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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Rankin Inlet North)

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(Cambridge Bay)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, March 22, 2007

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Peter Kilabuk)(interpretation): Good afternoon. I would like to ask Mr. Curley to lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome Premier, Ministers, and Members. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 039 – 2(4): Coppermine River Management Planning

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2002 the Coppermine River was successfully nominated to the Canadian Heritage River System through the hard work of the community of Kugluktuk, the Hunters and Trappers Organization, and my department.

The Coppermine nomination came in recognition of its important natural and cultural heritage value, and its significant recreational opportunities. The Coppermine River is one of the very few rivers nominated to the Canadian Heritage River System for outstanding representation of all three values.

The nomination highlighted the importance of the river to Kugluktummiut and already has resulted in more visitors and new opportunities for tourism in Kugluktuk. This was only the first step to full designation of the river, as the Thelon, Kazan, and Soper Rivers already are. The second step is the preparation of a river management plan to ensure the values for which the river was nominated will be maintained through appropriate management action by all stakeholders.

Today I am pleased to inform members that in keeping with negotiations towards an umbrella impact and benefit agreement for Canadian Heritage River System, and with funding from the Canadian Heritage River Board and my department we have contracted the Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association to lead the development of the management plan.

We have established a local Advisory Committee that includes the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the hamlet, elders, youth, the Community Lands and Resource Committee, industry through Miramar, and my department to help guide its development and ensure it reflects what is important to all river stakeholders.

We expect that the plan will be completed in August of this year to be presented to the Canadian Heritage River System Board for their approval at their spring 2008 meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 040 – 2(4): Nunavut Plan to Ban Incandescent Light Bulbs

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity today to provide details about the Government of Nunavut's idea to switch to energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs in Nunavut. This will result in a measurable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Nunavut will be the first in any Canadian jurisdiction to take this step. As you know, many Nunavummiut are already using the spiral shaped light bulbs. These bulbs use up to 75 percent less energy than regular light bulbs and last up to seven times longer.

The goal is to have these bulbs in our homes, workplaces, businesses, schools, and offices. We will be working with retailers and electrical equipment suppliers on the development of regulations. We are proposing a phase-in period of up to three years and exceptions will be made for specialty bulbs where compact fluorescents are not currently compatible. For example, Mr. Speaker, things such as the oven bulbs in your stove, halogen lighting, dimmer bulbs, water lights, and outdoor lights.

As you can see, when it comes to addressing climate change, Nunavut is ready to take a leadership role beginning with a proposal to introduce legislation during the next session of the legislature to ban regular or incandescent light bulbs.

Mr. Speaker, it is anticipated that by September 2007, all Government of Nunavut housing, public housing, and government buildings will be required to have compact fluorescent light bulbs. Funding for the distribution of 30,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs is available through the EcoTrust Fund money that was announced in the recent federal budget.

Using these bulbs across the territory in place of standard bulbs is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1,300 tonnes over 12 months.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, a move to spiral light bulbs makes sense. Not only are monies saved, but fewer greenhouse gasses are produced, a leading cause, as we know, of climate change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 073 – 2(4): Victims of Income Support

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my continuing frustration regarding income support. Earlier this week I posed some questions in the House regarding this issue.

In the non-decentralized communities in Nunavut, there are very few employment opportunities. Income support for some of my constituents and many Nunavummiut is not only their last resort but their only resort.

Here in the capital city and bigger communities people have no problem in getting employment but it is not so in a non-decentralized community. Recipients of income support are often doubly penalized; first by relying on income support because of a lack of jobs. Then if a gift is given to them to help out, that amount is deducted from their support.

It does not matter what you do, you lose either way; you have no job, no money, you ask for income support, you get help and that help is taken away from you.

A quick solution to this problem is to move, but who wants to move from their home community? Is this government telling my constituents in Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk that everyone should move to Iqaluit? At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking more questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Members' Statements. Mr. Curley.

Member's Statement 074 – 2(4): Reaction to the Federal Budget

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to react strongly to this week's federal budget. I was extremely disappointed with the budget. Although some additional federal funds will flow to the territorial government, I believe that these will be barely enough to meet some immediate needs.

For some time I have heard our government tell me that they have been seeking additional federal support to specifically address the high cost of oil and energy. I did not see anything in the budget to meet this need.

Although the federal budget contained tax breaks for public transit users, long-haul truck drivers, farmers, and other categories, I did not see any assistance for the many Nunavut homeowners who have been facing terrifyingly high prices to heat and light their homes.

Although the federal budget extended the benefits of the northern residents deduction to some residents of British Columbia, the amount of the deduction remains, once again, unchanged for the residents of the three territories.

The federal government has told us it is committed to a strong sovereign north. That may be so, but I am still waiting to hear a firm commitment to building a year-round deep water port.

I am asking consent to conclude my statement.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are still waiting for a year round deep water port. I am still waiting to hear a firm commitment to establish a new Arctic Training Centre. I am still waiting to hear a firm commitment to acquiring new ice breakers.

The president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has spoken out against this federal budget. I believe she feels we have been betrayed. She is not content to sit back and take no for an answer, neither will I.

I believe the crown must honour its solemn promises and commitments to Inuit and First Nations. I believe that the time for a new partnership is now. It seems that the federal government is willing to provide us just enough to keep us from starving but never enough to keep us fed.

Let me take the Kivalliq Health Centre as an example. It is still not operating on a 24-hour basis and it has been open for almost two years. They don't have enough money available. I dread to think what will happen when the new hospital in Iqaluit opens. I fear that shortly after the ribbon-cutting ceremony takes place there will be a bed closing ceremony because we can't find and house doctors and other health workers.

I have been around long enough to have learned that it is to be expected that Ottawa will say no more often than it says yes. I do not believe that a strategy of silence and surrender is sufficient.

I do believe that we must make it clear to Ottawa that we are not going away, and that we will not be silent. I ask the Premier and the Finance Minister to go down to renegotiate with the budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 075 – 2(4): In Appreciation of Nurse Gail Redpath

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my great appreciation on behalf of my constituents in Arctic Bay for the work and service of Gail Redpath, Head Nurse at the Arctic Bay Health Centre.

For close to 20 years Gail has provided critical health services to the residents of Arctic Bay. She is an important part of our community as an individual, as a caregiver, and as a professional.

On a daily basis Gail meets challenges of working in a remote northern location. These days those challenges are made even more difficult by a steadily growing pile of machinery, boxes that are now crowding the old facility that the nurses work out of. Health staff even have to store some of their supplies in sea containers outside the building.

Later today I'll be tabling some photographs which show much better than words can describe the cramped, crowded conditions at the Arctic Bay Health Centre. A number of articles in the national magazines have been written about Gail and her colleagues. She has appeared in Readers' Digest and more recently in UpHere Magazine.

This is a very good way to show people what living in the remote northern community is like. It may even persuade some nursing professionals to come to the north to experience the challenges for themselves and learn to love the northern way of life. I am very pleased that Gail has been recognized not only at her home community but nationally.

In May 2006 Gail was one of the three Canadian nurses who received Excellence in Nursing Award from the federal Minister of Health. This award celebrates Gail's dedication, initiatives, and overall excellence in her profession.

I will ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Gail on her award and recognizing her invaluable service to the community of Arctic Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. I just remind you to be more observant of your time allotted please. Thank you. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 076 – 2(4): Elders and Youth Forum at Baker Lake

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is Inuktitut Day so we would like to speak as much Inuktitut as possible. The Canadian Youth Conference held a meeting not too long ago. It was very important and beneficial for the people of Nunavut.

There were a lot of people who went to Baker Lake for a conference. It was very good to see them here. I was happy to see, as a father, my son whom I named, was recognized for being a volunteer at that conference. The people who recognized him, I would like to say I appreciated it very much.

The meeting went on very successfully and they had some entertainment there as well in Baker Lake. They also went to eat at my parent's place in Baker Lake and the community held a feast for them as well. I would like to say thank you very much to the people of Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Simailak. Members' Statements. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Netser.

Member's Statement 077 – 2(4): Chesterfield Inlet Science Fair

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to talk about two young constituents of mine from the Victor Sammurток School in Chesterfield Inlet, who have taken on a very admirable initiative for their science fair project on our changing environment.

Our members received a copy of this survey. I completed mine yesterday and returned it promptly as I was very impressed with the efforts displayed by the youngsters. This questionnaire is on Climate Change: Is it Real or is it Not? The survey consists of seven questions ranging from, "Have you noticed any change in the weather or environment?" to "Do you think the Inuit should be worried about climate change, or do you believe climate change is really happening?"

It is very gratifying to hear that the leaders of tomorrow are very much aware of our surroundings today. I am hoping every member will take a few minutes to fill out this survey and assist Ashley Tanuyak and Jacqueline Sammurток in completing their project. I would like to congratulate Ashley and Jacqueline for displaying good leadership and being concerned about our future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 078 – 2(4): Above-Ground Pool in Cambridge Bay

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House about a problem that threatens Cambridge Bay's most valuable public recreational facility. In the summer of 1988 when I was on the Cambridge Bay Hamlet Council, we made a strategic decision to invest in the Government of the Northwest Territories above-ground pool program.

We made this decision largely in response to the life threatening risks that many of our young boys were taking when they rafted in local waters in unsafe rafts. In one tragedy, four boys drowned in a small pond only a half-mile from town when a raft sank in less than 10 feet of water just 15 feet from shore.

The above ground pool has been successful in Cambridge Bay. Over the years, instructors have taught hundreds of kids and adults how to swim, provided lessons about water safety, boating, kayaking, snorkelling, and scuba diving. In addition to those activities, the pool has been a place where children and families gather everyday in the summer to have fun and play.

Our children are safe in our pool under the watchful and caring eyes of lifeguards.

It has come to my attention that our above ground pool is in danger of not reopening this year. The pool is in a wooden structure building which may have mould problems. This will be analyzed soon. In addition to this, the pool structure itself requires a new liner, a new deck, new plumbing, painting, and other repairs and replacements.

Like most hamlets in Nunavut, Cambridge Bay has not received sufficient infrastructure funding to upgrade or replace recreational facilities in our community. The small annual operations and maintenance funding from Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, while welcome, does not keep up with the increasing costs of operating this facility.

We constantly hear that our children and our families are important to Nunavut. It would be a sad occasion if the above-ground pool, a safe haven for our loved ones, were to close because the hamlet council does not have capital or operations and maintenance funds to upgrade and operate the facility.

I urge the Minister of Community and Government Services to send her officials to visit the hamlet council to discuss their immediate funding requirements to upgrade and operate their above ground pool this summer. I urge the minister to help the children in Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 079 – 2(4): Polar Bears Not Endangered Species

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps if I could tell the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth first, I spoke about polar bears here in this House last week and because we are leaders of Nunavut we have to be able to get the information to the people of Canada about polar bears. After I spoke about polar bears I was approached by people to ask me questions about polar bears. A lot of people told me that there are many numbers of polar bears here in Nunavut. They even go into the communities because there are too many of them right now.

Also in my community people told me that we have 25 tags and they told me that the tags were not sufficient because they wanted to be able to go out hunting without being in danger from polar bears.

We don't have to worry about the numbers of polar bears in Nunavut because there are a lot of them. The United States Government keeps on saying that they would be put in the endangered species list but I am from here, from Nunavut, and I go out hunting quite often. I can say to the United States Government that there are a lot of polar bears. Years ago we didn't even have polar bears but now they are coming into my community.

I would like to have consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you colleagues. I would like to say that if the United States is concerned about polar bears declining in numbers why don't they come over here and find out for themselves?

Why don't they come and talk to us because the Minister of Environment is from Nunavut and he knows that the polar bear is not at risk.

We don't have to worry about it, but if the American government is worried, they should come over here to see for themselves that they are not at risk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit East, Minister Picco.

Member's Statement 080 – 2(4): Role of Mayor

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this week, Canadians from coast to coast to coast were treated to a National Intelligence Quotient Test, or IQ test, not to be confused with *Inuit Qaujimanituqangit*.

This IQ test was broadcast on CBC Television. Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's capital, Iqaluit was represent by her Worship, the Mayor, Elisapee Sheutiapik. The mayor did an excellent job representing Nunavut and Iqaluit on this national TV broadcast.

Mr. Speaker, the role of mayor entails attending daily meetings and briefings, representing the city locally, nationally, and internationally with an annual budget of several million dollars. The role of mayor in the largest community in our territory is complex and demanding.

Recently, discussion on having the position of mayor made full-time was raised at council. I would again support the city in moving in this direction. The time has come to have a full-time elected mayor for Nunavut's capital.

I support the council to revisit the issue and look forward to that debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' Statements. I don't think there are any more. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Minister Picco.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce in the Gallery several students from our own Nunavut Arctic College here in Iqaluit. The students are in the foundation year at the college, and these students, and I want the members to give them a good round of applause after we do an introduction for them.

They are in the foundation year, and they are entering the NTEP program, as well as the Nursing Program. They are here with the Honourable QC, Mr. Neil Sharkey, who is one of the outstanding instructors not only here in Nunavut, but in Canada, and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome Neil also to the Gallery.

So, if I say the person's name, if they would just stand up. I'm sure members will recognize several of them. First of all, we have from Iqaluit Malaya Doucette.

>>Applause

From Kimmirut; Atsina Aqpik.

>>Applause

From Resolute Bay; Ragilee Atagootak.

>>Applause

From Iqaluit; Noodloo Noah.

>> *Applause*

From Baker Lake, we have Helen Oman.

>> *Applause*

Asoola Pootoogook from Cape Dorset.

>> *Applause*

Geela Qaunak from Igloolik.

>> *Applause*

And I believe we have Benadine Otak also from Igloolik.

>> *Applause*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 099 – 2(4): Measures to Address the High Cost of Living in the High Arctic

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Education.

Mr. Speaker, in his member's statement today, my colleague from Akulliq spoke about the difficult situation facing many of his constituents in our small decentralized communities.

(interpretation ends) The cost of living in the High Arctic is extremely high. During our last session, I asked the minister to work on a plan to help my constituents take better advantage of our food mail program. There are no banks in my communities and many people can't use food mail because they do not have access to credit cards.

What has the minister done to take action to help my constituents to access more affordable food? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very quickly, the member did raise the issue and we had the opportunity to revisit it within the department.

As I suggested at that time, and I still suggest to the member, if a person in Arctic Bay would like to order food directly through the Food Mail Program and be able to pay for that using a credit card, we're not able to use the Government of Nunavut credit card, but if there was an opportunity through the hamlet, for example, and the contract for income support in the member's community of Arctic Bay is delivered in cooperation with the hamlet, then there may be an opportunity where the person could pay using their income support.

For example, if their order was for \$300, they could pay the \$300 to the hamlet and the hamlet could use their credit card, if they so chose to do that to order that food supply. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Incredible. Many of my constituents feel that they are victims of the income support system, especially when it comes to things like clawing back the valuable items that we donate to our neighbours.

Has the minister clearly heard my concerns on this issue and how will he address them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said again in the House, we have clearly heard the member's concerns and we would like to thank him for raising them. One example of not clawing back that the whole House is aware of, very quickly, would be the example of Co-op patronage dividends.

This government moved very quickly to allow people who receive those types of dividends to keep them and not be taken back as was the case in the past under the Income Support Program. So we are listening to what the member and other members have said. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell the House today if there are any measures in this week's federal budget that will help low income Nunavummiut receiving income support and social assistance to keep up with the high cost of living? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very quickly, I can't speak to the federal budget. It is not the territorial government's budget, it is the federal budget. When you look at areas of income support, those are under the provincial or territorial jurisdictions.

What I can say is some of the tax numbers that were released by the federal government, some of the programs they have put in there for energy efficiencies, for example, the extra money they have given us under the Territorial Financing Contribution, or the TFF, will be a benefit, not only to low income earners in Nunavut but all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When can social assistance recipients expect to hear some good news from the minister in terms of social assistance rates? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I'd like to thank the member for his questions. We know that 46 percent of Nunavummiut at any given time have to use the Income Support Program. The Income Support Program, like other jurisdictions, is a program of last resort. We have increased for the first time since 2001, in the last two budgets of this government income support payments by over 15 percent.

We again will be looking at that this spring to see if there is another need for an increase. So those increases have been put in place and we are all the time reviewing the program and making it more equitable for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 100 – 2(4): Funding for Development of Lots

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

The minister tabled the Nunavut Housing Trust Delivery Strategy, I think in the last session, and this session he's issued a couple of Ministerial Statements to the House updating members on how that strategy is progressing.

It is great to have more housing and training for the communities. While I was reading through the report I noticed that there are some glaring omissions in the report under the incremental cost estimates.

My question for the minister: is there funding in the strategy to help communities complete community surveys, subdivisions, housing lots, pad development to provide the resources to undertake the construction of houses in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Community and Government Services deal with where the units are going to be built. The department has stated that we would like to work closely with Community and Government Services to make sure that there are lots available for the units that will be built in the future years. 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 answer. As the former mayor of the community for four years I'm well aware of what it costs to undertake the development of subdivisions, lots and pads. It is quite a financial undertaking. It places a great burden on the community.

My question for the minister: can the minister clarify what plans the Nunavut Housing Corporation has made to extend the municipal services and the utilities for the new homes that would include such items as telephone poles, power lines and other utilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said earlier that we're working very closely with the communities to make sure that we have appropriate poles, lots, and work with the communities, again, we want to show the federal government that we can build these many units within that timeframe.

So we're making sure that we work very closely and make sure that we have adequate poles, or lots to build these units. So we're working very closely with Community and Government Services along with Finance, and Arctic College, along with other departments in the government. So we're making sure that all units are going to be up by the time we want to finish those units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. As we saw in the Finance Minister's budget it is going to be a very lean year coming up and a few more years after that. I don't think Department of Community and Government Services is going to see all that much money that can flow to the hamlets to assist them with the development of housing lots, pads, and other items like that.

The minister had indicated he was working with all these departments, and working closely with them, but he didn't tell me specifically how were they going to come up with the finances to help hamlets with their needs to develop the lots, subdivisions, and other utilities in the communities when these houses, or before these houses, arrive in the next fiscal year for construction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Housing Corporation, Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. The funding of \$200 million, we have reviewed how we can expend that money wisely and as we stated earlier on Community and Government Services and the Department of Finance ... we have continually worked with those two departments to look into how we can spend the money wisely and how we can have good results.

That has been our vision, and we've been looking at the operations and maintenance costs because these units are going to be beneficial to Nunavummiut. So we would like to see the funding used wisely, and we will continue to do so.

As we progress with the construction of the units it will be clearer how we can expend the funds more wisely so that we can complete the units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

The \$200 million that we're receiving from the federal government will construct 725 units. It will not construct any more than that. It will not provide any additional funding. We know that the government doesn't have any additional funding other than what was announced earlier this week, which is specifically targeted at certain areas.

I don't know where the government is going to come up with additional money for the incremental costs to go to the hamlets to assist them with all the work they have to do at the community level to undertake such large projects over the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, in the strategy, he also mentioned that it costs an average of \$20,000 annually for the operations and maintenance costs for typical public house, social houses. That translates to, when they're all constructed, \$14,500,000.

That is operations and maintenance that the government will have to find to provide the funding to the local housing organizations to operate those houses. I would like the minister to clarify for me where his department is going to find an additional \$14,500,000 to help the local housing organizations operate these houses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. These houses are going to be extremely helpful to the people of Nunavut.

I'm sure that after the houses are constructed, we will have to get additional funds, and we can probably talk to the federal government to get operations and maintenance dollars from them.

We're going to work extremely hard to get the additional funds from the federal government and we'll have to work closely with the Department of Finance to make sure that there is money for the operations and maintenance of these houses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 101 – 2(4): Delayed Construction of Aqsarniit Middle School – School Year Loss

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

Before I ask my question, I can correct him. When he responded to my colleague earlier, he called the funding formula that we have the TTF, and not TFF. I'm sure that his good friend Brian was watching and caught those mistakes.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister in relation to education deals with the delay that took place at the opening of the Aqsarniit Middle School and at the time there were concerns raised that students there had lost two weeks of instruction time as a result of those delays. So I would just like to ask the minister if he could update me, the Members of this House, and the public as to the status of where they are in making up that lost time due to the delayed construction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, again, thank the member for correcting my TFF and the FFT as he knows he can go URRC, and we've had some debate around that before.

Mr. Speaker, in answer to the member's question, the member and the House is aware that there were some construction issues with the Aqsarniit Middle School. In cooperation with the local district education authority here in Iqaluit, the staff who put in a lot of time and energy worked the schedule, not only administratively but logistically, they were able to cover off the teaching hours that were needed in cooperation, as I said earlier, with the district education authority.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the Aqsarniit Program is in place and is not in a position of being in jeopardy for the school year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to hear that. I know that a lot of people were wondering, with the blizzard days that we've been having this year and the schools have been shut down, whether the students would actually achieve the hours of instruction necessary to proceed on to the next year.

My second question, I know in the initial stages of this early in the fall the minister had indicated that the contractor was going to be paying for some of the extra costs involved in making up that extra time. I was just wondering if you could inform this House as to how much and what kind of support, whether it be financial or with people, that the department received from the contractor in this case. 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. Because of some of the delays in the construction of the school, we felt that there was an obligation of the contractor to make up some of the monetary needs of the school.

So in cooperation with Community and Government Services, who have the project management oversight of that project, we were able to negotiate with the lead contractor to fund some of the positions that were identified by the school staff and have those in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister indicated they were able to negotiate that they would be responsible for funding some of the positions necessary to catch up on lost time. Can he indicate how much funding they received and how many positions that funding was allocated to as a result of those additional costs to the school? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the dollar values with me on how much dollar values were used, but I can say I believe there were two positions, and that was my understanding.

As the Minister of Education, I had an opportunity several times to go to the school during and after the construction, we spoke to the staff and said, 'Look, if there's anything we could do as the Department of Education to help with extra person-years in the school during that transition period, we would do that.' And we did do that. I believe it was two person-years and I believe those positions would continue up to the school year.

I'll be at the Aqsarniit School tomorrow at four o'clock and I'll have an opportunity, again, to review some of that with some of the staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the minister, the staff, the department, and the district education authority have, as you would say, done yeoman service in making sure that the school year was not lost, and I congratulate all of them on that. It just shows an example of what can happen if we work together.

I would like to ask the minister to commit to providing the amount that the contractors if you want to call it a penalty, or having to compensate the school for those additional costs. Can he commit to providing that information here in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will be able to break those dollar values out and I believe that we should be able to make that available to the members next week in the house. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Question 102 – 2(4): Victims of Income Support

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Income Support. In my Member's Statement today, I said that I heard people on income support should be employed but where are the jobs in the smaller communities? We have been hearing from the government to date that we are going to be focusing on the smaller communities. In my Member's Statement today I alluded to the reasons why Nunavummiut have to resort to income support.

Can the minister tell me today if he and his department believe that the residents of smaller communities should all move to decentralized communities in order to get a job? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Education, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's question. I think what we are trying to do as the Government of Nunavut since 1999 has been through the decentralization program, and other programs of the government, is to foster and grow our communities, not to shut them down. The answer to the member's question is this government supports all communities in Nunavut: decentralized, large, and small.

What we have been trying to do on our different programs, specifically the member is asking about income support programs, is to put a program in place that helps facilitate all people to receive employment, whether in that community or outside the community.

For example, under income support, we have programs for transition to work. We have programs where it helps a person on income support to move to a community to get a job if they have been offered a position. We are also putting training programs in place.

The short answer is no, we are not trying to get people to move out of their communities. We want people to stay in their communities and try to have full employment through every department in government, whether it is tourism, arts and crafts industries, traditional means in the communities themselves, or through other work projects for example, like the housing program we are putting in place right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The situation facing people in the smaller communities is very, very difficult than the situations in the city. However, in the regulations for income support, they are the same in all communities.

Would the minister commit to reviewing the regulations in order to better meet the needs of the people living in non-decentralized communities where there are particularly no employment opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister responsible for Income Support, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The benefits under the income support program are known as universal benefits. That means the same benefits program that is in place for Clyde River or Repulse Bay would be found in Iqaluit or Cambridge Bay.

After saying that, if the member has a particular regulation that seems to be discriminatory toward a smaller community, then I'd be prepared to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that my constituency should be punished for ways of wanting to travel to visit their relatives in other communities. If a person on income support receives an airline ticket that was obtained through Aeroplan points, or a buddy pass, how would the department assess the value of that ticket and why does it consider tickets to be unearned income if people aren't using them as planned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Education and Income Support, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we have done is increased the exemption for earned income by over \$400 per family, or \$200 for single people. The problem with a gift like an airline ticket; if you're on income support and I give someone a ticket to fly from a given community to another community and they're spending six or seven weeks in the community, then they're not in their own community looking for work, or seeking employment, and so on.

That's one of the reasons why it would be considered unearned income and would have to come off the income support. The idea behind income support is that you have no income. It is not designed to allow someone in the community, for example, to go on a vacation, or something. However, and it's very important to make this acknowledgement, if a person receives a ticket to travel to a community to visit a sick relative; to attend a funeral; because of an issue like that, or an emergency, then that money, or that ticket is not considered unearned income.

What we're talking about specifically, and the member has raised, is when a person receives a ticket as a gift to fly someone when they're on income support and then when they come back that amount would be subtracted from that income support payment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A Member: Shame. Shame.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how else to say this but in the smaller communities, when there are no jobs, it's the same thing even if they try to go to the economic development officer.

I don't know how else I can explain this but could the minister indicate to me that the social assistance regulations will be reviewed, and when will my constituents see improvements in their lives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member has raised this issue with me at my office, and so on. He has written me on it. I think he has been a very strong advocate for the issue.

At the department, what we're looking at, I am looking at the regulations to see how I can facilitate what the member is asking for without opening up the whole program. I can't, as the minister responsible, just limit if someone receives a ticket and say we won't include that in his or her income as a household, I would have to do it for all of Nunavut, all 25 communities. How do you say that it's okay to receive a free ticket, or what have you, in one community without having to do it in the other communities.

So that's some of the concerns that we have. We are reviewing it. So the commitment that I've made to the member is to review the regulations to see if there is an opportunity. If any of the members have an opportunity, or suggestion to make of how we could reform that to make it more conducive to Nunavummiut, then we would entertain that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Question 103 – 2(4): Support for the Families of Sick Children

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. (interpretation ends)

As the minister has said a number of times there are often situations that do not fit into a set pattern and things have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

But, when a certain type of situation repeats itself over and over again, I believe that some changes need to be made: when a family has a child who needs to be close to medical care that can only be provided in another community, or province, this often means that the whole family has to move.

Can the minister clarify for this House what steps are taken to ensure that a family stays together when one of their children needs to move to be close to medical services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, we have close to 200 people in care in Nunavut, and the issue of providing that will come up over and over and over until we have met the needs of patients and the facilities in the north.

So we have to address each file and each case on a case-by-case basis, you're correct. In the case of the incident I believe the member is referring to, there is a critical team that needs to evaluate the patient's needs. A critical team that reviews what treatment, what care, and so on will be needed by this particular patient.

Once that assessment is done, and through the doctors, then the next step is to look at where we can place the child or the adult. In the case of that incident, the critical team is meeting, and will be responding to the family accordingly once they determine what kind of care the person needs, where that care can be provided, and then move forward in that.

But, the first step is the evaluation of the individual patient, and then to start searching for facilities that can treat that person. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. It is very hard for families to be away from each other. I know that the family has been in Edmonton for such a long time, but I'm glad that they are moving the family close to their home.

I am sure that our community social workers do the best they can for the good of the whole family. Can the minister tell this House what kind of flexibility is available to community social workers to make decisions on a case-by-case basis, especially in the situation of family travel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The individual teams that make the assessments of the needs of patients are very flexible in that they have to respond to that patient's needs.

So the flexibility is exercised on the basis of the child or adult's medical condition and need. So the team that deals with that will respond to that particular individual and decisions are made once the review is completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. Can the minister provide some clarification on what kinds of policies are in place to ensure that family

members, and especially children, are reunited with their parents at the earliest opportunity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Mr. Speaker, in the case of children and adults that live in facilities out of territory and within the territory, the department provides annual visits for those individuals from their families.

In the case of this particular incident, a review will be done to determine what kind of treatment is necessary, but we don't move the entire family for those 200 people that are living in care. We have not done that for every situation.

Again, it's on a case-by-case basis. The particular individual that the member is questioning me about, that assessment has to be done and then a decision will be made how best to treat and provide the support for the child.

So, that assessment has to be done. On a case of relocating every individual patient's family to Ottawa, or Edmonton, or Calgary, we have not done that for every single file. Again, it's on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Question 104 – 2(4): High Cost of Fuel for Homeowners

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Education and Income Support.

We have a concern on income support. For homeowners, they go through hard times, especially with the prices of fuel, and some homeowners run out of fuel and they don't have any extra money.

A lot of times they are declined by income support. I would like to ask the minister; can the minister review this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister responsible for Education and Income Support, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we can review it. In all cases where a person is on income support, or a household is on income support, their electrical costs, as well as fuel costs, the operations, water, sewage and so on. All are covered under the Income Support Program.

If there is an issue with the program itself, for example, if there wasn't the availability of the household to receive their fuel, then that appeal could be made to the income support worker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is extremely difficult in the wintertime especially for those people who have no income whatsoever.

So I am encouraging the minister; can he give an idea of when he can do the review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, we are doing a review of the Income Support Program right now, areas around the subsidies that are available, the amount of the Income Support Program, and so on.

If, for example, a family is in a unit and they're on income support, then the heating bill, the light bill, all associated bills of running that unit are covered through the income support program and are paid directly to the local housing association or the fuel supplier or what have you.

If the amount of money for that period of time has been budgeted over on the family, then they can appeal to the income support worker and then those costs would be covered. I am not aware of any case in Nunavut, where for example, a person ran out of fuel in their unit on income support, and weren't able to get their oil tank refilled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you are living alone, \$200 is not enough for a whole month. My further question for the minister might be that sometimes a household runs out of fuel before they get another income support cheques or the money. How often do you fill up the tanks for the houses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. This question was to Minister Picco. It is up to you if you want to respond. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the member has described, I would like to use a couple of scenarios.

If the family or the person is in a local housing association unit, then there is an agreement in place in all our communities for fuel delivery for that unit.

If they run out of fuel and they are on income support, then they would be automatically refuelled under that program. If the person is in a rented, private accommodation, then again, if they needed fuel then that would be added on to the income support for that month for that person. There is not a set, maximum limit in that case.

In the third case, if the person owned their own home, and were on income support, again, income support would cover those amounts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am talking about the homeowner that needs help for fuel. Maybe I should ask again. What I am trying to indicate is how often do income support people get help for their fuel? How often does the department fill their fuel tanks? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister responsible for Income Support, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, it depends on the community and the household. For example, as I said earlier, if you are on income support and you needed your tank filled up with the fuel supply in the community, whether it is the Co-op or whomever, they will come on a regular basis and fill up the tank. If the income support client's tank is empty, then the Income Support Program will, again, pay for that tank to be refilled.

When you are in a local housing association house, as the members know, you are renting it, and that unit belongs to the housing association. Again, they ensure the tank is refilled. It depends on the unit.

I am not aware of any case where a house froze up because the income support clients weren't able to receive fuel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin North, Mr. Curley.

Question 105 – 2(4): More Funding for Defence Lawyers

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Justice. We have heard about people that are supposed to be going to court and they don't know anything about their lawyer until that day the court party comes in, they don't know the lawyer.

Federal, provincial, and territorial Justice Ministers met last October. One of the things that the provincial and territorial ministers have called for is increased federal funding for criminal legal aid and new funding for civil legal aid.

My question is; because I have heard this happen before and they don't have enough defence lawyers; can the minister explain to the House how the federal government is going to be assisting with funding for those people that are going to need criminal or civil legal aid?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been dealing with this for quite some time and I met with the Minister of Justice at the federal level. I asked them if they could assist the people of Nunavut because we are not up to par with the rest of Canada. They should be able to help us with those kinds of funding for those matters.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have certain responsibilities, and actually business plan, as well as a strategy that we can develop in our own territory.

So the first question to the Minister of Justice is; the business plan for the coming year indicates that one of its priorities is to, and I will quote, "Improve community circuit work coverage and procedures. The Legal Services Board will be expecting greater accountability and performance on circuits on all lawyers working within the system." Can the minister explain to me today how this goal will be accomplished?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Justice, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have appointed new members to the Legal Services Board and will be taking measures to carry out the good work that was done. A lot of work of reviewing the structure and operation of the board took place over the last few years and we'll be taking steps to implement those recommendations. So I look forward to more accountability and at the same time utilizing the limited resources that we do have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada recently was quoted in the media saying that access to justice is becoming increasingly difficult for middle class Canadians, and we don't have any up here.

Can the minister explain to us today how he will work to improve access to justice for all Nunavummiut?

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we're taking some steps that will be very helpful. One of them, violent crime has, unfortunately, been a very difficult issue for our territory. So we're planning to implement the *Family Violence Intervention Act* later on this year, which will definitely assist us in reducing the number of people that have to appear before our courts by focusing on healing.

We're focusing on trying to get a fourth judge so that we don't have to rely on outside judges to deal with our cases. Luckily, some of the Akitsiraq students are graduating and becoming lawyers. That will assist us in getting more Inuit in the legal community.

So those are some of the steps that we've been taking for some time and it's starting to work out in some areas, but it will take a bit more time in others. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many Nunavut individuals that have been charged and are still waiting for court cases that have occurred maybe a year or two ago; they're still on the court docket.

Would the minister be willing to order an independent review of the effectiveness and efficiency of our legal aid system, and if not, why not? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that we will be reviewing a supplementary appropriation dealing with more costs to the legal aid system. That's what we have to do unfortunately to try and address reducing the time required to go to court.

But, at the same time, we're looking at ways; we've been pushing the federal government to make it easier to go straight to trial so that the amount of time that is involved in going to trial is reduced.

So that is something that we've been pushing with other territories and provinces so that it doesn't take as much time to get the matter resolved. So, it is something that we can't do ourselves, but we're trying to do with the federal government because it's federal legislation and it's something that we can't do on our own. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 106 – 2(4): Status of the Review of the Fuel Tax Rebate Program

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance who is responsible for the Government of Nunavut Fuel Tax Rebate Program.

In his official response to a petition that I presented in the House, the minister indicated, and I will quote to be perfectly clear: "I have directed my officials in the Department of Finance to review the program and make the necessary changes to address the concerns. For example, we are suggesting an expansion of the program to allow all hunters and harvesters to access the program, regardless of whether or not they are employed or classified as a commercial hunter. As well, we are making the forms simpler and easier to complete."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell the House today when these changes will be implemented? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are doing an ongoing implementation of those changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's official response to the petition I tabled indicated that he will, and I quote, "...rise in the Legislative Assembly during our next sitting in March 2007 to provide members with an update on the first year of this new program."

Can he tell me today when he will table the first annual report on the Fuel Tax Rebate Program? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as it has been gathered I will table it in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are hunters in the communities who are confused about the program. How will the department communicate with the public on the changes to the program, and help hunters complete their applications? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will be dealing with this, for instance, by going on community radio stations to give them explanations and information, as well as writing down the information to be used by the public.

After the changes to the program we will try to make sure that we also have a 1-800 number where people can phone to ask for assistance in filling their application. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister table how many hunters use this program and how much money the government has used in dealing with those mining companies, the tax rebate for mining companies.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister for Finance, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those will be in the annual report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 107 – 2(4): Wildlife Harvest Permits

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister for Environment.

The Department of Environment has an internal review process to consider applications for wildlife harvesting permits for commercial harvesters across Nunavut.

My question for the minister: can the minister provide an overview of who is on the review committee and how long they have to issue a permit if the application is complete? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Mr. Speaker, the Fisheries file belongs to the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. So, I will refer the question over to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. I believe the question is being referred to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could I get clarification on the question please?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Can I ask Mr. Peterson to repeat the question please? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly can. I was asking whichever department is responsible for reviewing applications for wildlife harvesting permits for commercial harvesting, and maybe I could clarify commercial harvesting, in this case it would be for musk ox harvesting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister of Economic Development to respond. Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are responsible for giving out permits for commercial harvest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the clarification from the government department on who is responsible.

Kitikmeot Foods in Cambridge Bay submitted an application on October 24, 2006 for their annual winter musk ox harvest. The department did not forward it to the Nunavut Impact Review Board until February 16, three days before their musk ox harvest was scheduled to begin.

My question for the minister: can the minister explain to me what would account for such a long delay when the application was complete and submitted on October 24, 2006? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the application for that commercial harvest for musk ox was presented to NIRB and it was up to the proponent to proceed with the application from the Nunavut Impact Review Board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the answer. The federal food inspector and the abattoir supervisor were delayed as well due to the permitting snafu and the harvest began late, and the organization only harvested 246 of the 300 musk ox, and this affected the bottom line in local employment.

As it turns out because the abattoir is located in Cambridge Bay, it is not a portable on the land abattoir; it may not have been necessary to have a NIRB review in the first place.

This is news to my constituents. For the previous years they have applied to the department and now they are being sent to NIRB. My question for the minister: can the minister clarify for my constituents in the Kitikmeot on why their musk ox harvest permit application was forwarded to NIRB for review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that was in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement where we have to deal with the NIRB and other bodies when communities do commercial harvest. 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. The application was submitted on October 24, 2006. It didn't make it to NIRB until February 16, 2007. That's almost four months, or is four months, and my constituents just weren't aware of that.

One of the problems of the Government of Nunavut is delay, red tape, and barriers to business. In the Kitikmeot we have so few businesses that it's very important that we support and help them through all the regulatory red tape that we have in government.

My question for the minister: would the minister commit that he will instruct his officials to streamline the regulatory review process to support business in Nunavut and to expedite the processing of applications? If they identify early on it has to go to NIRB then send it to NIRB, don't wait four months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Members, the Question Period is now over. Going back to the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. (interpretation) Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 054 – 2(4): Arctic Bay Health Centre – Photos of Crowded Conditions

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling a series of photographs showing the cramped and crowded conditions at the Arctic Bay Health Centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Please bring the documents up. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Peterson.

Tabled Document 055 – 2(4): Nunavut Association of Municipalities Press Release – Federal Budget Won't Improve Nunavut's "Quality of Life," Declares NAM President March 22, 2007

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a press release that was issued today by the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. The title of the news release is: Federal Budget Won't Improve Nunavut's "Quality of Life" Declares NAM President. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Please bring the document up. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Tabled Document 056 – 2(4): Health Human Resources Initiative with the Métis – Health Canada Press Release February 6, 2007

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the federal government's press release dated February 6, 2007 that announces \$10 million from the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative for the Métis Nation to support the development of health professionals, including health bursaries and scholarships.

I urge the Minister of Health and Social Services to set up her efforts to access similar federal funding to support the development of Nunavut nurses, and other health professionals. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Please bring the document. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Tabled Document 057 – 2(4): Qangualuk Disappearance – Draft Terms of Reference for a Public Inquiry

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our parents and our elders request help for the things that they need.

(interpretation ends) I wish to table today a document, which provides draft terms of reference for a public inquiry into the Qangualuk disappearance. I believe that these terms of reference are perfectly straightforward and provide a sound basis for the government to take the next step in resolving this issue. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Please bring the document. Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit East, Mr. Picco.

Tabled Document 058 – 2(4): Media Release: Compact Fluorescent Bulbs Do Not Pose a Fire Hazard

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table two documents concerning the spiral light bulbs statement that I made earlier today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. I am sorry. We're getting ahead of ourselves.

(interpretation ends) Please present documents in an orderly fashion because we appear to have one that was clumsily presented to the table.

Some Members: Shame. Shame.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for the First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions.

(interpretation ends) Members before we proceed to the motions let's take a 20-minute break.

>>House recessed at 15:14 and resumed at 15:40

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you members for coming back. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to go back to Item 5. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. The member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to Item 5. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the members.

Very quickly, I would like to recognize in the Gallery this afternoon, Dr. Steve Grey who is here with his daughter. His daughter is up for spring break, and he is taking a couple of days off to show her around Iqaluit and to listen to the proceedings today. Welcome to the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Going back to Item 16. Motions. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 16: Motions

Motion 003 – 2 (4): Rejection of the Report of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the 2006 Report of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 21, 2006;

AND WHEREAS subsection 27(5) of the *Nunavut Elections Act* requires the Legislative Assembly to consider the Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Baker Lake, that the Legislative Assembly reject the recommendations of the Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission in their entirety.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. The motion is in order. Members, before we proceed with debate on the motion I have a few comments to make as to procedures. Every member has the right to speak once to the motion for a total time of 20 minutes. The mover of the motion speaks first and the seconder speaks second.

The mover of this motion has the right to the last replies which closes the debate. To the motion. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I go first and second right away?

>>*Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak to the motion before the House and I would like to begin by thanking my colleague from Baker Lake for seconding the motion.

Indeed, the fact that this motion has been moved and seconded by members from two very different communities should serve to amplify one of the key elements of my position which is; that the interests of Nunavut as a whole must come before the interests of any one member, any one community, or any one region.

Mr. Speaker, as you clearly recall, the Members of the First Legislative Assembly were united and spoke with one voice when we passed our made in Nunavut *Elections Act*

back in the fall of 2002 when the Legislative Assembly just started in your beautiful home community of Pangnirtung.

When we developed the Act, careful consideration was given to how best to approach the issue of electoral boundary redistribution. The Members of the First Assembly, a number of whom are sitting here in this House today clearly recognized the need for an approach that is objective and systematic.

The provisions in the Act for the establishment of an Electoral Boundaries Commission achieved that goal. Given that such commissions are specifically designed to remove politics from the equation. Mr. Speaker, the Members of the Second Legislative Assembly were also united and spoke with one voice when we established the Electoral Boundaries Commission last year.

Like other members, I looked forward to the presentation of a report that would provide clear and unambiguous recommendations based on rigorous and thoughtful analysis. This report was supposed to provide the foundation on which a Constituencies Bill would be drafted for you to present before the House.

Mr. Speaker, do we see a Constituency Bill before us today? No. Will we see one soon? No. Like other members, I was very disappointed at the final report of the boundaries commission.

I do want to make it clear that I am in no way questioning the sincerity of the efforts of the commissioners. They had a challenging task before them. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, if you were to review the recent and very interesting report from the House of Commons Standing Committee, you would see that the issue of how to approach electoral boundaries possesses challenges even at a national level.

Nonetheless, we have an obligation as elected Members of the Legislative Assembly to deal with the situation that we have before us today.

The report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission is deficient.

I do not believe that there is any Member of this House who could reasonably dispute that conclusion. We have been informed that it is simply impossible to proceed to the next step of drafting a Constituency Bill based on the report. The commission simply did not fully comply with its requirements under the Act.

Mr. Speaker, the boundaries commission was assigned the responsibility of bringing forward clear recommendations. What we got was a disjointed smorgasbord of options and scenarios, maps without substantive meaning and no evidence of consultation on changes to constituency names.

Let's take the constituency of Amittuq as an example, which includes two communities. The commission brings forward not one, not two, but three extremely different options

for how to deal with the boundaries. Which option did the commission think was the best approach? Who knows – it's simply impossible to tell.

As another example, in the case of Iqaluit, the commission actually brings forward an option to elect the city's members on a fundamentally different basis than every other constituency in the territory without even an attempt to provide an analysis or discussion of the merits of this radical proposal. Mr. Speaker, the report is fundamentally and fatally flawed. It is beyond repair. You may hear the suggestion that we can rush out and strike some form of new body to fix the problems. I'm sorry, but in this case, I believe the patient is dead.

I recognize that the title of the motion before us today has a negative ring to it. The word "rejection" itself sounds unpleasant to the ear. However, I believe that the legislative assembly will accomplish something positive by passing this motion.

Earlier in my remarks, I noted the importance of putting the interests of Nunavut as a whole above all other considerations. As the Member for Iqaluit Centre, I could have endorsed the report for personal political gain, as one of the scenarios for my community would have positioned me well in the next election, if I chose to run.

However, I firmly believe that we have an obligation to get the job done right for the benefit of all Nunavummiut.

We were all elected in February of 2004. Even if a new commission were to be established in the spring sitting, it is unlikely it would be in a position to report back until next year. There simply wouldn't be time to bring forward a bill while providing our electoral administration with sufficient time to prepare for the next general election.

The best course of action is to permit the members of the next assembly the opportunity to establish a new commission from scratch, which can learn from these lessons. It is my understanding that will be required anyway after the next general election.

That's the common sense approach. Let's do the job right next time, and I will be pleased to support any necessary amendments to our act to help the next commission do so.

Mr. Speaker, you may hear comments today that suggest that the assembly should effectively cherry-pick the parts of the report that it likes. That would be a dangerous course of action. It would make a bad situation even worse by compounding the problems.

The whole point of establishing a boundaries commission is to present members of this House with a complete, clear and cohesive set of recommendations. Picking and choosing what we like as individual members treats the report as though it were some sort of buffet.

Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that effective democratic representation comes at a cost, however, we must ask ourselves whether it would be a price worth paying to rush into a quick-fix, Band-Aid solution, I don't think it is, and I don't think that the thousands of Nunavummiut who are waiting for us to deliver improvements to housing, health care, and education would think so either.

Mr. Speaker, we have better things to do with our limited time and scarce resources than to continue bickering over this flawed document like starving ravens. Let's move on to the task of governing.

Mr. Speaker, again, I encourage all members to support the motion before the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation) Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seconded the motion.

Just recently when we had a meeting I was told by my staff that the report did not follow through with the responsibilities that were given to them. We were told that we'll have to do the same thing in 2009 and set up another commission.

At this time we keep saying that we have very limited financial resources and it would not be the right time to proceed with this. We are going to be spending more money as a government and as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

With that, I seconded the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. To the motion. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I think this is one of the rare times where I actually agree with the Member for Iqaluit Centre ...

>>*Laughter*

... even during budget time. But, I must say as the Premier of this territory I represent every single community and I try and represent every single community in the same light. With the struggles that we have each year, we try and do our part in making sure that every part of our territory is benefiting in some way, and I will continue to do that.

I have to also look at the resources that we do have and what programs that we can offer, and the recommendation to add new members when we're already the most represented territory in the entire country is something that we have to look at very carefully.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The report recommends four additional members, and if broken down, would create additional limitations in our limited resources by creating an additional \$2 million that will have to be expended for our territory to be represented when it's already overrepresented.

As my colleague has said already, the report itself is flawed. It's the first time that we've tried a boundaries commission. There will be more in the future. So I'm sure that the future commissions will look at that very carefully and make sure that the mistakes made aren't repeated.

So I look forward to the future recommendations of the future commissions and look forward to making sure that it's sound and something that we can live with. I think we owe it to our constituents to use the resources that we do have to deliver programs and services to the best of our abilities.

So in that light, I will be supporting the motion and supporting my colleagues in rejecting the report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation ends) Member for Arviat, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not agree to the report and I'm sure that it was very expensive as we spent \$250,000 on it. Would the three members who are saying that there was no financial resources, I'm sure they're going to be saying the same in 2009, and say that there should be no additions to the 19 members here.

But again, as a government, we have to keep going forward instead of going backwards. We have to be proud of the bodies or the entities that we produce. We worked extremely hard to make sure that the commission was approached by the elders, by the youth, by the people.

We directed them to go to the communities to hold public consultations and when I see that I wouldn't want the people out there to be disappointed. They took the time to come to the meetings and now they might be saying that the government is doing totally useless things.

There were a lot of papers that were produced and the outcome is nothing. That, I think, will be the image that the public will see. With all the documentation that was compiled, I'm sure that there are some extremely good recommendations or extremely good suggestions that came from the people of Nunavut.

The people out there were saying what they would like to see in the government. They gave options to the commission. Again, we have been given the authority to make the decisions and we have to get the good recommendations from this report and put them to use.

I don't like the idea of going forward with this motion. We heard that there were a good number of people that were coming to those meetings when the commission came to their communities.

In addition, with all the information that was complied by the commission, they did their job. They followed our direction, and we appointed people as commissioners because we believed in them. We believed that they would do a good job.

In 2009 the same thing is going to happen again and we're going to be hearing the same thing. I wanted to make a comment to the motion, but if we create a new commission in the future, they will probably write the report, but for the record, I would like the people out there to know that we shouldn't be doing things like that if the end product is nothing.

There are people out there who are poor. There are people who can't buy food. They have no harbours. They have nothing in their communities, and here we are throwing thousands of dollars away.

I will keep working with you. I will oppose this motion. I am not mad, but I have to let you know how I feel and how the people out there feel. The commission worked extremely hard, and I saw people going to the meetings in their wheelchairs to be heard by this commission which was directed by the Government of Nunavut.

As such, I wanted to make those comments for the record. It is up to us to make the decision. We got the report which could be the first step to our progression. We can still go forward. I wanted to make those comments, and I will oppose the motion. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. There was one person before me the Member for the Kitikmeot, but I'm rising now because you recognized me.

First of all I want to say this is not the first time that a report is actually rejected, but it happened before in the NWT. I can state that as a member I have witnessed where there have been increases, and we used to do that in Yellowknife; once we considered the report; once it's tabled we used to review it page-by-page.

In the Nunavut Legislature I guess we know so much that without opening the report we reject it. I wonder how those people who are listening are thinking. What are they talking about? I want to tell you that I didn't vote at the time because of the timeframe and it was too busy. I wanted to get somebody else as a chairperson and that person was recommended by the committee staff.

The commission report that the chairperson (interpretation ends) experienced judge. I think that you are going to agree with me that she is a very able judge of the Nunavut

court, and so on. I would like to compliment her. It's the beginning of playing politics is what we have.

(interpretation) First of all, I would like to say that when I was in Yellowknife when they requested increases to the Members of the Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife we rejected it, but we could permit it as we reviewed it page-by-page, riding by riding, and all the recommendations; A to Z. With this particular one I don't know how many of you have read it from the beginning to the end. When I read it from the beginning to the end there are some areas where they're very well done.

In the Kitikmeot they're not over represented. So for that reason some of those changes would be good. Maybe if the mover and the seconder agreed (interpretation ends) to withdraw your motion. Let's go page 1, at least recommendation 1. 2. It'll be more democratic. It'll be fairer to those people out in the constituencies, the elders who came.

(interpretation) If Iqaluit ridings don't support it; if we were see the Cabinet Ministers the Kitikmeot is not over-represented; there is only one person from the Kitikmeot. We have to make it equal. Maybe if there was a way that we could make it equal. (interpretation ends) Please withdraw the motion. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Motions. Member for Nattilik, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin I would like to also acknowledge the Commission and their hard work in the last year and traveling to every community to speak to many Nunavummiut and to hear their concerns for the plans as it relates to the current boundaries, and their views on whether they're adequately represented in this House or not. So I thank Judge Browne, John Ningark, and Bernadette Niviatsiak for doing that hard work for us.

I'm glad to have the opportunity again today to speak against the motion before the House.

The issue that we are considering today goes to the heart of this great institution. As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we do our best each and every day to represent our constituents, and our communities to the very best of our abilities.

We may sometimes differ on what solutions to pursue, but I genuinely believe that we are all committed to the task of improving the lives of Nunavummiut, the hard working taxpayers who pay the bills and who have entrusted us with this great responsibility.

I do not believe we should be sacrificing adequately representing Nunavummiut because of our current financial challenge. I agree with the mover with respect to some of the problems in the report. I agree with that.

What I don't agree with is the proposed solution. It's not a solution, which amounts to basically flushing \$200,000 or \$300,000 down the toilet, throwing up our hands and saying we give up, let the next bunch of Members of the Legislative Assembly deal with it. That's what we're saying: ignore all the hard work of the commission, and ignore all the input we received from the many Nunavummiut who spoke to express their views.

Ignore that; leave it to the next Members of the Legislative Assembly. That's what we're saying.

Mr. Speaker, I've never believed in giving up and I believe that the report is not perfect, but very few reports are perfect. What I am proposing is that we roll up our sleeves and fix the problems identified in the report.

I am asking members today to defeat the motion, and if we do so, I am prepared to bring forward a new motion to empower a new commission to be established with a clearly defined task of addressing the technical problems in the report, and bringing forward some practical solutions in time for the next general election.

We have not done that. We have not reviewed the report by recommendation behind closed doors or in the House. We have not even looked at it. After spending \$300,000 and talking to many Nunavummiut, we're rejecting everything in the report for what?

Our job is to address the hard issues before us. That is why we're elected. We're elected to address the hard issues, and this is a difficult one indeed, and we have to address those. Ignoring the recommendations is not representing the interests of our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the unity of Nunavut is important. We must recognize that unity depends on our diverse communities and the regions being fairly and effectively represented in the Legislative Assembly.

We do not enjoy that situation today, and waiting another five, six, seven years will only make matters worse. We're saying let's wait until 2014 to deal with this problem. The problem exists now. It exists now.

The census figures released last week reveal that a number of Nunavut communities have experienced dramatic population growth since 1999. That resulted in enhanced funding as a result of that.

We're saying we're going to ignore this until 2014. Why? I actually happen to also agree that Iqaluit is entitled to another seat in the Assembly. However, passing this motion would condemn this community to under representation for several more years; 2014 and I do not understand why the mover of the motion is willing to take that risk.

To take another example, Mr. Speaker, we all recognize the challenges facing our colleague from Akulliq. Like his predecessor, our good friend Ovide Alakannuark, the

Member for Akulliq faces the almost impossible job of effectively representing two communities split between two regions.

Because of the airline route any member in that riding spends most of their time traveling between two communities instead of representing their communities in the community. When it comes to regional issues in the Kivalliq and the Kitikmeot that person is in conflict.

When it comes to regional issues that is what I have been told by my constituents and by the leaders in the region. KIA President, Vice-President, NTI, all the mayors have said that. We all have recognized the unfairness of this situation. The commission report provides a good solution for the problem and we would be doing a great disservice to the people of Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk if we were to just be so negligent to allow the problem to fester when we have this chance to fix it today.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the potential for regional alienation in Nunavut. One of the reasons why Nunavut came into being was that the eastern arctic was not effectively represented in Yellowknife. I do not want to see us go down that path again and that path of deepening divisions between our communities of making some part of this beautiful land feel that their voice is valued less than the others.

Mr. Speaker, it will certainly take some hard work to address the problems in the report and bring forward some solutions in time for the next election. Mr. Speaker, I know that you have never been afraid of hard work, and I am confident that our colleagues today will agree that working hard together to face our challenges is a truly Nunavut way.

That's why our constituents elected us. To deal with the hard issues, not to junk the report that they are saying we should address. Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to join together in defeating this motion and choosing a better path; a path that will address the concerns of our regions and lead us to strengthening the territory as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation) Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion before us is very difficult for me as a member for Akulliq. We just heard about it and we are, especially for the Kitikmeot, it's true that with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association and Kitikmeot mayors, this is very close to me because I am in that situation where I represent two communities in different regions.

It was mentioned that it is very expensive to travel between those two and a lot of times I can't even visit the two communities and I am pretty sure my predecessor experienced the same hardship.

Even if we're invited to go to a function it gets very difficult. I feel the concerns of the Kitikmeot and Repulse Bay, the other community that I represent. Which way are we going to go because the recommendations are divided, especially for Repulse Bay?

The Minister of Finance, in his budget address about the federal budget, not too much was for Nunavut. I constantly struggle to represent them well because they are not even decentralized. There are not too many options for my constituents from the NWT to Nunavut.

If this motion is passed I don't know, will we be better represented looking at the money that we have if this is approved,...(interpretation ends)...when the Minister of Finance for Nunavut and the federal minister are saying that there are funding restraints.

(interpretation) I don't see any positive outcome of this, but I doubt if the smaller communities will be better represented. As I said earlier I feel what the Kitikmeot feel but there are some discrepancies in there.

For that reason I don't know how I'm going to vote. I would like to state that I will not be voting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for giving me the chance to talk to this motion.

First of all, I'd like to thank the boundaries commission for all the hard work that they did. I know they spent a lot of time traveling across Nunavut meeting a lot of people. I've talked to people that met with the boundaries commission who were looking forward to their report and recommendations. I'd like to thank the Nunavummiut who also took the time to get out and talk to the boundaries commission folks and provide a lot of good valuable advice, and input.

Mr. Speaker, unlike my colleague from Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk, I don't have this difficult situation that is identified in the report. I can vote against the motion; which I intend to vote against. Mr. Mapsalak is caught between two regions. It's something that we've known for a long time. It places him in a very difficult position. His speech a few minutes ago highlights one of the issues that the boundaries commission intended to deal with.

I know that the boundaries commission is not a perfect document but it does contain a lot of good and valuable information. I think we can work with that information. I have been in business for many, many years. When I get a consultant's report that makes recommendations, I don't toss it out.

I'd go through it and review it, talk to the boundaries commission, and see if I can adapt it to suit my needs. I am not going to spend good money and then throw it in the garbage.

When you're in business you don't do that kind of stuff, but I guess, as a government it's okay because everybody thinks the government has an endless source of money, which we don't.

This report cost over, I think the figure is over \$250,000. To a lot of people that's a significant amount of money. That is one house, or almost one house according to Nunavut Housing Corporation figures. I think they're saying \$308,000.

It's very expensive. Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that, when I read through the boundaries commission that they would address the geographical issues that would help my colleague from Repulse Bay, Kugaaruk.

We all know it takes him three days to travel to Repulse. It's like travelling around the world for him. He's got to go through Rankin Inlet, Yellowknife, Cambridge Bay, with no stops, and then he gets to Kugaaruk, then he spends a couple of days there, and then he has to reverse. That's a pretty hard trip on him.

I don't think any of us here has that type of concern. I know the Premier spoke about us all representing everybody in Nunavut; which we do. I speak quite often about issues related to Nunavut, and I also speak of issues that are important to people in my riding, and my region.

We don't like to talk about regions sometimes, but the fact of the matter is there are regional differences, regional issues, and regional concerns. We have regional Inuit associations, we have regional organizations. We don't have a lot of territorial organizations, so there is a fact of the matter. There are regional interests.

I think the boundaries commission put a little bit too much emphasis on the electoral quotients in Nunavut. The figures they presented or I read; there are 1,573 constituents per constituency on average in 19 constituencies.

In the Northwest Territories it's 2,206, and in Ontario it's 123,512 per one Member of the Legislative Assembly. With that kind of information, I think we could work with the report, we can redraw some boundaries, and we can help Mr. Mapsalak out so he doesn't have to make those seven or eight day trips. The folks in Kugaaruk could have their own Member of the Legislative Assembly, tied in with Taloyoak, and then the people in Repulse Bay could have their own Member of the Legislative Assembly tied in with communities in the Kivalliq region.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague from the Kitikmeot, Ms. Aglukkaq, that we should not put decisions off to future Assemblies to deal with tomorrow. It is five to seven years from now by the time you go through the process, if we put this boundary report on the shelf, it will be another five to seven years.

I think we should deal with the issues now, go through the report as my colleague from Rankin Inlet said, Mr. Curley, page-by-page and review the recommendations, and make recommendations then.

To facilitate that, I think that we should, in one of the options we discussed; establish a restricted Electoral Boundaries Commission that we can charge to go look at the issues we identified in the first report and correct them, and then report back to us. That would speed the process; we don't have to go through a five to seven-year process.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to urge my colleagues in the House to vote against the motion, and I certainly intend to vote against it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A Member: Hear. Hear.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. To the motion, Member for Uqqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am in favour of the motion. Perhaps some of the members might think that the report has no impact on me, but there are communities that were consulted by the Electoral Boundaries Commission, but there were some communities that were not consulted, and they wanted information from the boundaries commission, but the information was not adequate for those communities that were not consulted.

Some of the members are saying that we have not read the report yet but it's open to the public now. A lot of people don't really just want to pick up something and read it if it's not interesting to them.

The \$250,000 that was used for the Electoral Boundaries Commission is a huge amount of money and you can use that to build houses but if we were to get more MLAs, it probably would be a little over \$2 million that we have to put in for the members' use. I think that would be at least two five-plexes that we could build for that amount of money. It would be only used for the members if we were to increase our number. And that money should be better spent on the public out there.

The Electoral Boundaries Commission's Report should not be dealt with at the present time and get a better report by a different boundaries commission, and to, again, consult the communities through the Electoral Boundaries Commission, and some people were saying that the Electoral Boundaries Commission, when they consulted with the communities, worked really hard. I realize that and I also feel that even though it doesn't have an impact on me too much, I feel it's very important that we reject it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. To the motion. (interpretation ends) Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the commission that travelled to the communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'm in the same position as the Member for Akulliq because two communities could not be consulted because it's either to do with the weather, or the route of the airline. That's the problem that I have with my riding.

To me, it's not adequate and it's not adequate for my constituency. I represent Quttiktuq and the communities are quite far apart. The communities are not visited by dignitaries and stuff like that because they're so far apart.

I am in favour of the motion because two communities have not been consulted in my riding. When they had a Yellowknife Electoral Boundaries Commission, they visited all of the communities, and we were able to read their report and really dealt with the report.

Here in Nunavut, some of our constituencies have not been consulted yet; the commission did not go to those communities. So it doesn't make sense when some of the communities were not visited at all and the people were not consulted at all and the people did not have a chance to voice their opinions. I feel that this is not right because the elderly people don't know anything about those kinds of things.

I'm in support of the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation) Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the motion.

My community was not consulted as well by the commission but just before I came here I went on the local radio and asked my constituents and we had a meeting with the hamlet council to ask them what they think of the boundaries commission that visited the communities. They felt that it was not adequate because they did not consult my community or they did not go to my community.

Mr. Speaker, this was not, the people of Sanikiluaq thought that it was not an adequate report because they did not go to Sanikiluaq and we have a lot of concerns in my riding about regional governments. We always felt that we were going to have less for Sanikiluaq because of that I will not be against the motion.

It seems somebody said that there would be an additional \$2 million that will be spent for extra members of this House. We have no place else to go even if we get an extra member we have a very small area for our meetings at this time and we don't know if we are going to be getting another House. This building today has no place to expand.

It is already too small as it is and if we get another extra member it will probably be too small to house more members that we have presently. For example, in Sanikiluaq whenever there is capital funding we talk about in this House, we don't get any capital funding for my community.

I can say to the Members of this House that Sanikiluaq people do not have any funding at all for capital. They don't get any capital money because the government does not have enough money to spend. In some ways I feel that the report is good, in some ways it's not adequate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. I'm sorry.

>>*Laughter*

My apologies to the member, Mr. Kattuk, I called you Mr. Barnabas, so I apologize Mr. Kattuk. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Members, I wish to inform the House that I have no more names on my list. Does the mover have any last replies? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank everyone that spoke to the motion; I mean that's what the whole democratic process is about. As far as doing this whole process behind closed doors and as I mentioned in my opening comments, the report was tabled in our last sitting.

It is out there, it is public information. I have heard conflicting comments on the amount; I have heard one member say \$300,000, \$252,000 and some change. I heard someone say that Iqaluit is over-represented and someone else say it is under-represented, it is under-represented based on the current form, and on the report it would continue to be under-represented.

I think when you talk about regional representation, for Cabinet, as my colleague from Rankin Inlet North indicated, when we all get elected every member that is in here has an opportunity to run for Cabinet. To my recollection, there was only one member from the Kitikmeot who wanted to run for Cabinet.

Everybody had an opportunity...was there two? Then I apologize. It was to my recollection. Everyone has an opportunity. Right from April 1, 1999, we have been saying Nunavut is a territory. We are not three different regions that we were under the GNWT.

We created our own territory because we wanted to do things differently, not the way they used to do things in the Northwest Territories, like my colleague said he wants to do with this report. Even that process has changed over there and has changed here as well. They don't even do that over there.

Regarding the comments about money, 99.9 percent of my argument has nothing to do with money. The report is incomplete, it does not contain the required information under

the Act that it's required to have in it. There are some very good recommendations. I am not saying many of those recommendations and things in there were not good.

I apologize to all those people that came out and put forward what their concerns were and what they would like to see. It is not their fault that the report was not done properly. I don't think it would be fair for us as members of the assembly; I don't think it would be responsible for us as this assembly to cherry pick and go through an incomplete report.

The whole idea, as I outlined in my comments, of setting up an actual boundaries commission, was to take politics out of it. It shouldn't be up to us. That is why we assigned that commission to come forward with recommendations so that we won't be able to do exactly what some people seem to want to do now; that is to cherry-pick and do what's good for them.

One comment that was made was, "adapt this report to suit my needs." It suits my needs just fine, that report. But I am not here to look after my needs. I am here to look after the needs of all Nunavummiut and to make sure we do our jobs properly and that we move forward. We are not waiting until 2014 for this to be addressed.

Regardless of what happens here, after the next election will automatically trigger another electoral boundaries commission. After the next election in one and a half to two years, automatically another electoral boundaries commission will have to be struck, because of the population, to do this all over again.

As I was saying, you take some lessons learned. There are some good recommendations in there. However, legislation cannot be drafted based on this report, which is what it is supposed to do. Again, I urge, the report is incomplete and based on that, that's my basis for rejecting the report. Because it does not contain what it is required by law to contain. I would think it would be irresponsible of us to say, "That's okay, we are going to take it and do whatever we want with it anyways."

I think we owe it to our constituents to make sure we do things right. I have always been told, "If you do something, do it right." As Inuit, if we didn't do things right we wouldn't be here today. I believe that and I believe this is an example where we have to follow that. Again, I urge all members to support my motion to reject the report in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation ends) The debate is now closed. We will now vote on the motion. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like the vote to be a recorded vote please. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand, and sit down once I have called your name. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Arvaluk. Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Picco. Mr. Simailak. Mr. Okalik. Ms. Brown. Mr. Tapardjuk. Mr. Arreak. Mr. Kattuk.

All those opposed, please stand and then sit down when I call your name. Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Peterson. Mr. Evyagotailak. Mr. Curley. Ms. Aglukkaq. Mr. Netser.

All those abstaining, please stand and then sit down when I call your name. Mr. Mapsalak.

Thank you, Members. The results of the vote are as follows: those for the motion: 11. Those against the motion: 6. Those abstaining: 1. The motion is carried.

Thank you. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Sorry, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to raise a Point of Order, during my statement I had said I would be introducing a motion in our spring session to have a modified plan. I plan to do that in the spring. Thank you.

Speaker: Ms. Aglukkaq, I remind you that I do not take that as a point; there is no Point of Order in that. Thank you. We will return to Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Minister responsible for Education and Income Support, Minister Picco.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills

Bill 09 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act – First Reading

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay that Bill 9, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is in order and Bill 9 has had first reading.

(interpretation) 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. Bill 1, 2, and 3 with Mr. Evyagotailak in the Chair. In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 4 – 2(4), the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed to Committee of the Whole we will take a short 10-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 16:45 and Committee resumed at 17:03*

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

Chairman (Mr. Evyagotailak): I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with Bill 1, Bill 2, and Bill 3. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 1 and the review of the main estimates for Health and Social Services followed by the Department of Environment and Human Resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Are we in agreement to continue with the main estimates of the Department of Health and Social Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 – Consideration in Committee – Health and Social Services

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Aglukkaq, do you have witnesses that you'd like to bring to the table?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Yes, I do.

Chairman: Does this committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms. Minister Aglukkaq, for the record please introduce your witness.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations, Dave Richardson and to my left is Shirley Alder, Executive Director of Finance. Thank you.

Chairman: Welcome to the chambers. Members of the committee, we are falling behind our schedule as we proceed with departmental main estimates. I will again mention that once a member has spoken that I have discretion as Chair under Rule 77(1), to allow you to continue. I plan to use this discretion so that we can achieve significant progress in our budget deliberations. Once again, members, I am going to impose Rule 77(2), which allows me discretion to recognize a member more than the one time or not.

Thank you. Yesterday we were on H-11, Health Insurance Program. We have Mr. Curley, Mr. Barnabas, and Mr. Tootoo that have spoken to this page. Health and Social Services Branch Summary, Health Insurance Program. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$49,608,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Health Protection. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$4,662,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Treatment Programs. Total Operations and Maintenance. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question regarding the medevac policy. I am not sure exactly what the medevac policy is so I would like the minister or one of her officials to give us a briefing on what the policy is.

The medical evacuations were contracted out and especially in the Keewatin area I seem to recall that one of the airlines that was in one of the tenders for the medical evacuations was required to have washroom facilities and so on but it seems to be confusing.

It seems to be a joke right at this time and last year as I said that the elders will be medivaced requires a medevac plane that has washroom facilities and the argument at that time was that the flight was only an hour and a half. But your body needs to do its function whenever it has to, whether you are the Queen or a big official. Since that is the case I would like to urge you and your department to make changes.

(interpretation ends) Charter flights more than enough to buy a decent medevac plane that would be satisfactory for patients.

So could the minister commit to change the requirement of the loosely worded policy that says whether or not they should have? It should be a requirement that we no longer should be using these frontier planes to medevac people. Could the minister respond to the state of confusion in the Kivalliq? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Health has contracts with different airline companies to provide medevac emergency evacuation services. One is in the Kivalliq, one here and one in the Kitikmeot.

If the member could clarify for me what the confusion is I'll try and address his concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Just respond to my question because I'm using up my time. I was really quite clear in my language.

Do these planes require washroom facilities or not? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The kind of aircraft that we fly, as far as I know from the guidelines around Transport Canada, the kind of aircraft that we use do not require toilets in most cases. What we have asked for in the request for proposals is to try and get airlines that have washrooms. But the types of aircrafts that are used to fly are under Transport Canada regulations do not need to have washroom facilities.

I hope that clarifies that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: No, it does not clarify. It confuses a lot more because the tender that was issued specifically stated that washroom facilities are required. I would like to ask the deputy minister to respond to that question. Respond to that question. I don't want to repeat the question because I am taking up my time. I only have ten minutes or less - six minutes right now. Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask the deputy minister to come here who is also a pilot and has firsthand experience with Transport Canada and knows more about the field to come here to respond to the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff.

Welcome. Minister can you please, for the record, introduce your staff.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Ron Browne, the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Welcome to the Chambers, Mr. Browne. Would you please answer the member's question, Mr. Browne.

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister has mentioned there are three contracts for medevac services for the territory. None of the current contracts require the availability of a built-in toilet on the aircraft.

What has been arranged in the case of a chartered scheduled medical service from Sanikiluaq is that there is a portable toilet in that aircraft for scheduled chartered medical flights.

We understand the benefits of being able to have a toilet available. There is a new medevac contract that has been put out for request for proposals, and a successful responder has been chosen for that.

The wording in that new contract is that it would be desirable to have an aircraft with a toilet. As the minister has mentioned, the most important thing is to have the appropriate aircraft for the patient that flies with the amount of equipment that is needed to medevac the patient, and those size of aircraft under Transport Canada regulations don't require a toilet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I would like the deputy minister to give the breakdown on each of the regions' three contracts. What amount they are roughly for the last year. I'll settle for last year or the previous year if the figures aren't there.

I would like to say to the minister and deputy minister that desirable is hardly a commitment by the government to have that service because it's not a binding requirement.

I fully understand there are transport regulations, but the health regulations for specific needs are really not directed by transport rules. You, as for instance, the airline that is selected have to have certain medical equipment and so on; those are not part of transport regulations for these types of aircrafts.

These are medevacs, a type of air ambulance flight. Why are you settling for less than real air ambulances for the amount of dollars that you are spending? First you give me the figures; exactly what annually are you paying for the medevac service. Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday in the House, a letter with the breakdown was tabled with the medical travel for the previous fiscal year. This fiscal year is not over yet for us to provide that information.

Right now, we process in total over 33,000 travels in Nunavut. The breakdown, by region, over \$16 million in the Baffin, Kivalliq is over \$20 million, and for the Kitikmeot it is \$10 million.

In total, that results in about over 33,000 people being shipped for medical travel as well as medevacs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Part of my question was not dealt with. The word desirable, to have a washroom is hardly a binding requirement, isn't it deputy minister? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe Mr. Curley wants the deputy to respond, so I'll transfer that to Ron.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Browne.

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, the wording in the request for proposal for the contract that is currently being renewed uses the phrase; "...make the best efforts to provide washroom availability on the aircraft."

There are a lot of factors that have to be taken into account in deciding the best overall arrangements for medevac aircraft. And, at this point, the requirement for a built-in washroom has not been felt to be justified, so we are specifying it as something desirable rather than mandatory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Minister and Deputy. But I tell you when you have constituencies like we do, then you would say then when you a 70 year old, almost an 80 year old man that has been medevaced and coming home and saying, "I wish these strangers have a washroom." He barely made it to that location. That was my father-in-law just before he died of cancer.

You would likely do that if you were a politician. But you're paying top dollars; you're a real gold mine with those contracts. Why are you failing the constituents, the Nunavummiut, the patients of Nunavut and settling for I use the word 'frontier' type of airplane. Not jets, not real air ambulances, when you're paying top dollar. They can finance any new airline air ambulance services with that amount of dollars.

It would be, I think, less than fair to the patients. You have tremendous opportunity to put the binding needs of Nunavummiut, instead of ... otherwise why pay that amount of dollars when you're settling for less than what is really needed for the patients of Nunavut? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Browne. Sorry, Mr. Browne. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the aircraft that are used for medevacs are similar aircraft any other jurisdiction uses. I'm not sure what ancient aircraft the member is talking about. The aircrafts that are being used to do medical evacuations of people are modern aircraft. There are some jets that we use in transporting patients in the north.

So I guess the top priority for us is to get the person into a hospital. That's our first concern. Adequate medical attention is given to patients on the aircraft. So that is our

major concern and our top priority. We pay huge amounts of money to transport people to hospitals. That's the only means we have at this point in time.

We don't own our own aircraft and increasing the size of the aircraft right now would require additional financial resources for us. Bigger aircraft cost more money. So we try and provide an adequate service to communities.

But the other thing is not every community, not every aircraft can land in the communities; they can't land jets to Pangnirtung as an example, or Grise Fiord. So we have to use twin otters or the smaller aircraft to land, the top priority being, again, to get the patient to a hospital. So we try and address those concerns through the RFP process, and of course, it would be desirable to have washroom facilities but at this point in time we don't have that.

In the case of Sanikiluaq, that issue has been addressed with the company with the scheduled medical charters, it's not a medevac; it's a scheduled medical charter. It's very different from the medevac contracts that we're talking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Minister and Deputy. I can tell, you know, with the amount when you calculate that amount of dollars in one week at \$20 million a year, not all of it is for purchasing fuel and everything. So a lot of that percentage is profit. We don't need to worry about what type of aircraft that we are buying; you are just not putting out your tender exactly what you want in your tender and your services. You already made up your mind that we are not able enough and we are not that far ahead, so we'll settle for something.

I was on the medevac plane going down to Winnipeg. I could tell you that was not the kind of a medevac plane that anyone really should be on. And yet that is what you guys are settling for. It's not something that you get the best deals of any kind of medevac plane.

I wish the minister would table some of the medevac planes that are available within the provinces and compare them with our services, will you do that? The type of aircraft that are available, as you have already said, you are now using similar planes and everything else. Please table those types of aircraft of the provincial governments and our own, exactly what type we are using, which ones are being used by other provinces and that will help us a lot. Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will provide the photographs to the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I'm not just asking for photographs, I think we need the detailed information, what type of tenders they normally put out as well and look for their requirements for medevac planes.

I think, minister, you need to demonstrate to the Nunavummiut that while you are not willing really to give the patients, as well as elderly, comfort when they have been medevaced. I wish that you would be, I believe, prepared to speak to the companies because you are giving them top dollars for the medical travel and medical charters.

I truly believe that they can bring in a special plane that is specially geared for a medevac instead of being part of the charter services of the general territorial region. So I believe if you do that the people will know that you are working your hardest to make them comfortable. (interpretation) Will you be able to do that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We expect standards of different types of aircraft in our request for proposals process, I will be glad to share that request for proposals document with the members which clearly outlines what standards of care are to be provided. What kind of aircraft we use and the types of abilities of each aircraft, whether they can put in a stretcher, or whether we can put in an incubator and so on.

There are different standards, we also have standards of medical teams that we require on those flights, and that I can share the RFP information with the member, and those standards are similar to other jurisdictions. The aircraft that we use in the north are used, for instance, Sky Services is used internationally. We use that company based in Ottawa to do our medevac for Ottawa bound.

The company that we use in the Kivalliq is Manitoba-based as well. The company that we use in the Kitikmeot is Cambridge Bay as well as Yellowknife-based. So other jurisdiction do use the same aircraft

But I want to state for the record that we try very hard to provide good service to the citizens in getting them to the hospitals. The information I gave in terms of the figures before are not just medevac. Those are scheduled travel of patients on scheduled aircraft to and from the communities. It is not just medevacs in those figures that I provided. For the record, I just wanted to clarify that.

I will be happy to provide that information to the member and what other standards are used by other jurisdictions and the standards and requirements we ask for in our territory and I also want to assure that the aircraft that are used are transport-approved aircraft and are safe. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I would like to ask the minister and her officials, there are many patients that tend to check in to the hotel instead of the Inuit centre for a number of reasons. Many of them are understandable. Once you check into the hotel, aside from the travel warrant or accommodation warrant issued to the hotel, you are responsible for all other expenses, meals, transportation, etcetera, although you can claim them back.

To claim those receipts is really extreme. Sometimes it takes, as in one case, two years. The person has forgotten about it but the cheque came in for a claim, \$200, for a claim that was put in two years ago. One of the things we learned was why it was so late? The airfare had been paid for by the government, for tickets and everything else, but she had not got home with the boarding pass part of the ticket.

In order to submit the boarding pass, she had to get an affidavit. Why is that such a big deal when you already had a travel agency pay for it? The boarding pass is just a seat number required. It is a part of the major delay of the Department of Finance. Could you explain why that is such a big deal to the department?

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the difference here, from what I gather from this particular case of an individual posting a claim, if an employee working for the government travels, they get reimbursed for their hotels and their meals. That is outside the Department of Health.

If it is a non-employee of the territorial government; we cover all the travel, transportation, the boarding home situation and/or the others. But if an employee is claiming back meals and so on, as part of the *Financial Administration Act*, employees are required to provide receipts. That would be the particular department processing their claims that would handle that.

When it comes to treating individuals under the non-insured health program, we don't have claims. We cover that, we do the travel, we ship them to the boarding home, we pick them up at the airport, we provide them the meals at the boarding home and so on. I think that those are the two differences in administering medical in that particular instance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under H-13, my question is in regard to I believe 2006-07, \$46,322,000, (interpretation ends) but this year it is \$2,189,000 less than last year. What is the explanation for this? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you. Just give me a second. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. I believe there are about six or seven positions that were funded under a different line item for wait time reduction funding. We removed that from this item as part of the revised main estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are you saying that it would be the same for the travel and transportation costs for those staff is less than last year? It probably applies to the same staff that are withdrawn from this line item? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the member asking me a question around the Travel and Transportation line item, or are you still under the first item? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Aglukkaq, I'm sorry Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm on H-13. The \$2 million something, where was it put? As you stated earlier, because of six or seven positions, where do we see the increase in others, and is it the same with travel and transportation? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think you would make a very good Mr. Aglukkaq.

>> *Laughter*

I'm going to ask Ron to respond to that line item. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Aglukkaq. Mr. Browne.

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The main reason that the compensation and benefits is \$2 million less is that because of the difficulty in recruiting nurses, and other staff, we realize that although money had been provided in the budget in 2006-07 to add additional staff in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet that the likelihood of being able to staff up to that in the fiscal year of 2007 is very unlikely.

So we have temporarily frozen 24.9 person-years in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet and that amounts to a reduction in the budget of \$1,896,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Browne. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's too bad that they had to put a hold on them because in Rankin Inlet and in the Kitikmeot, there is a big shortage of nurses.

I wonder if the minister, with all her power, because those positions have to be filled, has the minister tried to fill those positions to the best of her ability. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The staff that were missing, next week, on Thursday, we will be recruiting. We're always looking because we're short in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I now have a title of minister, so I want washroom facilities in all the aircrafts. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome minister and your officials.

I have a question. On more than one occasion, as members we have raised the matter of operation of medical transportation within the Baffin region. As a minister, what improvements have you made of the problem that we have in the Baffin region. At the first assembly this was raised during the first assembly too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I'd like to start my response to that by saying that prior to any change we were dealing with approximately 200 complaints under the old system a year. The volume that you see in the tabled documents and the number of volume we deal with in processing. We needed to address that concern, particularly, here in the Baffin where there is only one hospital.

So the improvements that we tried to make to address the concerns were to have the hospital personnel travel south to deal with the patients at the hospital for any arrangements. That was one. The second change was the creation of positions in Pangnirtung to provide a service to the health centres for any southbound, up island to Iqaluit travel.

Then we broke up the volume of this as it was. The Baffin hospital was providing services to people whether they were going to the hospital or not. We tried to manage their workload a bit by splitting that function and to have them focus on their patients in

the hospital. You'll see in the Baffin alone there are about 13,000 tickets that we've processed in twelve months. It's a huge volume. Of that about two percent we heard complaints from people.

One of the things that we've done to try and address that is deal with the airlines. We've met with the airline companies and established better communication and better processes. I think that we had a very good meeting with First Air and they continue to be a partner in providing the service to us. There's direct contact to our staff whether they're here, Ottawa, or in Pangnirtung.

Another area we established was to have staff in the Pangnirtung office work after hours. There's a person that receives the call who is on call if there is a need. Their hours of work have also been extended to work around the airline schedule a bit more effectively.

Regular communication has also been established from our personnel to the boarding homes to try to better case manage patient travel. Another area that we are working on and we're hoping to try and address in the next year is to develop a computerized system of managing our patient records and patient referral systems.

Those are a number of areas that we have put out for improvement. I'd like to report back after one year of implementing this change to see if there has been a reduction in the complaints of our clients traveling in and out of the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for her response.

I represent three communities with one airline. Whenever there is a load some of them are left behind that are supposed to go to the hospital. There's always somebody left behind when the aircraft leaves. The Larga Manager in Ottawa, when I spoke to them they said that whenever there is somebody that comes down to the hospital and has to stay in the Larga Home they have no more space, especially when they have relocated that position to Pangnirtung.

There's a lot of information that we can provide through the telephone, fax, and through the computer. Even though it's like that, even if you give a telephone number to an elder, they can't keep on phoning the travel agent coordinator or the travel agent person because elders are not like that.

I wonder if the minister can consider that Pangnirtung position to ... (interpretation ends) ... Will the minister consider relocating the Baffin medical travel back to Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think yesterday we spoke extensively about the challenge of trying to meet all the needs of the patients at the Ottawa boarding home, and we've been working very closely with Nunasi to address the boarding home situation in Ottawa. There are capacity issues there; we recognize that and we will continue to work with the service provider in addressing their concerns.

The issue around relocating is a concern to me. Relocating would not improve and address the two percent of the people that have complained before we made the change. The travel office at the hospital is still there. We have not removed that. It's still at the hospital. So the hospital is focusing on providing better service to the patients that are in the hospital.

The two positions that we created in Pangnirtung is to provide service to the health centres in the communities.

So as I said to the House earlier is that I would like to report to the House on some of those changes and to evaluate whether in fact we have reduced that two percent of the complaints we received before we created the office in Pangnirtung, but we did not dissolve the operations in the hospital; it's still there.

Perhaps some time when we're not sitting I can walk you through the hospital and explain the procedures that are in place to provide services to the patients, and go and walk through the process of how we deal with patients that are being discharged from the hospital, how they get their airline tickets, and so on. Individuals at the other end in the Pangnirtung office are Inuktitut-speaking individuals. The tickets are processed through the Pangnirtung office and so on.

So in responding on the service, I would like an opportunity to perhaps set up a time to go through the process. I would also like to be able to report back after a year to see if these changes in fact address the two percent. My staff were at the mayors' and QIA meetings just on this very issue and they said two percent is not acceptable. And we're trying to address that two percent with these improvements to the system.

So I would like to be able to evaluate it before I consider the member's recommendations and report to the House on these complaints, or whether we've been able to reduce that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday I asked a question on the tabled document that was provided by the minister: Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and Baffin region uses for medical travel.

A little over \$15 million for the Baffin, \$20 million for the Kivalliq, and \$10 million for Kitikmeot, something along that line for medical travel and for their escorts.

What has the department done to try and not spend a huge amount of money for medical travel and their escorts in 2007-08? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the initiatives that we are undertaking internally are initiatives to prevent illness; initiatives in keeping people healthy. I think that is one short answer to what we are doing.

The other is to develop more services in the communities through the diagnostic imaging as an example, developing systems of fetal fibronectin system which diagnoses false labour, I think last year we prevented 40 medevacs from happening because of that investment and we are hoping to expand that service to the regions, providing more specialists to travel to the communities.

So, quickly, that is the kind of initiatives we are undertaking, it is very, very difficult to predict illness. It is very, very difficult to forecast illness costs, so we try and provide as much service as possible in the communities. But at the end of the day if a person requires treatment in a hospital we only have one hospital in Nunavut so we have to transport, so there are initiatives of trying to reduce this.

At the same time the investments in Telehealth, we have tried to do the diagnoses in that way. So I hope that, in short, answers some of the member's questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In response to concerns raised by members regarding services and treatment, including medical travel, the department has indicated that these would be addressed by creating a position of client service coordinator. What is the status of the client service coordinator? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are proceeding with the advertisement of that job. I have committed to advertising that. The position will be located in Cambridge Bay. I thought I had sent a copy of the response to the chair of the standing committee on some of those issues. We are moving forward in that, I apologize, and the member may not have a copy of that, but we plan to fill that position. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When did that position come about because we have been trying to get that position for three years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I said we are planning to advertise that position. It will be located in Cambridge Bay. I stated that in my letter on March 6, 2007, to the standing committee members, the plan to do just that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Have negotiations with the federal government, with respect to funding for accommodations for medical clients in the three regional centres been finalized? If not, why not? And, when will the standing committee be advised of the results of these negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to that question is twofold; some of these contracts with the service providers have not expired, so we haven't started that process of the request for proposal.

Normally we do the public request for proposal process of getting submissions to operate the facility. Where we have been negotiating is trying to increase the rate that we get paid from Health Canada to operate them. And, that one was related to the one in Ottawa. As part of that discussion and negotiations for that, we've dealt with that through Nunasi. And, that one is concluded.

The other contracts are still existing, so when they do expire, and shortly before, a public process will be advertised where we request the proposals from providers on that. We don't sole source those services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have visited quite a few communities and a few days ago I visited Baffin Larga in Ottawa. I have visited the Winnipeg Larga too, and I have also visited the Yellowknife Larga.

The Yellowknife Larga and the Winnipeg Larga are brand new. The Winnipeg Larga is brand new. It has even got an elevator, and there are washrooms in all the bedrooms. The restaurant is spacious and there is room for Inuit to eat. They accommodate Inuit needs.

Likewise in Yellowknife, the design is very good. I went to see how Larga Baffin is doing. The kitchen is running out of space, and people eat in the living room. Patients eat in the living room when the dining room is full.

There are two buildings used as Larga Baffin; one is a boarding home, and the other is used for patients who have had surgery, and they have to go to the next house for their meals.

(interpretation ends) What is the status of the boarding home accommodations in the three regional centres? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The status with the boarding home is we have a boarding home in Edmonton and a service provider, and that contract is still in place. In Yellowknife, we have a lease on that building and the contract to operate it is still in place. In Cambridge Bay, we don't have the building yet. In Rankin Inlet, we don't have the building yet.

As for Winnipeg, the contract with the service provider is still in place. So, there are different facilities in every region; different sizes, different issues, and so on. I recognize the situation in Ottawa is a challenge and an issue. We've been working very closely with Nunasi, as they are a partner. We have been working closely with them trying to move forward on constructing a new facility in Ottawa.

To build a new facility, we needed to negotiate a new daily rate with Health Canada. So, that we've concluded, and they can move forward now in constructing a new building. So, that's where that is.

The others, we have not gone down that path yet, as it is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you. Just to go back a bit to the Client Travel Policy. When do you expect to complete the Client Travel Policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I reported in the House this last week that I have received, what you call, interim support to the draft that I presented to Cabinet.

I have to go back to the Financial Management Board. Any changes to the policy will require incremental funding. One example I will use is that we provide escorts, and the

recommendations from the members were every elder should have an escort whether they are medically required or not.

That will have a financial impact, and I have to go to the Financial Management Board to seek that funding. It's a challenge. I'm hoping I will have that direction completed by this summer.

At the same time I have been directed to develop the guidelines in administering the programs for every health centre along with the policy. So, that is going to take a bit of time. I'm hoping this summer. It's taken a lot longer than I expected. But in the interim, we still use the current policy that was approved in 2002. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Barnabas, keep your questions to Treatment Programs, page H-13, please. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you. I'm asking questions on page H-13, and some on H-20 in the business plan. I apologize Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) When will the department conduct a public information campaign to explain the Client Travel Policy to the public, and to ensure that staff responsible for implementing the policy are up to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Quickly, as soon as I get support from Cabinet, and it's approved, we'll be doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions on this branch summary regarding medevacs. First of all, I wanted to know how much it is to charter from Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is approximately \$15,000 per trip. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that's enough to charter a modern airplane now. \$15,000 is a lot of money. My next question; the minister said they are using modern airplanes now. What kind of plane are they using for travel between Sanikiluaq and Winnipeg? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I said modern I meant that these aircrafts are Transport Canada approved. The one in Sanikiluaq, I believe it's a King Air of some sort; I don't have the exact knowledge of the model types, makes. I know in some cases we have Lears, Citations, and King Air 100s and 200s, but I can get back to the member on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I can update the minister as to what kind airplanes they are using. What I've been told since Kivalliq Air was bought, I don't know when, but right now, they've been using the Mitchell, which is long, noisy, and they need earplugs for when the plane is taking off. I'm hoping that the minister will correct that.

I heard a rumour that they might use a King Air 200. Is that true that the airplane that's used for the Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg medical travel must be a King Air 200? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's probably best I contact the company and ask that question. I don't know the answer to that rumour and it is better I ask the company to provide this information of what their plan is in regard to that aircraft. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When will you do that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can place a call tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one more concern or question. It's difficult sometimes when we're in a small community; we're kind of an isolated community.

I think the government or the department is using a lot of money transporting from Sanikiluaq; maybe it's about \$15,000. Sometimes there are patients that are going to Churchill for checkups but they've been transported to Winnipeg, from Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg, and they overnight in Winnipeg and then go to Churchill.

But the way I see it globally from Sanikiluaq to Churchill is shorter, how come they get transported from Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg and then from Winnipeg to Churchill. Which way is cheaper to transport? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think one area to consider is what the patient's needs are. Maybe there was no room in the Winnipeg boarding home, or the hospital, or the treatment wasn't available in Churchill. I don't know the answer to that but I imagine it has to do with providing the service to the patients. Again, I would have to get that information specifically from the Rankin Inlet office in those instances and why we went to Churchill.

The other thing that I'd like to ask and I've had some discussions with my staff, is around why doesn't Sanikiluaq go to Ottawa? So that's an area that I've asked my staff to explore; perhaps that's a better arrangement. I don't know the history behind why Sanikiluaq is being serviced by the Kivalliq, and Winnipeg. I think, in light of these kinds of concerns, I want to review the possibility of having this service to Ottawa as an option at this point in time.

I will check to see what instances people in Sanikiluaq went to Winnipeg and then to Churchill and report back because I don't know why. It could be related to the patient, is my assumption. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: If she wants to find out, go down to Sanikiluaq and talk to the people. We've talked about that in the past. I don't think you understood my comment about transporting patients yesterday, or the day before.

There was a patient who had to go to Churchill for a check-up but they transported her from Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg, and then next day from Winnipeg to Churchill. She had a one hour check-up in Churchill. Yesterday she went back down to Winnipeg and she is coming home tomorrow. That's using a lot of money, unfortunately.

I don't know why the charter couldn't go to Churchill direct from Sanikiluaq. It would be better for everybody, for the department, for the patients. I think the department has to look at which is better for both sides, for patients and the department.

That is all that I have, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will look into that situation with the staff in Rankin Inlet. I don't know why they went from Sanikiluaq to Winnipeg to Churchill. I don't know the answer to that specific question.

My guess is the patient had an appointment and the earliest appointment was available in Churchill. I am assuming these things. I don't know the answer. I will take that information and talk to the staff and figure out and get them to explain to me why that was the case. It could be bad weather; it could be...I don't know. I really don't know and I apologize to the member for that. I don't know the response but I will contact the office to explain to me that particular situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if I explained enough, or not. I am saying that it happened more than once, to my knowledge. They had to see a doctor in Churchill and they transported them to Winnipeg first, and then the next day to Churchill, instead of taking them direct to Churchill. That's a shorter flight and cheaper. And going back they have to go down to Winnipeg again, and then from Winnipeg to Sanikiluaq; that's a long haul, eh?

So I think the department has to take a look into this seriously. That's just an explanation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome the minister and officials to the House again today. On Page H-18 on the Business Plan under Treatment the division there, Hospital and Physician Services. The budget seems to have increased by approximately \$5.6 million over this current fiscal year. Could the minister explain what the increase entails? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This relates to the increases of the out of territory services of our patients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Does that include bed nights in hospitals in southern provinces? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: That would be correct. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I am wondering, if the minister could give us an idea of what the, I suppose they call it bed

nights or patient. What's the cost of being in the hospital in Yellowknife, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal, and Iqaluit, would you have those kinds of figures available? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that level of detailed information before me but I can give the information to the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. One of the reasons I asked this question is I asked it several years ago to the former minister of health. Provincial hospitals are being squeezed quite a bit for funding so they will bump their patients and they will take patients from the north, Nunavut, and the patient rates could range anywhere from \$900 a night to close to \$5,000 a night depending on how seriously sick the patient is. I know in Yellowknife, I think it was \$1,200.

I wanted to get that information just to see if the patient bed night rates have increased or decreased or if we're still into that situation where we have to pay fairly exorbitant rates to support our patients in the south. If the minister could provide that information, I don't need it today, but if we can get that information for the standing committee and Members in the House.

I know we are always trying to stay positive when a patient has to go to a hospital down south and the only beds available are a \$4,500 bed then that is what you have to pay.

On the same page there is a description of audiology services. I had a constituent last year who required a hearing aid. She said it was almost a two year process for her from the time she saw the ear, nose, and mouth specialist.

I am wondering: is there a way to speed up the process of trying to see the specialists if you need a hearing aid or if you need some other aid or whatever your health condition is. Is there a way to speed up the process so that specialist comes to the community, diagnoses the patient, they don't have to wait for three more months before they see that patient again and then three more months before they... you know, eventually it adds up to a year, a year and a half.

I wonder if you could look into that scenario and how you could speed it up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can review the process and get back to the member on how that service is provided in Nunavut by region and report back to the individual. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister.

That would be fine. I know if we live in the south we'd probably be able to see a specialist in a lot more timely fashion, maybe within a month or so. In the north, it's a little bit more difficult. They're only coming in every three months, and then you get diagnosed, and it's another three months before they come back.

I'd like to help our residents up north from the time they're diagnosed to when eventually their health issue is resolved. On the same page, under Community Health Centres, the budget there has decreased by \$5.5 million.

I wonder if the minister can explain there is a decrease in community health centres. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The facilities in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet that was originally under the health centres were transferred down to, part of it under the Hospital and Physician Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for responding. It's kind of more a rebalancing of those two items. Okay.

On page H-19 of the business plan, I want to follow up on one of your priorities for 2006. There is a statement there: it says; "Status of expenditures in the new regional health facilities in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay." The statement there says; "Emergency outpatients, specialist clinics and diagnostic services have been enhanced in Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay."

Can the minister expand a little bit on what you mean when you say the services have been enhanced? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations to join me back at the witness table to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff. Thank you, Mr. Richardson. Welcome back. Please answer Mr. Peterson's question. Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The enhanced services in Cambridge Bay, with the new facility includes a new adult day program, laboratory services are just about to be opened with new staff and new equipment under way, the availability of lab technology and new pharmacy services have been provided in the community. Those are the new services.

There have also been, in Kitikmeot in Cambridge Bay, rehab physiotherapy services in the new health centre. There are plans to introduce and offer an endoscopy program with the assistance of a specialist from Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Richardson for that answer. Perhaps the minister or assistant deputy minister could tell me what level of operation do you consider the Cambridge Bay Health Centre to be at in the new regional health facility? You heard me talk about the fact that we should have four doctors and we only have one, and we need 20 nurses. Seems like they are doing a lot here, what Mr. Richardson describes as enhanced services in that health facility.

Obviously if we only have one doctor and you don't have the full complement of nurses then this facility isn't 100 percent operational and delivering all the services intended to deliver, what level of operational capabilities do you consider the health centre to be at as of today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Aglukkaq. Sorry Minister, Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The only services that were planned for the facility that we are not currently able to operate due to the shortage of staff are the obstetric services and the acute in-patient services and those will require additional new staff that will be difficult to recruit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Mr. Richardson for that answer. I have been telling everybody prepared to listen to me that it's probably only 50 percent operational. People like to have numbers. What do you consider it to be 50 percent or 60 percent or 70 percent? Can you give me a number? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is not as easy for me as the member to make this calculation. We are using the entire building. The majority of services apart

from the in patient and the obstetrics are being provided. I would say that we are more than 50 percent operational in the facility and I would put it at about 70 percent of the capacity of the facility. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Mr. Richardson for that answer. Now, I can start telling people that it's more than 70 percent operational and when they ask me what that means I will refer them to the assistant deputy minister.

Just further down on the page under your priorities for 2007-08, one of your priorities is improve tracking of specialist referrals. Can you clarify what you intend to do there for that priority? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have spoken on the need for our organization to develop case management of our patients. Right now everything is manual. We are looking at trying to put in systems that can track patients as well as their appointments in the referral system. One of those is also the specialist services that come up or they have to go down to, as part of the development of this system and services that they provide are physicians. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I certainly hope that the tracking does improve. I've had complaints from some of my constituents who are waiting for specialist service they are told that it will be a month or two. Then suddenly they'll get a phone call after a week that'll say just before lunch "you got to go on the flight today" because the specialist is available in Yellowknife.

I know it applies in the case I said earlier about hearing aids. It puts a lot of stress on constituents when they had other plans for that day, or that week and they are told by the people looking after the referrals that you have to go on the plane today to go to Yellowknife, or Edmonton to see that specialist, otherwise you will have to wait three months.

It would certainly be something that my constituents would appreciate it if the tracking and appointment process was organized and orderly, and not sudden and surprising for them. I am not saying that it happens in every instance but in a couple of instances it's happened. It puts a lot of stress on my constituents and they come into my office and you know what it's like - the stress and strain and you don't want to miss your appointment.

Mr. Chairman, that's more of a comment. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the minister and her officials, that referrals, if they're not done properly, can place a lot of hardship on constituents who are in poor health already. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe that there was a question, but I appreciate the member raising that. Yes, I agree we need to work on that and it is identified as a priority that we want to work on this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I'd like thank Mr. Peterson. Mr. Curley, you had your hand up earlier, and I will give you just one question. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I truly regret that work to rule is on all sides because I want to say that this Assembly and the government appears to completely ignore the plight of those with special needs; those people with mental illness. There's very little reference in the government work plans in the health department on H-14 of the business plan for mental illnesses in Nunavut.

I believe there are a tremendous number of our constituents that are diagnosed with mental illnesses and they don't have any representatives, and it's really shameful that you are also a part of that, Mr. Chairman, that we're now working to rule because we need to know exactly...

I have a constituent who came to me this summer in a very difficult situation. The children are somewhat treated, the mental health facility in Rankin Inlet, is a good example. I am not questioning that one, but there are adults that don't fit into that category and cannot get into that facility.

Yet we don't have any allocations of funds, or strategy, or how are the mental health strategy, or treatment programs being delivered by this government, because in view of time and the gag order that I would like the minister to fully explain in detail exactly what are we going to do with those with special needs, and mental health treatment requirements in Nunavut?

I would like the minister to table such a report, if there is one, before too long so that people diagnosed with mental health or psychiatric needs ... how they're really treated because I don't think we should ignore them anymore. Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of initiatives that the department provides for mental health patients and mental health services.

First of all, in every community we have mental health workers that provide service to the communities. In Nunavut we have a few facilities that house 24/7 care to mental health patients. In cases where we don't have the facilities in the north to provide that, we have to go out-of-territory for providing that kind of service.

We also provide contributions to all the municipalities in providing not just mental health but addictions counselling services on a municipal level through contribution, that information is provided.

At the same time, the department has also initiated last year, and we're expecting the graduates this year, is to train our own people in the north to be in the field of mental health programming, which is offered in Iqaluit at the Arctic College. Those individuals will be recruited to fill vacant positions in the communities to provide some support.

There's also, within the department, a crisis intervention team that deals with mental health situations in times of crisis in various communities in the north. We are in the process of hiring a director of mental health and addictions person to focus more on those types of services in the north.

I can also table the document that was tabled in the House I believe in 2002; it's the Nunavut Addictions to Mental Health Strategy. That's the document that we've been working with in trying to address mental health. And, I will provide that information to the House and to give more information to the members on some of the initiatives that we're undertaking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I would like to thank Mr. Curley for asking that question. I don't have any more names on my list. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Treatments Program. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$106,701,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you, very much. Page H-4. Health and Social Services. Department Summary. Details of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$225,622,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you, very much. Are you agreed the Department of Health and Social Services is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you, very much. I would like to thank the minister and her staff. Do you have closing remarks, minister? Go ahead.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): Thank you. I thank the members for asking questions. (interpretation ends) I would also like to thank my staff, Shirley, David, and Ron who is sitting in the Gallery today. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister and your staff. Thank you. We will take a five-minute break.

>>*Committee recessed at 18:39 and resumed at 18:54*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, for coming back. We're going to be dealing with the Department of Environment. (interpretation ends) I would now like to ask Minister Netser of Environment to make his opening remarks. Mr. Netser.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 – Consideration in Committee – Environment

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to appear before the Committee of the Whole to present our department's main estimates and business plan for the 2007-08 fiscal year.

With me tonight are Mr. Simon Awa, Deputy Minister, and Ms. Jane Cooper who is the Assistant Deputy Minister. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Environment's proposed main estimate budget for 2007-08 is \$17,261,000.

My department has identified a budget and business plans for fiscal year 2007-08 that focuses on two issues. One is delivering on our mandated obligations and responsibilities including our obligations under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and supporting partnerships within strategic core areas of our operations.

The Department of Environment has a number of specific obligations in areas of responsibility under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement that are directly related to the management of Nunavut's resources as well as a number of other national and international legal obligations and responsibilities which include: ongoing responsibilities for the core management of all terrestrial wildlife in Nunavut; Land Use Planning; Environmental Protection and regulatory functions including contaminated site inventory and drum crushing and the responsibility for the implementation of the Umbrella Territorial Parks Inuit Impacts and Benefits Agreement.

You will see a significant portion of our overall budget goes to ensuring that we meet those obligations. As part of the Departmental Inuit Employment Plan, we introduced a field officer training program in the 2005-06 fiscal year. Three Inuit beneficiaries, one from each region in Nunavut have been recruited to the training program.

The trainees are located in Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, and Kugluktuk. This multiyear training program encourages recruitment of Inuit wildlife officers through a modern training program which combines ongoing professional development within the system of training and mentoring.

Mr. Chairman, if resources permit us, we plan to continue this training program so that in time we will be able to further increase the percentage of conservation officers who are

Inuit. One of our goals is to have two conservation officers in each community, especially in the larger communities.

This would provide the officers with more security and support and to ensure communities continue to be served when an officer goes on leave or if a position becomes vacant. Throughout our budget and planning for 2007-08 fiscal year, we have endeavoured to capitalize on partnership opportunities as the most cost-effective and efficient approach to getting things accomplished.

By partnering with other organizations and institutions, in both private and public sectors, the department will maximize the impact of its resources to increase or supplement our internal capacity. Often a relatively small investment from the department will support a much needed service in Nunavut for Nunavummiut.

For example, in 2007-08 we plan to contribute \$946,000 as grants and contributions to our partnering organizations such as the hunter and trapper organizations, the regional wildlife boards and other partners. For the coming fiscal year we will continue to deliver our harvester support programming ourselves but we are working diligently with Nunavut Tunngavik to reduce duplications in our respective programs and to bring improvements and efficiency in the way that we deliver them.

The department will also be working closely with the Nunavut hamlets in addressing and managing the contaminated sites inventory, drum crushing and recycling projects. Respecting territorial parks, with community support we will continue our feasibility studies and development plans for potential parks in our non-decentralized communities.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that the Department of Environment's Main Estimates for 2007-08 are well balanced and clearly support the obligations and priorities of the Government of Nunavut as well as the needs of Nunavummiut. The department will continue to efficiently make use of its allocated resources and also leverage on third party support to meet our mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please assist the minister's staff.

Thank you. (interpretation ends) For the record, minister, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Jane Cooper, who is the Assistant Deputy Minister and to my right is Mr. Simon Awa, who is the Deputy Minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Welcome minister and your officials. Does the Chair of the Committee *Ajauqtiit* have any comments? Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide the committee's opening remarks as we begin consideration of the 2007-08 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Environment. Later on, members will have an opportunity to make comments and ask questions regarding these estimates.

The Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* has had the opportunity to meet with the Minister and his officials. The minister was able to provide an update on his department's proposed expenditures for the coming fiscal year.

The standing committee notes that the department has received a significant budget increase from its 2006-07 main estimates. The standing committee looks forward to the minister keeping the House fully informed of the specific projects for which this increased funding will be used.

Members continue to be concerned about the polar bear issue. The United States government is still considering adding the polar bear to its listing of endangered species. This could significantly harm a number of our smaller communities, where sport hunting is a major source of economic activity and employment. Members are aware that there is much evidence to indicate that polar bear populations in Nunavut are, in fact, healthy. Members support the minister in his lobbying efforts to ensure that Nunavut's position is clearly presented.

As all members know, our colleague from Sanikiluaq has been a strong representative of his community with respect to environmental issues affecting Hudson Bay, including major hydroelectric projects in Quebec.

Members are pleased that the department is planning to support a major conference in 2009, the Hudson Bay Summit, which has the potential of helping to ensure that our concerns receive attention.

Members are pleased that the department is making efforts to increase the number of Inuit conservation officers. Members note that the department has hired three trainees and that the department has produced a recruitment video, targeted at Inuit youth, to encourage them to pursue careers as conservation officers.

Members are aware that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board continues its work with respect to the review of new regulations made under the *Wildlife Act*. Members continue to receive concerns from their communities on such matters as the total

allowable harvest for certain species. Members have been given to understand that the majority of the outstanding areas of disagreement between the GN and NTI are being resolved. Members will continue to monitor this issue.

Members continue to be concerned with respect to the status of contaminated sites in Nunavut, including Old Clyde River and Cape Christian. The need for the GN to account for environmental liabilities has, in fact, been noted in the Auditor General's reports to the Legislative Assembly. The standing committee encourages the department to continue its work with Indian and Northern Affairs and other organizations to achieve progress in identifying funds and moving forward with actual clean-ups.

As all Nunavummiut are aware, the issue of global warming is of extreme importance. Members noted with disappointment that the Nunavut Climate Change Strategy has not been implemented due to lack of funding. Members recognize that a global problem requires global solutions. As MLAs, we all have a responsibility to ensure that this issue remains on the agenda, and support the minister in his efforts to work with his counterparts from across the country.

It was recently announced that an umbrella IIBA for conservation areas has been concluded. It takes many years to complete such negotiations and members are pleased that progress has been achieved. Members were also pleased that the Coppermine Heritage River Management Plan is being completed.

This concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will raise their own comments and concerns on the department's 2007-08 main estimates and business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Before we proceed I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have ten minutes to speak, and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may speak more than once to a matter under discussion but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken.

I suggest to members that wherever possible you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates. Do members have any general comments? Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials.

When we talk about environment, I feel very happy about that because it's the Inuit have to deal with the environment, especially the hunters. There is too much legislation and too many wildlife that are classified as endangered. There's a lot of wildlife that had been classed as declining but looking at that, because we live here, we know it isn't so.

I feel that the hunters in Nunavut try to tell the public out there that there's a lot of wildlife out there and they should be ... (interpretation ends) ... you just need tools. Well then give me tools. And our proof is we live in Nunavut all our lives.

(interpretation) It's very maddening when others tell you they believe in the scientists, or they believe in the biologists, but they don't live in Nunavut, and the federal government believes in them.

I think this has to stop. We have to voice our concerns and use *Inuit Qaujimanituqangit* when you're doing research on wildlife in Nunavut and tell the federal government that this is the way we want to do things. We'd like to be able to use our own people.

I would like to encourage the minister; he should be using *Inuit Qaujimanituqangit* and whenever there is wildlife that is in the process of being considered at risk, I would like the minister to try to tell the people that it isn't so. We have to have the power to tell them that this is not happening. That is just a comment that I wanted to make. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. General comments. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome you Mr. Minister and your officials. Please feel welcome to the Chambers.

I, too, am representing the High Arctic communities. I am representing the polar bear pass area and also marine mammals such as narwhal and belugas that migrate through the High Arctic in the spring time.

We need to monitor wildlife activists when they go up to the High Arctic. They pretend to be doing something else, yet they are taking photographs. I know they need permission to take photographs. That should be clarified by your department that they should seek permission from the individuals if they're going to be photographing these hunters.

I don't think animal rights activists should be taking photographs without the permission of the hunters. We are not depleting the number of wildlife. The market for sealskin declined but it's not Inuit who were at fault.

Back in 1976 the price of sealskins declined. The prices are coming back up thanks to your department, and you are providing support to the hunters.

With regards to the environment, we are going to feel the impacts of climate change. For individuals working on climate change, I would urge your department to monitor the scientists doing the research during International Polar Year because we are the ones that are going to feel the first impacts up here.

Sometimes I think that the reason why we see so many Inuit with cancer is because our environment causes it. They will eventually find out through research done during the International Polar Year.

I would like to thank your department for increasing the numbers of conservation officers because they really provide support to regular Inuit on the street. For example, when they are selling their sealskins, or when the non-Inuit are applying for a permit. When you don't have a conservation officer, it's not very good when you're trying to get something from Iqaluit, when we need to take care of our environment.

I also have a concern with them. When the scientists came up to our community they tagged the narwhals, or asked questions like how many narwhals were harvested. As Inuit people we know how many narwhals we've landed, or how many narwhals we've netted because we were there actually hunting the narwhals. We also know how many we had lost.

We know exactly where they're going, even though there are some scientists doing their research on them. Perhaps the scientists don't believe us Inuit people. We have seen satellite pictures of whales. We as Inuit people are not hurting our wildlife. It's the biologist and the scientists when they put in those tags they are interfering with the wildlife. When they interfere with the wildlife they change their behaviour.

I am sure if they put a satellite radio on the scientist, he wouldn't want to wear that. It's evident. I'm sure he wouldn't want to wear that. Likewise, with wildlife, they have feelings like us.

I don't know if they're going to do another form of survey. Perhaps inform, or consult with the Inuit hunters before they do their research, or before they start tagging them. If they don't want to get permission from the Inuit at least don't come up and don't do research. One of the things that I've observed, and I believe they should be monitored, are the filmmakers. Sometimes they hire Inuit people in the springtime. At least the Inuit people can see summer jobs thanks to them but these filmmakers show their film internationally.

The HTOs in the communities are asked for permission, and they're used to get permission. The HTOs may approve the request, and don't provide a supporting letter or agreement stating that these individuals could be charged. I am talking about the HTO board. The HTO boards are responsible for our environment and they are to manage our wildlife.

Sometimes they even have more authority than the municipality because they are responsible for our environment. If the HTO is going to be used to get permission from the biologists, it's not appropriate.

Having said that, HTO boards never have appropriate space; no matter what community you go to, they lack office space and they are the ones guarding the environment. They

meet with the federal government, and they meet with the community members, and they meet with various members of the communities. They deal and make decisions on polar bear management because they are responsible for taking care of the environment and to make sure that the community is safe.

The question I was posing, I want to stress further that the hunters and trappers organization boards require offices. The hunters and trappers organizations are used more than conservation officers, and they work together very closely.

When they set up the renewable resource offices, perhaps they could provide space for the hunters and trappers organizations to have offices at the same location. They do need adequate space and offices.

When they start making decisions on environment, if they meet with anyone, like the federal government, or if they meet with proponents that apply for permits, when they have to work with all those individuals, it's inappropriate for them to have inadequate offices.

So, I really want to urge your department to provide offices for them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make brief general comments.

My colleagues know the issue about polar bear management, and they know that I have a concern with that. I know that the Department of Environment will be the leading department dealing with that. I have a concern, and I believe that the Department of Environment should work hard on that issue.

Also, with regards to sealing, as Inuit hunters, sealskins are their main source of money. The hunters sell polar bears and seals to make money. I believe you have to work harder on that.

Last summer, I believe it was in August in Sanikiluaq, they were doing a tagging project, and I'm very happy that they did a study on the hydro project in the Hudson Bay area. I'm very pleased that the researchers were very supportive to us.

But the way Inuit manage wildlife, the hunters were not very pleased. Last fall, I think it was in November, I announced in Sanikiluaq, from Chesterfield Inlet to Coral Harbour, and back to Sanikiluaq, and to Cambridge Bay, the hunters had a concern about wildlife. I think that seal was going all over the place when it was tagged.

They believe the seal was quite disturbed by the tag. Even if the seal was itchy, it couldn't even scratch itself. I believe that the tag was uncomfortable and that seal was travelling all over the place.

The minister's statement this morning under Ministers' Statements, I was very pleased to hear that and my constituency was asking questions in regard to that. So I was very pleased to hear your minister's statement because our younger generation has a concern in regard to the environment.

In regard to the federal government, they keep making reference to the *Clean Air Act* and I think that they should take into consideration the colder climate up here and the Inuit. I think that they should consider the north and I think that if this *Clean Air Act* is going to be implemented, it's going to have a huge impact on the Inuit and the people who inhabit the north.

I don't know whether it's true or not but in reference to the opening comments of the chairperson, we have a very huge concern on the hydro project that they're proposing. It's getting warmer in the southern provinces and we see a lot more water flowing in the middle of winter. Usually, the rivers start flowing in the spring. If it's going to be getting warmer down there, then there's going to be less flow of water.

Because of that, the Belcher Islands are going to be negatively impacted as there's going to be more freshwater flowing into Hudson Bay. As you're probably well aware, the people of Sanikiluaq rely heavily on the marine mammals for food, and also shellfish.

If there's going to be more freshwater flowing into our waters, then it's going to have a negative impact on the mammals. There's going to be four rivers that are going to be diverted so that it will become one. A huge amount of freshwater will flow into the Hudson Bay saltwater and it's going to have a negative impact on the mammals that cannot live in freshwater.

Those are my comments, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the witness table. Don't fall asleep; I'll keep it as brief as possible.

It's very important to deal with animals and their research and everything but we have to look at development. I am sure that we all know about the fiscal restraint that has been practiced by the government. But in the community of Arviat we send out a lot of seal pelts and fox furs, we don't have a lot of trappers but they do get a large amount.

The younger generations are also harvesting those animals and some of these young people are not experienced as they didn't go out with the hunters since they were small.

There is less and less older generations and it seems like we are not practicing trapping as much.

We are not using the old traps anymore and the newer models are very expensive and it's preventing people to get into the trapping business. I think your department has to be reminded of that and we also have to look at the training component of it. I think that it is up to your department to make sure that you get the information out to the schools and also have a career day so that they can think about entering those types of jobs.

Is there money set aside to be used for training in regard to seal pelts and fox furs? The students or the younger generation don't know how to go about harvesting those animals. They don't know how to dress the furs and the pelts and they don't know that the furs or pelts tend to spoil if they're not taken care of right away. I am sure that there are some people learning and we know that there are people who are selling those products; I think that your department should be looking into this further.

In regard to the conservation officers, if we look back to the end of the 60s we started getting conservation officers and they had equipment like snowmobiles, boats and so on.

It is the same case today but they get very limited money to be used to buy gas and supplies and so on, and they have to go out on to the land to look at the environment and look after the animals. They also buy seal pelts and they buy a lot. We hear that all the seal pelts were bought at the auction but I think it's up to us to look at how we can improve the cost of the pelts.

There is limited room in the freezers and these pelts have to be taken care of properly in places where it is temperature controlled. We don't have any facilities to house those pelts and furs.

I wanted to make those comments. There are a lot of people out there who want to work in environment-related jobs but they're given limited equipment. They're given limited amounts of money to be used to buy gasoline and grub and so on. I think that we have to look at this closer as we don't give them enough financial support.

I wanted to make those comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister, the deputy, and the assistant deputy minister. We are dealing with the Department of Environment and please make sure that ... we don't take it personally however tough or one-sided we may appear.

Since we've started deliberating on the budget of Environment, it's a very important department and my colleagues are well aware and very educated on the issue of environment. We have been working for a long time and if I use Rankin Inlet as an example. It's the second largest community in Nunavut. The conservation officers don't

have any money at all compared to the large amount of responsibility. They are overloaded with responsibilities and the amount of money they receive is no match to the size of their responsibility.

I wanted to make those comments. There seems to be no strategy at all on how they can access more funds, be it third party funding, or from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and also for facilities.

We should look at the hunter and trapper organization offices; they have a temporary office at this time but once the lease expires they will have to move again. They have an old Government of Nunavut office that they're currently using and it's shameful. We have to have a long-term strategy and include the hunter and trapper organizations in the government infrastructure. They are doing a huge amount of work and it seems almost impossible to do all that since they don't have an office.

We had a community freezer and I believe it's owned by the Government of Nunavut and it's connected to their building. I don't know who the owner is but it is community operated.

Number one, the health officer closed down this building and the *Mattaaq* was just coming in and the health inspector was going to be closing down the building if they didn't fix it up properly. I don't know who owns that building. I don't know whether it's Economic Development, or Wildlife.

They spent approximately \$10,000 and they couldn't recover that cost in order to put that facility up to code. The government has to give back the \$10,000 that they spent because I believe the Nunavut Government owns that building. So this is one example, the building being condemned.

I would like to find out what kind of strategy you have with regard to the hunters and trappers organization offices? Just recently, and I think everybody knows, in Rankin Inlet a hunter was charged for killing a polar bear.

He is a very accomplished hunter, but he was charged. He is very incredible and has credentials. He is originally from Chesterfield Inlet, or Kugaaruk. He would never intentionally kill an animal. I would like to hear from the minister, I hear that it is in front of the courts, but I would like to get an update from the minister as to what is going to be happening. If the *Wildlife Act* is broken, and if it's directed to Inuit, then they do an investigation right away.

This individual was charged by the conservation officers. He was told that he would have to be fingerprinted. I called the conservation officers' boss, and I told him that he was violating the *Wildlife Act*; it wasn't a criminal case.

(interpretation ends) Section 241 in the *Wildlife Act* says; "Alternative measures may be used to deal with a person alleged to have committed an offence instead of judicial

proceedings under this Act. (interpretation ends)...(*no interpretation*)...(interpretation)
Can the minister reply?

(interpretation ends) We have the support of the hunters and trappers organization, but that's a political organization. They don't all support it. Some have come to me and said we don't support this charge.

So, too quick once again to go and seek political support from somewhere before the charge is laid; that's not correct.

(interpretation) I believe it was investigated over one or two days. Mr. Minister, you wrote in the letter that we have to be fair. Yes, most of us, not just me, suspect now that if there appears to be an Inuk hunter who seems to break the *Wildlife Act*, then it's investigated right away.

It's not just me. We know that the mining companies don't have investigative powers, but I was also told by a hunter in Rankin Inlet who was out caribou hunting, it appears that too many caribou are dead.

And, some of them have taken a very small amount for testing. I wonder why the wildlife officers don't do their regular patrols like they used to because it's not too cold. The wildlife officers are capable of patrolling, and that is one of the areas where I will be raising questions.

With regard to the polar bears, we heard in the fall time, even though it came from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, they were saying there is a population decrease in the walrus, but we have to hear from the wildlife if they agree with that because we have to convince them that it is not so.

I would like to ask the minister if he approves of tagging because according to *Inuit Qaujimanituqangit*, they should have an idea of the migration patterns of different kinds of animals, and we will be asking why it is like that, and if you approve of it.

I will want to get more information in regard to commercial harvest. So I would want you to see, I would want you to table what policies and guidelines there are and I will want information on that. The written questions I posed, I want a response before we finish this department because it will be difficult in regards whether...

That's all I have for now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. I have no more names on my list for general comments. We will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting with page I-5 in your main estimates. Page I-5. Environment. Branch Summary. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I've asked this question before, but the way I understood when you wrote me a letter that I believe alternative measures can be used. Let's not worry about the case in Rankin Inlet. What does that section 241 exactly mean because as you said that you get the support from the conservation officers but I think that should be left up to the courts. I wonder if you can respond to that in regard to the section 241 of the *Wildlife Act*. Exactly what does it mean?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): In regard to the polar bears, especially if they have cubs, we talk to the HTOs because we have given that responsibility to them. If they feel that somebody breaks the law, then we go to the conservation officers. That person he's talking about, we talked with the HTOs and chairpersons. I talked with an elder in Rankin Inlet who was observing that hunter. He went after that polar bear for quite a long time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, since he refers to that, could he say how he feels about that, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. We are not to ask hypothetical questions. Mr. Minister it's up to you to respond or not. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We are not to answer hypothetical questions, so I won't answer.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, as the minister stated earlier, the response he gave to my question, I didn't say that I wanted to refer to that but he automatically went to that response about the incident in Rankin Inlet because it sounded like he knew the person who witnessed it because he witnessed the whole thing. It's not hypothetical.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The person who witnessed this I know but the member is proud of him because he is a very respected elder and I often consult with him in regard to the wildlife. His name is Tatty and he said he witnessed the whole thing and he was not too happy when that young man was going after the polar bear with cubs.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, this will be put into evidence. It looks like it had a political interference but in the Act it doesn't state under

legislation planning if somebody is charged under the hunter and trapper organizations. That is why I asked the section 241 without thinking about the Rankin Inlet incident. This section, is this used? And it would be helpful too if you can respond to my Written Question and do you think about alternative measures because I don't think it's referring to hunter and trapper organizations. So I would like to ask the minister.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member is alluding to the Written Question that he posed last week and we are preparing answers to the written questions so that will be forthcoming and I will have that answer for him at the beginning of next week or before. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Section 241, do you use that section if people think that somebody's breaking a law, or if there should be an investigation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My assistant deputy minister, Jane Cooper wants to answer that question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We often use alternative measures. Not all cases go to court. We often, between the conservation officer, the hunter and trapper organization, elders in the community will often look at something that has happened and decide within the community how to go forward with this.

In this case, at the consultation with the hunter and trapper organizations, the conservation officers decided that yes, they should proceed in the manner as they did. If you look at 241(1) a, it says, "... if the alternative measures authorized by a person or a person within the class, the persons designated by the commissioner," that would be our conservation officer, and our conservation officer, after consultation, decided to go forward with this prosecution. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the response. I think that's the dialogue that your corporate management deals within those planning and legislation division. Also I'm sure interpreters in every division. But I am not 100 percent clear that local hunter and trapper organizations are fully informed of this alternative legislative measure because they are not part of the prosecution case or whatever. I asked the

minister earlier. I am sure Ms. Jane Cooper can respond to my question. I believe your first name is... I believe it is Jane, but Sue.

Here's the question, the question is according to the Act when wherever the charge is laid, are you required by law to consult with the hunter and trapper organizations and if so, under what provision is that in? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Before I let the minister respond, please don't refer to people by their names, anybody's name. Thank you. Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The First Assembly in consultation with the hunters and trappers organizations dealt with the *Wildlife Act*. The chair people of the hunters and trappers organizations were involved.

They are fully aware; they agreed to that. That is how the *Wildlife Act* came about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): My question was directed to Ms. Cooper. I would like to hear what she has to say because she had indicated that once a charge is laid, they normally go to the hunters and trappers organization.

Under what provision of the law in the *Wildlife Act* is the department required to consult with a hunters and trappers organization? In my opinion that is not clearly specified here, and I must be wrong. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. It is up to the minister if you want to respond to the question, and you can also designate your official. Thank you. Before you respond, I think Mr. Curley wants to clarify his question.

Mr. Curley: Mr. Chairman, my question was to one of the witnesses, Ms. Cooper. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser: One of my witnesses will answer that. Ms. Cooper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, there is no provision under the Act for us to consult with the HTAs. However, we work very closely with the HTAs and we try to consider all aspects of any kind of misdemeanour within the Act. We consult the HTA to see how they feel about going forward with different prosecutions, etcetera.

It is a part of our consultation process that we do within the department with the HTAs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Cooper. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. It would appear, when dealing with the legislation, or the interpretation of the legislation, that the department normally, I'm sure, consults with a legal advisor. As well, you're trying to get political support, like they say with the hunters and trappers organization.

I truly believe though each local HTA requires independent legal advice from yours. Is that part of the advice, Ms. Cooper, when you deal with that initial consultation?

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: I'll try and be Ms. Jane Cooper for a moment.

Mr. Speaker, under the land claim agreement, we are obligated to work with the hunters and trappers organizations, and we do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I would also like to ask Ms. Cooper whether or not the legal advice requirement is also considered; that they need independent legal advice when dealing with that; that they are not part of the department. Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Can you hold on a second. I would like Mr. Awa to respond to that question.

Chairman: Mr. Awa.

Mr. Awa (interpretation): Just a short response; the hunters and trappers organizations and the bodies such as the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board are the people that we work with. We work with all those organizations according to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement because they are also responsible for wildlife in Nunavut, so we work in partnership with them. Under the *Wildlife Act*, it does not state that but even though it doesn't state that in the *Wildlife Act*, because they are recognized under the Land Claims Agreement, we work in partnership with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Awa. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): My question, Mr. Chairman, is: can I ask any one of the witnesses, or do I ask one particular witness?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Awa. (interpretation ends) Mr. Curley, I think you're questioning my authority here. (interpretation) When you're asking a question you can direct it to the Chair, that's myself, and I will give the minister the discretion to answer or get one of his officials to answer the question. He can designate either one of his officials to answer that question. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Yes, I understand that but I would like to recognize the clock now, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation) There's a motion to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Thank you, Mr. Minister, Mr. Awa, and Ms. Cooper. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I'm sorry; I haven't said anything for quite some time so my voice is kind of harsh. Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Arreak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and the main estimates, and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There's a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

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. The Orders of the Day for March 23:

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
 - Bill 9
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We will resume our meeting at ten o'clock in the morning.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 20:06*

