtung when they are ready to go home, but even if they do call over there, there is no answer at that office and it is very difficult for the older people to phone that telephone, but some of them usually go home by paying themselves because they don't have any other help.

And there are others that I have not mentioned that where a problem exists, such as the airlines. Will the Department of Health and Social Services be resolving the problem as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issues that he raised this summer were addressed. The issue around making the phone calls and not having a phone, we, in fact, made some changes within the current system.

As soon as a person is discharged from the hospital, that clearance form is sent directly to the Pangnirtung office, directly to the travel agent. So the individual patients themselves no longer have to make that phone call to make the booking arrangements. So we have made that change.

Another change that we made, where there were problems in getting individuals to travel, was a direct result of the fact that the airlines were not processing the travel request. We have met with the service providers in the airline and outlined a procedure to follow in cases where individuals are at the airport without a ticket.

That process has been in place where they will book their arrangements with our office. At the same time, we have expanded the hours of operations of the Pangnirtung staff to after hours and 1-800 numbers have also been established.

So there are a number of initiatives that have taken place over the summer months to improve the services. And again, if there are any new concerns since this summer, I would like to hear about that.

We have also met with QIA, as well as the mayors in the Baffin to try and iron out some of those. During those meetings we had discussions around...we process 17,000 travels in Baffin alone, and we do encounter some problems; some of them relate to weather, some of them relate to being discharged by specialists in the hospital over the weekend, not knowing there are procedures to follow.

So we are continuing to address many of those. At the same time, we are looking at increasing some of the positions in Pangnirtung to keep up with the workload of booking travel for people in the Baffin. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Your second supplementary, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Madame Minister.

The minister stated that there have been problems that have been resolved so far, but she's asking whether there are any more problems that we have encountered. We would not be asking questions if those problems were not there. If they were solved, then there wouldn't be any questions.

I would like to ask the minister again: the person that writes the tickets; when will that position be transferred from Pangnirtung to Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

>>*Audio unavailable*

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: ...first, the issue around confidentiality. Medical information on any patient is confidential, booking travel is not. If the member can provide me the names of the individuals, I will follow up to see where we went wrong in the travel.

It's also very important that I have that name because we need to know if that problem occurred after the changes were made, or before. And in order for us to ensure and confirm that there are problems from his constituents with the travel, I need to know the dates and the name of the individuals for us to follow up to see if the problems occurred after the fact.

Secondly, I think the assumption, again, is being made that the problems are all directly related to the office in Pangnirtung, when in fact some of the problems are associated with operations in Iqaluit, as well as boarding homes, and/or the airlines.

So I say that again because I think it's important to recognize the efforts that the department staff have made in Pangnirtung, as well as here to address the concerns that were raised by constituents over the summer months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Barnabas.

Question 333 – 2(3): Table Recommendations on Medical Travel

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. I would like to welcome my colleagues back to Iqaluit.

The question that Mr. Arreak has...I also have questions in regard to the airline tickets. There have been about six months since the problem was supposed to be solved, but we have not heard today whether the problem has been solved. Can the minister table those documents in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can provide a letter outlining all the initiatives that were taken to address the concerns raised this summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I could give her 17,000 names if she so requests.

Mr. Speaker, if the problem is solved, as the minister is talking about, why are there still patients that cannot go on the plane? Are they on stand-by? What is the problem that they can't get on the plane?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, to respond to the member's question, I need the specifics of the individual, otherwise it's hypothetical. I don't know of any individuals that are being left behind. I do know that when a person is discharged from the hospital, the clearance form is sent immediately to the travel office to do the bookings. The bookings will be done based on the availability of the first flight out of either Ottawa, or here to the individual's community.

Some communities receive flights once a week, such as Grise Fiord. If the person is discharged, the person of course will have to wait in the community; here or Ottawa; to travel back, but in the interim, travel arrangements are made.

To respond to the specific comments that he's made, again, I will need the name of the individuals; the date of travel; for us to, again investigate whether, in fact, it occurred before or after the changes were made. That would be very helpful for us to follow up to see if the improvements are actually working or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that taking back a position from a decentralized community is not an adequate way of doing things, but if we were to try to transfer those position from the smaller communities to a larger community we would encounter problems.

I just wondered whether those positions that we are talking about are filled properly at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. If you understood the question, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the member please repeat the last question; I didn't get that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Barnabas, would you please clarify the question to the minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are the positions in Pangnirtung fully filled, or are there positions that are not filled properly in Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for clarifying that. The positions in Pangnirtung are filled; both the positions are there.

We looked at a number of improvements I had spoken to earlier: expanding the hours of operations, better communication with the airlines. At the same time, we're looking at the whole referral system that is currently in place within the department.

Travel is a small piece of that; travel is just a small piece of the bigger review that we're doing around booking specialist appointments in Ottawa, booking appointments here, transportation, and so on. We're looking at developing a system that can better track the referral system of our patients. Right now, we don't have that. A lot of it is manual.

So the bigger review that we are undertaking is the referral system. The other piece is also the review of people going down to Ottawa and trying to deal with the number of days that they are at the boarding home. If they're going to have an appointment on, let's say, November 21, why are we sending them on November 15? And so on.

So these improvements are necessary for better quality of services to our clients and we are looking into that, but the travel piece, again, is a small piece of the larger review that we are doing.

Of course, recognizing the concerns that had been raised this summer, we've done a number of improvements to try and address that, and again, I will outline in a letter to all the Members in the House what we have done to address their concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister stated that when the boarding homes are too full, they have to be billeted out to the local people, even though they might be elders.

My question is in regard to the elders who have to make inquiries about their travel arrangements. When the boarding home is full, the elders are billeted out, and then it's up to them to find out what type of travel arrangements were made for them.

Sometimes they are left behind because they are stand-by, or because the flights, for example, to my hometown are usually full as there are very few seats. When you're an elder and you go to the airport terminal, and of course, if there is no reservation made for

you, then the elder has to go back somewhere. What kind of support services do you provide to the unilingual people when it comes to travel arrangements? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned earlier that the clearance forms are sent immediately to the travel office to process the travel ticket. The information related to where the patient is staying is also, I believe, included in that information for the travel person to follow through.

The individuals that are staying at the boarding home, of course, the boarding home staff is there to provide assistance to them, as well as here. In some other cases such as the Northern Medical Unit of, I believe, Winnipeg, OSNI in Ottawa, there is communication with that individual as well.

So, again, the bigger review that we are doing includes all of those pieces; the pieces of OSNI, the pieces of the boarding home, the referral made by the physician, and the travel. That review is being done in terms of how we do business and how we can better provide a more coordinated approach to our clients around referral and it's in the works right now, but I am hoping that there will be more I can report on in the next little while just in terms of what some of the things are we are doing to try and better track that.

Assistance is provided to unilingual individuals; in most cases, people travelling to the hospitals have escorts as well to provide assistance to them. So I hope that answers the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 334 – 2(3): Over-expenditure by Health and Social Services

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Finance.

Before I ask my question, I just would like to commend the minister in his fiscal update and saying something that they have been saying for a number of years now is that our fiscal and financial position is much like that band a number of years back that used to play some good songs, Dire Straits. Seeing that here, finding the government admitting and taking action to do that, I think it is about time.

Mr. Speaker, in his fiscal update, a disturbing revelation in there was the fact that there was an over-expenditure of close to \$4 million for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, as the Chair of Government Operations and Accountability for a number of years now, the Auditor General has been wagging her finger at the government for breaking the law and over-expending what has been appropriated.

Mr. Speaker, in April this year, after year-end, senior government officials informed the standing committee, as well as the Auditor General, and I'll quote, for the 2005-06 year, which is just closing March 31, this was again, after year-end, "...our latest information from the free balance system, the main accounting system, is that no department will exceed their appropriations." And I know I was very happy, and I don't know how many times since then I said finally, finally we've broken that cycle. And then here we find out again now, today, that that isn't the case.

So maybe I could ask the Minister of Finance to explain: how come they didn't know about that after year-end? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Department of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The over-expenditure, we were not advised of it until May, I believe it was, of this year, when the Department of Health found out that there was in fact going to be an over expenditure for the previous fiscal year.

So therefore, we will be coming forward very shortly with a supplementary appropriation bill to cover that. And once that supplementary appropriation bill is tabled in the House, I'm sure the Minister of Health and Social Services will make detailed information on what that over-expenditure was about available to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having worked in finance in the past, I have a little bit of an idea of how it works with commitments and that.

I'm just wondering how; two months after year end and how much money we spent on our financial system; they could not know. It took two months after year end for them to realize that there was a deficit. Up until that time, I would assume then that you are indicating that they were saying, with all the financial information available, that they were going to be fine. Just how could that happen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we weren't aware of this problem and the over-expenditure of the Department of Health and Social Services, (interpretation ends) when we tabled the Interim Report for 2005-06, Interim Financial Report, un-audited I must point out, and I must also add that we tabled those on schedule in September 2006, the very first time since division. And that is

something we, as a department, are very, very proud of and hope to improve on even more.

(interpretation) The Minister of Health and Social Services could give you the reasons for the over-expenditure and I can only say that the Minister of Health and Social Services could give you an explanation of why they went over. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I point out the minister's comment of getting them done on time, and again I commend the department for that. Maybe they need to pass on some of the lessons they've learned over the last few years to some of the line departments so that...as we all know, the Department of Finance is basically just a messenger and is putting it all together.

When we found out in May, I think he had indicated that there was an almost \$4 million over-expenditure in the Department of Health. Did the department give you or your officials any kind of explanation as to why that happened? And if they did, can he indicate what he was informed of at the time as to what resulted in the over-expenditure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Finance, Mr Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, his comments are correct about working with other departments. We are doing that; we are working very closely with this and other departments in this government to make sure that their financial recording, gathering of information, and all of that is improved. It is improving within the government, we will continue to do that, and we are doing that.

Were we advised of what the reasons were? Yes, we were given an explanation of two areas of why that sudden over-expenditure was found, and that was to do with medical travel and with agency nurses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess given that explanation from the department, can the minister indicate whether he or his officials looked into what caused the delay in that information coming out? Was it a delay in processing? Was it a delay in billing? Have they figured out what it was that caused the delay so that hopefully that won't happen again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health just informed me that it was a combination of both, processing and billing. As I said earlier, she will have

complete details available when we are in Committee of the Whole discussing the supplementary appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 335 – 2(3): IQ Considerations in Decentralizing Medical Travel

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I didn't want to ask any questions as that's in our Speaker's riding, but the questions that we are asking are in regard to a concern that we have, not for the decentralized portion, it is for the unilingual elders travelling from point A to point B.

My question is: does the Department of Health and Social Services have IQ Coordinators and do they have one in EIA? When they were transferring those jobs to Pangnirtung, did they consult with the IQ personnel and EIA before they transferred that position to Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have, within the department, an *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* coordinator in Iqaluit. I think it's important to note there were about 10 departments decentralized out of Iqaluit to various Baffin communities over the last six years. This is just one piece to finalize the transfer for Department of Health to Pangnirtung the last six months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said before, none of us here is against decentralization of some of the departments, even in a small way. We are all supportive of that. It is, however, difficult to understand that when the government had set up an IQ policy that those kinds of considerations would be given; the language issue; cultural; possible inconvenience to some citizens of Nunavut, etcetera.

I'd like to ask the minister: is there a similar problem of that kind in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not heard complaints from the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq in regard to patient's airline tickets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would she consider using the successful no complaints transportation system of the Kitikmeot and the Kivalliq to be used as a model for the Baffin to eliminate the problem that we have?

I guess what I'm interested in Mr. Speaker, my question is related to, for example, why not consider something more important for Pangnirtung for employment purposes, for example, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, or something that is not so directly related to services department like health?

Health transportation is a service department. I feel that service must be where the service is required. If it is required in the hospital, then put the doctor or the transportation person there for the people who are being released from the hospital.

Can she consider then using the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot model for the Baffin region?
Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Arvaluk. (interpretation) Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the differences that I think needs to be noted in the other two regions is that currently when a person's travel is arranged, let's use Whale Cove as an example, the health centre makes the referral to see a physician in Winnipeg, the travel is done out of Rankin Inlet.

Let's use Kitikmeot as an example, if the health center says you need to see a doctor in Yellowknife, then again, Cambridge Bay would provide that service. In the Baffin, for anything from Iqaluit up communities, all that travel is done out of Pangnirtung.

For any service required for travel to Ottawa, that service is provided through the hospital here. So there is a difference in that the Baffin has a regional hospital. The Kivalliq and Kitikmeot don't. They will eventually.

So we are looking at ways to improve the services. I will absolutely take recommendations on how we can better service that, but, again, on a bigger scale, we are trying to systemize the current referral system because we are dealing with situations, for example, patients in the Ottawa boarding home - why are they staying down in Ottawa longer than required? Is that as a result that as airline schedules, say once a week from Grise Fiord, or is it because we're making appointments far too advanced, and so on. We need to improve that. We recognize that.

But the travel piece is a very small piece of providing patient care services. At the end of the day, we're trying to examine all those pieces to ensure that we are providing the best possible service to our patients in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for the answer, and I am hoping that we will be provided with the plan that will eventually work.

Can I ask the minister then, in the meantime, if the extended hours are not long enough, would she consider, for example, some of the specialists who are coming from Ottawa or elsewhere, to see the patients until probably 9:00 or 10:00 at night? And there is a flight sometimes too early in the morning with some of the airlines that work; the patient will not have time to get that entire transportation thing done.

So I would like to ask the minister if she would consider extending...no, my question should be: what hours have you extended to accommodate the travel requirements for the patients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hours have been extended in Pangnirtung to 6:00. At the same time, there is a person on call over the weekend - not an answering machine, a live person that they can contact for after hours as well. So those are the hours of operations that have been changed since the change had taken place.

At the same time, we recognize that most flights out of Iqaluit to northern communities occur in the morning until about noon. And the flights arriving from the evenings sometimes have to overnight here and then go the next day, so we worked those hours around the schedules of the airlines as well. So it was a factor in deciding which way we wanted to extend the hours of operations for the office in Pangnirtung. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. The allotted time for Oral Question Period is now over. Back to the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Mr. Clerk.

Item 7: Returns to Written Questions

Return to Written Question 017 – 2(3): GN Contracting Practices

Return to Written Question 018 – 2(3): Correctional Facilities & Other Matters

Return to Written Question 019 – 2(3): Appeals Under the NNI Policy

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling a response to Written Questions 17 – 2(3), 18 – 2(3), and 19 – 2(3) that were filed at my office by the appropriate minister. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. There's none. Item 11. Reports of

Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 13: Tabled Documents

Tabled Document 147 – 2(3): Nunavut DEA Coalition

Tabled Document 148 – 2(3): DEA/GN Contribution Agreement

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to table a couple documents. Both of them, as I had indicated earlier in my questioning to the Minister responsible for Education, are showing the dictatorial-type directives sent from the Department of Education to the District Education Authorities telling them that they weren't allowed to contribute \$500 of their money towards this coalition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sorry, one of them is from the Kitikmeot, and one is from the Baffin.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Can you have that brought forward, please?

Thank you. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Tabled Document 149 – 2(3): Kitikmeot Regional Seniors' Conference

Tabled Document 150 – 2(3): Gjoa Haven Seniors Society Report on Empowering Seniors Conference

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to table the Report on Empowering Seniors Conference in Gjoa Haven, October 1, 2, and 3, and the Kitikmeot Regional Seniors' Conference meeting recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Please bring the copies up to the table officers.

Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Tabled Document 151 – 2(3): Interim Financial Report (un-audited) of the GN for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2006

Tabled Document 152 – 2(3): GN Responses to the Recommendations by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability on the Report of the Auditor General

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the following document: the Interim Financial Report (un-audited) of the Government of Nunavut for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2006.

And also, the following document: the Government of Nunavut Responses to the Recommendations by Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability on the Report of the Auditor General. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Please be patient while we are waiting for the copies to be brought up here. Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Member for Baffin South, Mr. Akesuk.

Tabled Document 153 – 2(3): Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Meeting – March 24, 2006

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Agricultural Ministers Meeting – March 24, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Picco.

Tabled Document 154 – 2(3): Petition on Unwanted Presence of a Potentially Dangerous Offender

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do resent being called a dictator, a benevolent despot maybe.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a petition that has been signed by over 1,000 residents of Iqaluit. Mr. Speaker, I will be forwarding this document to the Federal Minister responsible for Corrections Services of Canada, the Honourable Stockwell Day.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I will table also in the House, my letter to Mr. Stockwell Day on the above issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. I have some documents to table too.

Tabled Document 155 – 2(3): Statutory Requirements for Tabling of Reports and Other Documents, November 2006

Tabled Document 156 – 2(3): Inuktitut Translation of the 2006 Report of the Auditor General on the WCB of the NWT and Nunavut

Tabled Document 157 – 2(3): Final Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission (Inuktitut and English)

I wish to table the documents Statutory Requirements for Tabling of Reports and Other Documents to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. (interpretation ends) This list is regularly updated by the Legislative Assembly and tracks the status of documents that are legally required to be tabled in the House. The current version of the list indicates what documents has been tabled as of November 21, 2006. I trust that all members will find this document useful. Thank you.

I wish to table today the Inuktitut translation of the Report of the Auditor General on the Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Thank you.

Finally, pursuant to Section 24(4) of the *Nunavut Elections Act*, I wish to table the Final Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission in Inuktitut and in English. Inuinnaqtun and French translations will be tabled later during our sitting. As discussed by Caucus, this report will be considered by the House at our next sitting in February and March of next year. Thank you.

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Clerk.

Tabled Document 158 – 2(3): Response to Petition 04 – 2(3) Tabled June 13, 2006

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling a response to Petition 04 – 2(3) filed in my office by the appropriate minister. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. There being no more. Item 14. Notices of Motions. At this time I wish to recognize Mr. Tootoo.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 21 – 2(3): Legislative Assembly Appointments – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bear with me, I was having too much fun with my good friend Fidel.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, November 23, 2006 I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that James Arvaluk, Member for Tununiq, be appointed a Member of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* and the Standing Committee on Health and Education, and an Alternate Member on the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I would like to seek to consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister Simailak.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 26 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2007-08 – Notice

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on November 23, 2006 that Bill 26, *Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2007-08*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Thank you. Item 16. Orders of the Day. Item 16. Motions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Barnabas.

Item 16: Motions

Motion 20 – 2(3): Airline Service in Nunavut

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This motion is regarding airline services in Nunavut.

WHEREAS the Government of Nunavut's March 2003 Nunavut Air Services System Implementation Options Document includes a vision of air transportation in 2021 where "all Nunavut communities receive more frequent air services than today, transporting passengers and delivering perishable goods with minimal delay";

AND WHEREAS Nunavummiut are reliant upon air service to travel between their communities;

AND WHEREAS the cost of living is highest in the smallest, most remote Arctic communities;

AND WHEREAS concerns have been expressed by Nunavummiut with respect to the high cost of air transportation and the limited number of carriers serving the smaller communities;

AND WHEREAS Nunavummiut aspire to fully benefit from such federal programs as food mail;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Nunavut has a responsibility to ensure that our territory's airport infrastructure is of high quality and to work with such stakeholders as the Northern Air Transport Association;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Economic Development and Transportation is currently undertaking a review of the Government of Nunavut's 2001 Nunavut Transportation Strategy;

AND WHEREAS the Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce is commissioning a pre-feasibility study to determine the viability of a direct route connecting Greenland and Nunavut;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Nunavut's innovative Fuel Tax Rebate Program to encourage exploration and mining activities in the territory demonstrates the capacity of the government to introduce incentives for economic activity and development;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kugluktuk, that the Legislative Assembly recommend that the Government of Nunavut work with the airline industry to bring forward an action plan to improve the availability of affordable, reliable air service to Nunavut's smaller, under-served communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. The motion is on order. Question has been called. Thank you. To the motion. I would like to recognize Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to rise today in order to speak to the motion that is before the House. I would like to thank my colleague from Kugluktuk for seconding this motion.

Most of us represent communities that are facing challenges in this area. I am grateful for his support today. I see this motion as a positive step forward in highlighting the importance of this issue and identifying a number of areas for action.

All of us are well aware of the importance of airline service in our communities and our constituencies. The communities that I represent in the High Arctic have been conveying concerns to me for some time and I have written a number of letters on their behalf to the airlines which serves my communities. I have specifically invited representatives of the airlines to come to my communities and speak with my constituents. Indeed, the community of Grise Fiord has also written to our Member of Parliament on this issue.

I recognize that the issue of airline service is also a national one. Canada's geography has traditionally posed a challenge to the provision of air services. The country has seen many examples of air carriers that have not succeeded.

I believe that the government and industry can work together to address the issues identified in my motion. For example, the government has the responsibility to ensure that our airports and runways are in good condition and can handle the newer models of aircrafts used by northern carriers. Federal investments are important in this regard.

The government should also look at ways to encourage carriers to improve their services to small communities. I urge all members to join me in supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. The motion is in order. Comments to the motion. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak in support of this motion before us today. I would like to thank my colleague from Quttiktuq for moving

this motion as he indicated in his remarks, both of us representing communities that have expressed concerns about the airline services they receive.

In the past, Kugluktuk was served by a number of airlines and in recent times the choices available to my constituents have decreased.

Mr. Speaker, in March of this year, I rose in this House to make a statement on this issue and at the recent Kitikmeot Trade Show, delegates addressed this issue. In March and June of this year I posed Oral Questions to the minister on this issue. I was pleased that the minister agreed with me on a number of points in his reply. He indicated that the goal of the Government of Nunavut is to see that every community has a choice of at least two airline carriers.

I believe that the minister recognized the benefit of competition. He also indicated a willingness to look at the different options for encouraging carriers to serve small communities.

I also urge all members to support this very positive motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. To the motion. Question is being called. All in favour of the motion. Opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you. Orders of the Day. Item 16. Motions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to seek consent with this House to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is asking for consent to proceed with his motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Tootoo, please proceed.

Motion 21 – 2(3): Legislative Assembly Appointments

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues.

AND WHEREAS Section 17 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides for the Legislative Assembly to appoint such committees to aid and advise it as it considers necessary; and

AND WHEREAS Rule 89(2) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly provide for the striking committee to recommend members to serve on standing committees; and

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to make appointments;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that James Arvaluk, Member for Tununiq, be appointed a Member of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* and the Standing Committee on Health and Education, and as an

Alternate Member on the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All in favour of the motion please raise your hands. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. There is no Committee of the Whole for today. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder for meetings tomorrow: Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* at 9:00 in the morning at in the Nanuq Committee Room, and at 10:00, Management and Services Board in the Tuktu Room.

Orders for the Day for November 22, 2006:

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

18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 15:49*

