



**Nunavut Canada**

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**Wednesday, May 30, 2007**

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**Iqaluit**

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

## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Peter Kilabuk**

(Pangnirtung)

*Chair, Management and Services Board*

**Tagak Curley**

(Rankin Inlet North)

*Striking Committee*

**Keith Peterson**

(Cambridge Bay)

*Striking Committee*

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**

(Nattilik)

*Minister of Health and Social Services; Minister responsible for Status of Women Council*

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk**

(South Baffin)

*Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation*

**Joe Allen Evyagotailak**

(Kugluktuk)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole; Chair, Regular Members' Caucus*

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(Iqaluit East)

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(Arviat)

**Peter Kattuk**

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**Hon. David Simailak**

(Baker Lake)

*Minister of Finance; Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation*

**James Arreak**

(Uqqummiut)

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

**Steve Mapsalak**

(Akulliq)

*Co-Chair, Full Caucus*

**Hon. Patterk Netser**

(Nanulik)

*Minister of Environment; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board*

**Hon. Louis Tapardjuk**

(Amittuq)

*Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Minister of Human Resources*

**Levi Barnabas**

(Quttiktuq)

*Chair, Full Caucus; Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Paul Okalik**

(Iqaluit West)

*Premier; Minister of Justice; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs*

**Hunter Tootoo**

(Iqaluit Centre)

*Striking Committee*

**Hon. Levinia Brown**  
(Rankin Inlet South – Whale Cove)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Community and Government Services*

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Innirvik Support Services

**Box 1200**

**Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0**

**Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266**

**Website: [www.assembly.nu.ca](http://www.assembly.nu.ca)**

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Wednesday, May 30, 2007**

**Members Present:**

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, 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. Evyagotailak to lead us in prayer. Mr. Evyagotailak.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak and Members. For some of us we can finally be here, and we're happy to be here.

Orders of the Day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Premier.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 056 – 2(4): A Northern Vision**

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome. I am so happy that you're here.

(interpretation ends) On Saturday I had the pleasure of joining my northern colleagues, Premier Dennis Fentie, and Premier Joe Handley, in releasing a shared vision for the north. In this vision we focus on northern priorities and sovereignty and sustainable communities, adapting to climate change and circumpolar relations.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's contribution was guided by *Pinasuaqtavut*, and was built on the 2004-05 Northern Strategy Conference. In these consultations, you and many other Nunavummiut expressed your views on a strong economy supporting a strong culture. Nunavut has a strong history of working effectively with our northern neighbours of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Through our northern partnership we have brought many benefits to our citizens and increased influence at the national level. Together we gained federal support for improvements in the Territorial Formula Financing, additional benefits in healthcare, and direct investments to economic development initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, a Northern Vision is the next step in this partnership. Northern Premiers seized the opportunity presented to us when Prime Minister Harper called on us to work together on priorities and to break paternalistic policies of the past.

Moving forward, Mr. Speaker, the Northern Vision is the beginning of a long-term process of sustained cooperation and partnership. I invite federal, provincial, Inuit, and community governments, the private sector and the non-governmental organizations to join us to build a more prosperous, sustainable, and secure north.

In particular, I look forward to continuing the good work already begun by Minister Prentice and to finally begin talks on a devolution agreement. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will table the document entitled; A Northern Vision, A Stronger North, and A Better Canada. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

#### **Minister's Statement 057 – 2(4): Pan-Territorial Search and Rescue Initiative**

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy that we're all here now. Once Mr. Arreak is here, everybody will be here.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce a pan-territorial initiative that brings together the emergency measures organizations and the RCMP division of the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut to focus on search and rescue exercises, training and prevention issues specific to the north.

Mr. Speaker, emergency preparedness is in many ways a fact of life in the north. We are pleased to work together to develop a northern solution that will focus primarily on exercises and training for search and rescue teams, as well as prevention and awareness education for residents and visitors.

Mr. Speaker, the objective of the Prevention and Awareness Strategy is to motivate all people to use the knowledge, information, skills, and programs to help them avoid or reduce the severity of search and rescue incidents. This Pan-Territorial Strategy will focus on youth awareness, aboriginal communities, and northern visitors.

Funding for the Northern Search and Rescue Strategy is provided by the Government of Canada's National Search and Rescue Secretariat New Initiative Fund and will provide \$1 million to the three territories over the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, my department, in conjunction with the other northern territories, is pleased that a Northern Strategy is being developed to address the different challenges we face in protecting our citizens.

Prevention is the key to reducing the loss of loved ones, educating and preparing our youth is to play an active role in the future, and will add to our northern communities' strength. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Brown. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Environment, Minister Netser.

### **Minister's Statement 058 – 2(4): Skills Canada Nunavut Competition 2007**

**Hon. Patterk Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome, even though the geese are back.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, on March 29, 2007, youth from across Nunavut participated in the Skills Canada Nunavut Competition. 80 students from across the territory were entered into 15 competitive events designed to foster careers in trades and technology. This was the largest competition for Nunavut to date.

I would like to extend my congratulations to all those who took part, especially those competitors in the Worksite Safety event. The Worksite Safety events involve three parts: Competitors gave oral presentations on a safety topic of their choice; they wrote a quiz; and completed hazard assessments of three different areas; an office, a kitchen, and a workshop. To qualify to compete the participants are encouraged to complete the Safety and the Young Worker Program. This year there were six participants at the territorial level; one in the junior category and five in the senior category. The students who participated performed well and I encourage them to return next year.

Across Canada people are beginning to realize that workplace accidents must not be accepted as part of our working lives. Every workplace injury can be prevented if safety is the first priority. In participating in the Worksite Safety Competition these youth are not only demonstrating a commitment to workplace safety, they are leading by example and building a foundation of a culture of safety in the next generation of workers in Nunavut.

I applaud all the youth who participated at the territorial level, particularly, Robert Peter of Pond Inlet, who received the gold medal in the senior category Worksite Safety event. Robert Peter will move on to represent Nunavut at the national level skills competition. I wish him the best of luck and the best of luck to other Nunavut competitors who are moving on to the National Skills Canada Competition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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



### Item 3: Members' Statements

#### Member's Statement 127 – 2(4): Medical Escorts for Elders

**Mr. Mapsalak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to raise an issue that remains one of the biggest concerns brought to me by my constituents. Mr. Speaker, despite what the current Medical Travel Policy states, unilingual elders travelling on medical services outside their community are still being denied escorts.

Mr. Speaker, our elders have gone on radio stating that they will refuse to travel if they are not provided with escorts. Mr. Speaker, I recognize that it is not necessary to have all medical travel clients to have an escort.

I also note that there are staff and interpreters from medical boarding homes who often meet medical clients at the airport. However, I am also aware that in situations where travellers have been bumped on flights and left in strange airports to wait for the next available seat. I am aware of situations where boarding home staff have met with clients at the airport. For an experienced traveller, who has the ability to speak English, Mr. Speaker, these situations are intriguing at best, for unilingual elders, they can be frightening and traumatic.

Mr. Speaker, I have raised this issue in the past. I have been told by the Minister of Health and Social Services that the Medical Travel Policy has provisions for escorts for unilingual elders. It is not clear to me why these provisions are not being acted on as they should be.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard in this House that a draft Client Travel Policy has been brought before Cabinet. I encourage the Minister of Health and Social Services to give serious consideration to the issue of escorts for unilingual elders when she finalizes the new policy.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. (interpretation) Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

#### Member's Statement 128 – 2(4): Certified Educators Program Graduates

**Mr. Evyagotailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate recent graduates of the Educators in Inuit and Native Children Care Service Program in Kugluktuk.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, nine graduates graduated from this program. The program trained the students into careers as Certified Educators in Child Care Service. The graduates were Sarah Algiak, Patricia Algona, Lesley Atatahak, Violet Etoktok, Christine Kaiyogana, Kristina Kuodluaq, Anita Niptanatiak, Cynthia Nivingalok, and finally Connie Pangon.

Mr. Speaker, the students' successful completion of the program will fill the lack of local professionals in the field. It will also be a great satisfaction to parents in our community to note that their children are being cared for by trained and experienced educators who are from our own home communities who will encourage and support our culture.

Please join me in wishing them the best in their chosen fields. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

#### **Member's Statement 129 – 2(4): Infrastructure Research Manager**

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to inform the House about an important position that the Nunavut Association of Municipalities has created within their organization.

Mr. Speaker, NAM estimates that Nunavut's municipal infrastructure deficit is \$600 million. The Government of Nunavut, the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, the Gas Tax Incentive, and the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund will provide less than \$200 million over the next five years to help address Nunavut's Municipal Infrastructure deficit.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's municipal infrastructure is crumbling and seriously decreases the quality and standard of life in our communities now and in the future. Our inability to provide much help to our communities is due in part to flawed national infrastructure programs that penalize territories and provinces with small populations.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities has created the position of Infrastructure Research Manager that is funded through the Gas Tax Incentive Capacity Fund. NAM's goal is to increase the amount of infrastructure in Nunavut communities by identifying alternative funding programs and options, and applying to them.

The scope and responsibilities for this new position are daunting; they highlight what the Nunavut Association of Municipalities sees as a critical requirement to initiate immediate action before Nunavut's municipal infrastructure deficit deepens. Mr. Speaker, among other duties, the manager will research and write funding applications, conduct research for community projects, promote solutions that improve the environment, and communicate and liaise with three levels of government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to join me in congratulating NAM on taking the initiative to establish the Infrastructure Research Manager position. I sincerely hope that officials in all levels of government extend a warm welcome to the incumbent when he calls or visits them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

### **Member's Statement 130 – 2(4): Recentralization of GN Positions**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome back. I rise today to express some serious concerns about the government's recent announcement that a number of positions in the Departments of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and Health and Social Services will be moved to the Department of Finance.

As members will recall, questions were posed in the House during our recent sitting on this matter and assurances were given. Since that time, I and the other members of the Legislative Assembly have received correspondence from the Nunavut Employees Union on this issue.

Later today, I will be tabling correspondence and a copy of a petition that has been signed by the impacted employees in the Department of Health and Social Services. And I commend them on their courage for speaking out.

Mr. Speaker, I am disturbed by what I have been told by the employees and their representatives about their treatment during this affair. I do not think that this is good for the morale of our workforce, which I believe is already on shaky ground.

If this is how our employees under the protection of the union are treated, it can only be left to speculate how employees who are excluded are being treated. It appears clear to me that employees do not feel that they have been fairly treated. It appears clear to me that adequate notice for this decision was not provided. It appears clear to me that efforts need to be taken to rebuild our workforce's confidence in their leadership.

Mr. Speaker, later today, I will have questions to the minister on this issue. There will be GN staff across the government who I'm sure will be listening very closely. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Members' Statements. Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

### Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Members. We would like to welcome Mr. Stanbury at the Gallery.

Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 168 – 2(4): Recentralization of GN Positions

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. As the minister would recall, I posed questions to him during our last sitting on the issue of the government's plan to move a number of financial management positions from the Departments of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and Health and Social Services to the Department of Finance.

At the time I questioned the wisdom of shuffling Iqaluit-based positions when it seems clear that the Government of Nunavut's toughest challenges in this area are being faced in its decentralized offices and I look forward to scrutinizing the upcoming supplementary appropriation bill to request approval from this House for the government to spend the funds necessary for implementing this announcement.

Can the minister tell the House today how many employees have actually been moved to the Department of Finance and are now in their new jobs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It is my understanding that the staff from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs are scheduled to physically move to the Department of Finance by Friday, June 1.

I don't see a note on that as such for what the actual situation is with the health positions, but health positions that are identified to be moved; affected are 11 in Iqaluit, five in Rankin Inlet, and four in Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that. I just thought by now that you would have an idea of when those people were going to be going there.

It is no secret, as my former colleague from Baker Lake used to say, that the impacted employees in the Department of Health and Social Services have felt poorly treated by

the way that this decision was made. The union has expressed serious concerns. Even the Government of Nunavut's own policy on excluded employees affected by reorganization clearly states and I'll quote, "Employees will be treated fairly and will be given reasonable notice."

Can the minister explain to the House today why he told us on March 12 that, quote, he had "not heard of anyone who doesn't want to be transferred to the Department of Finance"? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, on March 12, 2007, I did state that I had not heard of anyone who didn't want to be transferred to the Department of Finance, and that is true. At that time I was not aware of anyone who did not want to be transferred but I also said at that time that if there is such a case we would work with this individual and see what would work best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response and remembering the commitment he made back then and I appreciate him making that again. Like I said, he did make that commitment to work with employees on this matter.

Can he tell us today what message the government has to offer these staff now if they feel that they don't want to move, or that they're being unfairly treated? What message does he have to send to them now? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been a meeting and consultation with the Nunavut Employees Union, the Government of Nunavut, and the affected staff members. Although this meeting did not happen before the announcement, nor did it have to.

We have taken a number of steps to make this transition as easy as possible for the employees affected through interviews with each of the potentially transferred staff. Jobs were assessed to determine whether or not they fit the criteria for transfer, and staff were informed that if their jobs fit the criteria for transfer, they would receive a letter notifying them.

Staff were informed that their positions would not be changed in any significant way and that they would not have to relocate to another community. Because we appreciate the expertise that these employees have in their current work, we hope that they will go on with this transfer. However, they were informed that if they were not happy with the

move they are free to apply on other jobs within the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that this all ties in with the government's desire to tighten up its financial management practises across the government and I know in the recent federal budget, there was \$23 million in funding to address financial management practices and systems. Can the minister provide the House with details on how that money will actually be spent? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me just find my note on the \$23 million, please.

There were four areas that we identified where we needed more training. In our presentation to federal Finance, we had indicated that funding was needed in four areas, and that's where the \$23 million over seven years comes in. There are skills and development training, expansion of the accountability framework, preparation of the public accounts, strengthening financial management, like increased financial systems, like increasing bandwidth across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Question 169 – 2(4): Medical Escorts for Elders**

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

Earlier today I spoke on the issue of medical escorts for unilingual elders. Can the minister explain to this House why unilingual elders are being denied medical escorts when they travel for medical service outside of their community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current Medical Travel Policy that has been in place since 2002 allows elders requiring assistance while they travel to medical centres for escorts.

If the individual is aware of a particular individual that he thinks should have an escort, I would like to know that. I have not received information or concern from the member on

a recent concern related to this. The current policy as it stands allows for escorts where medical travel is required for unilingual elders.

In circumstances where we may not have an escort travelling with a person is, for instance, in a medivac aircraft. If there is no room in the aircraft, that person is first and foremost. Our primary goal is to get that person into a medical facility where they can be treated for their illness, and the following day the escort would follow on a scheduled aircraft. In those circumstances we need to that just because of the size of the aircraft that we use.

So in the case of where the member is raising this issue on a particular person, I would like to know who that is so that I could do an adequate follow-up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Mapsalak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister stated in this House that under the current Medical Client Travel Policy there are provisions for escorts for unilingual elders. Can the minister explain why these provisions are not always being followed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I just answered that question in my first reply. In situations where the aircraft is not big enough to have more than so many people in the aircraft, if a person is on a stretcher and there's not enough space; in those circumstances the escort would follow the following day to where the individual has been sent.

In the case where an escort is not required for the medical travel, but the policy itself is clear in that if a person requires medical travel assistance when they're being sent to medical centres they are assigned an escort. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Mapsalak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These unilingual elders are mostly travelling by scheduled flights, not medivacs. The minister has indicated that a new Client Travel Policy is being developed. Can the minister provide and update on the timeline for the implementation for the new Client Travel Policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Ms. Aglukkaq

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Cabinet Members have approved the current draft and the direction that I received at that time was to put in the manual for

the medical travel, not just the transportation piece but rather the whole Medical Travel Policy with guidelines to be used at various facilities in the communities. That is still in the works and we hope to have that information to Cabinet for approval sometime this summer.

I have put forth a plan for the one piece related to escorts, but on a broader scale, the decision was made to putting the manuals in place, the implementation guidelines for every health centre in our communities, not just for the health centers but also for social services. That's where we are at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Mapsalak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to our latest population statistics, the elders account for just eight percent of our total population. Will this fact be taken into consideration when the department reviews client travel issues such as providing escorts for elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Medical Travel Policy is much broader than just transporting a person from A to B. The Medical Travel Policy is a way for us to describe how we provide medical services to individuals in Nunavut where the medical service is not available. So it's much broader in that context; all of that is considered in developing the policy.

At the same time another major factor that we have to consider in designing a policy is the financial implications it will have on our budget. At the same time we also work with insurance companies that will tell us what they will cover and what they will not cover. For example, Non-Insured Health Benefits is a federal program that covers many of the health costs of Nunavummiut, and they tell us what they cover and what they will not cover.

So in those discussions we need to know up front whether they will cover any enhancements to what we're asking for. So these are negotiations that take place as another factor that we have to consider in the policy.

The other piece is there are other medical insurance programs that we have to work with. For instance, Government of Nunavut employees have a Medical Travel Policy and/or guidelines and insurance plans that are separate from Non-Insured Health Benefits.

So all these are factors that are being considered in the design of the medical travel policy and guidelines for Nunavut. One small piece of that is travel, costly although, but it is a piece that is part of that overall bigger development of that policy and procedures and guidelines for our health centres in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



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

**Question 170 – 2(4): RFP for Cambridge Bay Housing**

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

Mr. Speaker, I raised the shortage of housing in Cambridge Bay for health professionals on several occasions over the years. In fact, I'm getting rather tired of raising it, and I'll raise it again because apparently the minister is not listening.

Last summer, the Nunavut Housing Corporation put out an RFP for housing that in my opinion was flawed. In fact, only one business responded. I asked the minister in November of 2006 if he is going to issue another request for proposal for Cambridge Bay. To date I have not seen a request for proposal and now, it's the end of May.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House if the Nunavut Housing Corporation will be issuing an RFP in Cambridge Bay that will allow sufficient lead time for developers to meet sealift deadlines for July in Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome you. The Nunavut Housing Corporation has dealt with this and next month we will be doing a request for proposal for Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anyone familiar with Cambridge Bay and the sealift would realize that you shouldn't be bringing out RFPs in June or July. The shipping is from Hay River, if you're going to build a house or a building, you'd have to get it to Hay River in July.

My question for the minister, and again, I have to question how serious you are, I'm asking the minister: if they Nunavut Housing Corporation was serious about addressing the housing shortage for health professionals in Cambridge Bay, then why did they waste the last ten months doing nothing about it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have to be able to work with various departments and we have to have the funding available. We have been doing that.

I know that this item is rushed, but the houses that are vacant right now, I think there are about eight of them, that could be used for the Department of Health staff, at the present time they are vacant, but if we don't have staff we can't fill them.

Those are the types of things that we'll be dealing with again. 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 response.

Mr. Speaker, I have been dealing with this issue for five or six years now. When I was mayor, I told the government about what the problem was. They had to address housing. They reassured me, the various Deputy Ministers of Health reassured me, and the Housing Corporation reassured me that housing would not be an issue.

Now, we have a health facility that is, according to the HSS assistant deputy minister, 70 percent operational. There's no end in sight. I believe they need 20 houses in Cambridge Bay for health professionals. The minister mentioned eight. He mentions they need staff. I don't know what staff he is referring to: the Housing Corporation staff, or do they need nurses and doctors? They keep going on in circles, so I'm not sure what the minister is saying.

He did mention one interesting thing is that they have to identify funding. I have reviewed the budgets for Health and Social Services and the Housing Corporation and there doesn't appear to be any funding budget for housing for health professionals in Cambridge Bay.

My question for the minister is: can the minister explain to me when he is putting out an RFP where the Nunavut Housing Corporation or the Government of Nunavut will find the funds necessary to construct or lease housing for health professionals in Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The eight that I was talking about are with the Health staff. We have to look at the budget as to where we are going to receive the money for the community of Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, and here in Iqaluit so the health centres can operate effectively. We have been looking for funding for those issues for the Health Department, or the staff of the Government of Nunavut. This is very important and we know that we have to have adequate housing for our health professionals.

This is the ongoing work that we are doing. The funding that we will be receiving from the government has to be scrutinized and looked at as to where the houses will be built. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I hate to keep harping on this, but there is a critical housing shortage in Cambridge Bay. The eight houses that the minister referred to that are available for health, I don't think they are. They are available for all the Government of Nunavut employees. All the departments have staff coming and going.

I hope he takes it very serious. I don't want to have to bring it up again in November. We're starting to sound like a broken record. It's embarrassing to stand here session after session asking the same question and getting the same answers.

My question for the minister: if and when housing is provided for health professionals, would those health professionals be expected to pay the same rents for housing that other Government of Nunavut employees pays as per the Government of Nunavut's Staff Housing Policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

(interpretation ends) Can we have some order, please. Minister Akesuk.

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those are the types of things that we are dealing with right now. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, if I can get the member to repeat his question because I had forgotten the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Due to the confusion and there was a power outage for a few seconds, can you please repeat your question, Mr. Peterson.

**Mr. Peterson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the minister can fix the power problem over on the other side there.

We've heard that a lot of Government of Nunavut staff are leaving because of high rents, we hear it is hard to attract health professionals because of the housing issue and the expensive rents they might be expected to pay.

So my question for the minister: would health professionals be expected to pay for the same rent for their housing that other Government of Nunavut employees pay as per the Government of Nunavut's Staff Housing Policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Olayuk Akesuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. The Government of Nunavut staff pays the same rent when they are in the staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker**: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

**Question 171 – 2(4): Update on the Deep Sea Port in Nunavut**

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome you back.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The Conservative Party will be doing their campaign and they said that they would bring up icebreakers in the north, and they would provide a deep sea port. I think the people of Nunavut are expecting a deep sea port. Can the government leader provide the people of Nunavut what is happening to date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): [Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have continued to remind the government and to ensure it remains a priority. I have been informed that this project is being pursued ahead. They have not decided exactly where the port and the school are going to be located. We have told the government that these projects must proceed, particularly when they were part of campaign promises in the last election. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.]

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

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Premier.

Mr. Premier, you have to continue with the job that you were given the responsibility for. We have heard from the Conservative Government that some of the people have not come here because they get cold feet.

I am sure you have heard through the media, in the Toronto Star, that Ottawa will be purchasing six patrol ships. We have not heard where those six patrol ships will be located. I think these are the replacements for what the Conservative Government promised us, and I know that there would be more education for the people of Nunavut if they want to learn how to navigate ships for that reason. I know that those six ships will not be adequate for the north.

Can the Premier tell us if those six ships will be the replacements for what they promised us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): [Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The news story have not been confirmed as yet, but we continue to lobby the government to make good on their commitments. At this time, I cannot say whether it will be in the form of these ships.

We believe the school and port are very important to the people of Nunavut, and so very much want to see these projects to proceed and be built within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.]

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

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A news report on May 13 stated, (interepretation ends) the key federal cabinet committee (interpretation) wanted to see six patrol ships, and these would be arctic patrol ships. They would be small but they would be able travel through the brand new ice.

If we don't say anything about that, we might be missing our opportunity because the icebreakers... said that they would be based in Nunavut and that they would build the arctic port. Perhaps the Premier can tell Nunavummiut that he will look into that and ask the federal government not to replace the promises that the Conservative Government had stated during their campaign.

So we would like to hear from you, Mr. Premier, about that. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the most important thing for us is the deep sea port, and also training of military in Nunavut. We know that they're very important and that they need to go ahead.

If the Conservative Government wants to be re-elected by Nunavummiut... they made promises to Nunavummiut but we're still waiting for them to deliver on those promises. We're not going to just sit and wait. We'll need to deal with that.

If they wanted to get re-elected again, they will have to deal with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Curley** (interpretation): Thank you. I believe that this is a true report. The recommendation made by the Cabinet Committee, it had already been given to Prime

Minister Steven Harper for his approval. For that reason, you should write a letter as soon as possible to make sure that these patrol ships will not replace the promises that they made to us, that they will be building six patrol ships.

I believe that this is an urgent case and this request is already in the Prime Minister's Office, so if you could provide some sort of support to Nunavummiut we would appreciate it. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As they said before that it would help with the sovereignty patrol, and if we keep telling the federal government that if we're going to have sovereignty they have to provide more authority to the Government of Nunavut. It's not just patrol ships - the deep sea ports and training facilities are going to be very important to us; it will help the Canadian sovereignty of the north and that's what we keep talking about.

I will include that in our discussions and we will not stop dealing with this. I will look into exactly what their position is and discuss the promises. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Oral Questions. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

#### **Question 172 – 2(4): Medical Travel Airline Bookings**

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

My colleague Mr. Mapsalak mentioned an issue in regard to the patients that have been left behind. Today this is still a problem in my riding and it has been brought up again the reason being that the elders are sent out on medical travel without an escort when they have to go down south, or when they have to travel on emergency airplanes or medevacs.

When we asked the minister about this during our March sitting, she said that she would talk to the airlines in regard to the patients being left behind due to lack of room on the airplane.

Particularly, when I was here in March, there was an elder who was left behind by the plane four times even though they had been at the airport four times, but because the transportation office is in Pangnirtung; this elder could not make the phone call themselves directly. This individual was left behind, although he was being helped by the family.

So what is the status of your meeting with the airlines to make sure that patients get on their flights on time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not to generalize too much in terms of this response because every case is on a case-by-case basis. If there is an elder that the individual is referring to that he had discussed this issue with in March, we need to know who that elder was to deal with the specifics of what actually happened with that person.

The procedures that are in place is; if a person is done with their appointments, the first available flight bookings are made, and those are made through our staff. The discharge papers are issued here and that information is sent to Pangnirtung, and the travel bookings are made for the first available flight.

Depending on the situation where I don't know the exact scenario of this one, but not every case is the same, it could be weather; it could be the fact that this person was done their appointment sooner than later, and so on. So there are a number of factors, and it's not broad generally speaking.

So in order to respond to that specific individual's case, I need the name of the person, and we will follow up to try and respond to that specific file. But, generally speaking, I can't respond to the hypothetical scenario because every case is different and every case management process is different. So if the member can share with me the individual's name, I can then proceed with responding.

What discussions have we had with the airlines? We meet with the airlines. The airlines here have the direct lines to our staff. At the same time, there is staff here in Iqaluit, as well as in Pangnirtung, as well as in Ottawa, so there is a direct connection with the airlines on a regular basis in supporting travel transportation of our patients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a problem for all. It is not just a case-by-case incident. I don't even want to mention the individual elder's name. I'll tell you privately and meet with you in your office privately to discuss this matter.

What I'm saying is that patients are constantly left behind, especially elders. The elders know exactly when they're supposed to leave and they know when they are to meet the doctor, and they request escorts if they're going to see a chiropractor, or get an operation, or if they're going down to one of the provinces, since it's not their community, and they don't know the community itself. When they are not approved, they have to make an appeal to Rankin Inlet.

How long does this appeal process take to deal with in Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, case-by-case, if there are people left and stranded at the airport, tell me who they are, and we'll follow up. We need to know who they are to follow up if that is the situation that the member is referring to. If it relates to this specific individual elder case, I would be glad to follow up.

But, the individuals that are being transported are given support through the boarding home staff, they are transported to the airport, they are made sure that they get on the plane, and for whatever reason, if their flight is not going that day, then they are booked on the next available flight. The same applies in Ottawa.

In those situations we try our best to get people on their flights, depending on whether the flight is full or not, and so on, we try and follow up. So if the individual has specific names, I will follow up on that and try to respond to the individual's situation.

In terms of the appeals, the appeals are dealt with before the person travels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Barnabas** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The appeal process is not dealt with right away by your department, especially when the patients are elders. They are gone already without having gone through the appeal process. The patients have to call, themselves, to Pangnirtung because that is where the transportation office is.

It's evident that that's one of the reasons why the patients are left behind due to the fact that the office is there. How do you deal with the elders' appeal process when they have to travel on urgent cases? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In cases where elders are on the medevac, depending on the flight, I explained this earlier to Member Mapsalak, if the aircraft can accommodate, an escort is provided if it is required. If it is required and the aircraft is too small, the escort follows on the first available flight to where that individual is.



We try to accommodate in that way, but the primary goal here is to treat the sick person first and foremost, and then we try and follow up with the escorts to the various communities, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat, Mr. Alagalak.

**Question 173 – 2(4): Update on Road to the Gravel Pit**

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not expect that. You have a good tan, same as mine. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister knows that the mayor told the communities this spring that there was one issue or concern that was raised at the time. When we talked about the old gravel pit; the gravel pit was depleted two years ago. It was mainly all rock. They found a new gravel pit and they needed to build a road to the pit.

The minister said that she would look into that. So what's the update on that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I remember we met with those individuals along with our officials. You were also involved at the meeting with the mayor.

We are still working on that and finding new things within the department. The regional staff are still working on that and they are still doing a feasibility study. We will follow the request by the community and we are looking into the things that need to be worked on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Minister. Yes, the government had already identified that after the consultation with the municipalities. Also, I was already using the access road. I have tried travelling on that access road and I did a test drive on that. We were able to reach that new gravel pit.

It is evident now that the Department of Community and Government Services and the Housing Corporation, and also the local housing authority in Arviat are now expecting to see units being constructed in Arviat. There are residential, commercial, and institutional lots. These are various lots and industrial lots; the companies sometimes have to leave all sorts of equipment on those industrial lots. And usually, if you go down, it's full of water,

and those lots are just filled with water. They have to put land on there, even though they're not creators.

But its evident now, madam minister, it is now June, and in July the municipality is going to start constructing the roads. What are we going to do if we have no go of it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Ms. Brown

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been working on it on a regular basis, and I would like to thank you and the hamlet council for identifying this as a priority. We will keep working on it, especially looking into the future; we have to have long-term plans prepared for these different types of lots, and also for the gravel paving.

There are going to be more buildings coming into the communities. Over the next three years, we are going to have to prepare for the 700 new housing units that are going to be coming in. We are going to be have to be prepared with the gravel pit. We have to also make sure that we have enough at hand to handle the amount of construction and building that's going to be coming into the communities.

I will have to urge my department to make sure that we're prepared for the onslaught of construction and building that's going into our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Alagalak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who are working in Arviat are very close but I think it's up to you to urge them to make sure that we are prepared and to make sure that we have proper roads. In order to do that we have to make sure that we have an adequate supply of gravel. Is the minister prepared to tell us if there are going to be any additional funds to set up a gravel pit? Is she going to be able to answer me in the next few days or so? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Levinia Brown** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I'll make sure that I'll work very closely with our department and I will also direct the communities to make sure that they start working on it right away, especially in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Arvaluk.

**Question 174 – 2(4): Patient Counsellors in the Boarding Homes**

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

As a preamble, the patients who have to be transported to Ottawa for medical reasons, and if they're diagnosed with cancer, are usually escorted by their wife, or a son, or a daughter, or an immediate family member because there is counselling involved when you're diagnosed with cancer for example.

There has to be counselling and there has to be support given to this patient, and at times you have to tell this patient that there is nothing they can do and that he or she will have to be sent home to wait for death. I know that's very hard on the patient and also on the immediate family member who is escorting this patient.

My question to the minister is: is there a patient counsellor available in Ottawa who can work with patients who are terminally ill, who are waiting for an operation or some other work?

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In all our boarding homes there are support systems that we have in place through OSNI, as an example, for the northern medical units of the boarding homes that are not directly through the boarding home operations, at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Arvaluk** (interpretation): Do I understand that there are no patient counsellors available in the hospitals? Maybe I should ask if these counsellors in the boarding homes, are they able to speak Inuktitut, and do they know about the Inuit traditions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify, my response is that we don't have social workers in the boarding home operations. There are services that we use, through OSNI, as an example, which is the area where... but there's all the appointments for us with the doctors and services that will be required by the patient.

When we send patients to various centres where there are services available for whatever type of treatment, we rely on those provinces, or communities, or cities for assistance to also support us, such as the doctors, surgeons, and so on, whatever the treatment may be deemed necessary for that individual. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Arvaluk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Well, I thought that was my first supplementary but it was my second. Since I understand that there is no patient counsellor available, we're told that there are Inuit counsellors available. Some of them are social workers and they have been working for a very long time. We have one such person in Pond Inlet, who has been working for the past 14 years.

My question is: since you don't have patient counselors and because these terminally ill patients wait a very long time for their chemotherapy, and also for the operation, is it possible for you to set up a position so that we could have a patient counsellor available for those patients?

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The services provided by jurisdictions, we rely on the jurisdiction, through our arrangement, to provide medical services that are not available in our territory. The Department of Health does not have Department of Health operations in Alberta, Yellowknife, Manitoba, or Ontario at this point in time.

In terms of the services that the member is referring to, currently, we rely on the jurisdictions where we send our patients through a reciprocal arrangement to provide support services.

Whether they are bilingual, I am not aware, but I can certainly look into what that service is in those jurisdictions. I can say though, through the boarding home, as well as through OSNI, as an example, we do have interpreters in those centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Arvaluk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are creating more questions than answers. I am glad that she will be reviewing these with other jurisdictions.

In the question of patient counselling, I also understand that the jurisdictions like Manitoba or Ontario provide counselling services through translators. This is very similar to that. We have social workers from outside of our territory and they're supposed to counsel people. However, if you do not understand the social system of the Inuit especially, then you cannot effectively counsel.

So can the minister tell me then that she will review her contract with other jurisdictions with those services and consider, instead, creating a PY within their own department and have the PY placed in those hospitals? Thank you.

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

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can look into that. I mentioned earlier that we do have some services available through our partners, and I will look into the member's suggestions and get back to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 175 – 2(4): Informing Union of Transfer of Positions**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Human Resources.

Earlier in my Member's Statement and in my earlier questioning to the Minister of Finance that they deal with how employees of the Department of Health and Social Services felt that they were treated through this whole process with the transfer; and it's my understanding, that there is an article in the collective agreement that requires the government to inform the union if any changes are going to be there that would affect or impact the employees. I would assume that the Department of Human Resources would be that department conveying with the union and in any cases like that.

So I guess my question to the minister is: have they, or did they, or when did they contact the union to let them know that this policy change of where positions were going to be transferred from department to another; when did they contact the union? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Tapardjuk.

**Hon. Louis Tapardjuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the departments and in transferring employees from one department to another, the union is asked for their opinion on the subject, and if there should be any changes to the proposal, the departments have to be informed ahead of time before we proceed with the transfer.

With your question, I can inform the member that we did inform the union on March 23, and we made sure that the information was given to the Department of Finance, the Department of Health and Social Services, and also Human Resources. We made sure that they were given all the information prior to the transfer. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister indicated that he provided that information on March 23. My understanding of it is that it was earlier in March that the announcement was made here in the House on those position transfers.

So I'm just wondering if I could get some clarification: was there a requirement to inform them before, as I said I heard the minister state, or was it just an after-the-fact type of thing that it just seemed to be what happened? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Louis Tapardjuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, once I was informed about these proposals that will affect the employees, we are asked about what we should do in order to propose making any changes.

Once we're informed, first of all, we would talk to the two departments and we would have a meeting with the departments that are making the proposal to make the transfers. We would have a meeting with the employees and make sure that they were informed on how it's going to affect them. Once Human Resources are informed, then the process would begin. For example, after we were informed then we had a meeting with the union. They were informed March 23.

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

**Mr. Tootoo**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can understand a little about what the minister is saying. I guess the Department of Human Resources, much like the Department of Finance, is a central organization providing advice and support to the other departments. He kept referring, in his response, that once they were informed of this, I would just like to ask the minister, when was the Department of Human Resources informed by the Department of Health and Social Services about this change? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Tapardjuk.

**Hon. Louis Tapardjuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My staff, deputy minister, I can't remember the exact date when they were asked to review. I can't say exactly on what date they were asked. I will have to get back on the member with the exact date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Tootoo**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the minister is checking that out, would he have an idea of whether or not the information was passed on to him or the department officials prior to the announcement being made here in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Tapardjuk

**Hon. Louis Tapardjuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For Human Resources, we were not informed on how it would affect us. If we could provide the organizational

charts when they're going to make changes, then they can ask for assistance from the department.

Once that is put in front of us then Human Resources can make changes if they're recommended by the department. That is our mandate. We have to try and accommodate those departments if they want to make those changes. That's how we operate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. I would like to recognize that Questions Period is now over. 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. Mr. Premier.

### **Item 13: Tabled Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 085 – 2(4): A Northern Vision: A Stronger North and A Better Canada**

**Hon. Paul Okalik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to table the following document: A Northern Vision: A Stronger North and A Better Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker**: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Can we have the document brought forward to the table, please.

(interpretation) Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

#### **Tabled Document 086 – 2(4): Petition from Nunavut Employees Union Members in H&SS Finance Division re. Transfer to Department of Finance**

**Mr. Tootoo**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table, on behalf of the Nunavut Employees Union, a request that I got from the president of the union, is a petition on their behalf of the individuals. I'll read it. It says, "We, the individuals signed on this petition disagree with the treatment by the Department of Health and Social Services and their decision to move us to the Department of Finance. We disagree with Minister Simailak's comments in the Legislature on March 12, 2007, that any of us had been asked if we were okay with this decision but rather we're told that we have no choice in the matter and we wouldn't have a job otherwise."

Also it says, "We are in no way responsible for the deficit of the Department of Health and Social Services and our presence in the department in no way made the department any less effective, efficient, and responsible in the use of public funds, which Minister Aglukkaq is implying by her statement in the Legislature of March 9, 2007."

The petition is signed by 17 out of 20 employees that are affected by that.

Again, I would like to commend the courage of these employees for speaking out through what there appears to be some misinformation that has been put out there against them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation ends) Can we have that document brought forward to the table, please.

Thank you. Item 13. Tabled Documents. (interpretation) Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

**Tabled Document 087 – 2(4): Letter and Petition from Nunavut Employees Union re: Centralization of Payment Processing – Department of Health & Social Services**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to table another document. A letter that I received from the President of the Nunavut Employees Union; it is outlining some of the concerns that they have as far as recentralizing the payment processing unit of the Department of Health and Social Services to the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Please bring the document forward.

Thank you. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Mr. Netser.

**Item 14: Notices of Motions**

**Motion 014 – 2(4): Listing of Polar Bears as a Threatened Species – Notice**

**Hon. Patterk Netser:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, June 1, 2007, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tununiq, that the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut opposes the move of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to list our polar bears as a threatened species under the U.S. *Endangered Species Act* of 1973. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 14. Notices of Motions. If there are none, Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Mr. Tootoo.

**Item 16: Motions**



**Motion 015 – 2(4): Adjournment for the Day**

**Mr. Tootoo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 46, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that the House adjourn for the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. The motion is in order and it is not debatable. All those in favour. (interpretation) Opposed. The motion is carried and we go onto Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

**Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk (Mr. Quirke):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There will be a meeting of the regular caucus with the Minister of Finance at 3:30 in the Nanuq Room this afternoon.

Orders of the Day for May 31:

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
  - Bill 13
18. Second Reading of Bills

## 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 10
- Bill 11
- Tabled Document 49 – 2(4)

## 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. This House stands adjourned until May 31 and we will reconvene at 1:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 15:03*

