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**Wednesday, June 2, 2021**

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**Iqaluit**

**Speaker: The Honourable Paul Quassa, MLA**

## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Aggu)

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(Quttiktuq)

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of Human Resources*

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(Amittuq)

**Pauloosie Keyootak**  
(Uqqummiut)

**David Qamaniq**  
(Tununiq)

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(Netsilik)

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Energy; Minister of Environment;  
Minister responsible for Immigration;  
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(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government  
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Energy Corporation*

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

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

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

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Management Board; Minister of Justice;  
Minister responsible for Labour; Minister  
responsible for the Workers' Safety and  
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut  
Wednesday, June 2, 2021**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Paul Quassa) (interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, let us pray.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Good day, Nunavummiut. Welcome to those who are following the proceedings as we start our session today. Continuing on. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements****Minister's Statement 637 – 5(2): The Passing of Butch Kautuq**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to acknowledge Butch Kautuq, a highly valued employee of the Department of Economic Development

and Transportation who unfortunately passed away on December 25, 2020.

Butch directed airport operations and maintenance at the Clyde River Airport for over 40 years. Starting in July 1978, Butch could be found clearing snow and managing runway surface work to ensure the safety and efficiency of airport operations in Clyde River.

As members of this legislature know, maintaining safe and reliable air transportation networks in Nunavut is especially critical in supporting the movement of passengers, cargo, and those requiring urgent medical attention outside of their home community. Butch and others like him are the backbone in ensuring critical airport operations and maintenance work is regularly carried out at airports across Nunavut. Winter storms, sub-zero temperatures, rain or shine, along with many early mornings or late night callouts, we owe Butch and all local airport maintenance crews a debt of gratitude for their work in keeping our airports open and safe for travel often in the most challenging of weather conditions.

Butch was also a great local ambassador; he always made everyone feel welcome upon arrival to the Clyde River Airport. He was a real nice guy known by many folks in the Baffin region and indeed across Nunavut's aviation community. Butch is survived by his wife Martha, his adult children and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Butch will be missed by many and I want to thank him for his years of dedicated service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. [Ministers'] Statements. [Minister] of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Minister's Statement 638 – 5(2):  
Staying Connected during  
COVID-19**

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon to my colleagues and especially those in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, 2021 has been a year unlike any other and has presented its share of challenges particularly for municipalities and the residents they serve. I am proud to say that Community and Government Services continues to look for new and innovative ways to deliver on our mandate and collaborate with our municipalities.

Throughout the pandemic, our public health office has instituted a series of directives to keep our communities safe. Many of these directives have impacted how municipalities deliver their services to residents and how the department provides services to municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, early on in this public health emergency, we recognized that a coordinated response to COVID-19 would need to include effective communication with municipalities. It is my pleasure to inform members of the efforts undertaken by the department to remain engaged with and provide services to Nunavut's communities throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency.

In addition to facilitating regular remote meetings among municipal

administrators, program staff, and elected officials to review public health directives and discuss program implications on municipal operations, Community and Government Services has expanded use of online platforms to connect with communities.

Earlier this spring we moved our municipal asset management training online. I am pleased to report that so far this spring, 16 municipalities have participated in the introductory sessions that were delivered virtually.

In addition, Community and Government Services continues to engage municipalities on their integrated community sustainability plans. To date seven municipalities have participated in virtual sessions, including an orientation to the Government of Nunavut capital planning processes, timelines, scoring and ranking of capital projects, as well as asset management and funding opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the pandemic, local governments have shown their resourcefulness and resilience in maintaining service delivery in their communities. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the cooperation of local leaders in staying connected and for contributing to the success of new service delivery models. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 639 – 5(2):  
Nunavut Law Program**

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great pleasure to share that the University of Saskatchewan Nunavut Law Program students have completed their final year of law school.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Mr. Speaker, the completion of law school is a remarkable accomplishment and I wish to congratulate every student who put in countless hours of studying and preparation to successfully complete their courses. Nunavummiut are proud of your achievements and hard work.

I also want to thank the educators involved in the program for their hard work and dedication that made it possible to reach this important milestone.

Mr. Speaker, the successful graduation of a cohort of law students who plan to work and live in Nunavut will have an important and lasting impact on the justice system in our territory. We look forward to the graduation ceremony for Nunavut Law Program students this fall.

Mr. Speaker, I am also happy to share that the Department of Justice has hired six graduates of the Nunavut Law Program to do their legal articles with the department. The articling program will prepare these graduates for their future career as lawyers by teaching essential skills and providing them with one year of mentoring and supervision by senior Department of Justice lawyers.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome these law students to the Department of Justice and wish them all the best as they continue their journey to become lawyers in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of those who gain new skills. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 640 – 5(2):  
Rising Construction Costs' Impact  
on 2021-22 Projects**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and I say "good day" to the residents of Pangnirtung.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that increased costs of construction materials across Canada are a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and are having a negative impact on Nunavut's new housing construction projects. This was to be expected, given that our budget for 2021-22 was set when the cost of building materials was lower and bids for construction were expected to be lower.

Construction projects were reviewed to identify which ones can be postponed with the least impact on program requirements or the ability to quickly retrieve projects when market conditions stabilize. In Iqaluit four public housing fourplexes are postponed. In Taloyoak two public housing five-plexes are



postponed because the contractor was unable to secure insurance. In Rankin Inlet one public housing five-plex is postponed and will go ahead once the land is developed. In Pangnirtung one staff housing five-plex is postponed and will be reviewed. Mr. Speaker, I want to stress that the public housing projects are not cancelled; they are postponed until next year.

Builds will still go ahead in Coral Harbour, Rankin Inlet, Naujaat, Kugaaruk, Sanirajak, Pond Inlet, and Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, the corporation did not want to make these decisions, but it was not possible to proceed with the builds when the bids were 30 to 40 percent over budget. We will continue to work with our federal counterparts and partners to ensure Nunavut is included in national strategies to keep ahead of rising construction costs for public housing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

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

#### **Member's Statement 918 – 5(2): The Erosion of Inuit Language and Culture**

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the residents of Clyde River who are following the proceedings, as well as the

residents of Qikiqtarjuaq and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today due to having a key concern here in Nunavut as it relates to our language and culture, as Inuit are slowly starting to lose their unique traits.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely distressed about the prospects for our language and writing systems, and that not enough emphasis is being placed on retention. It is becoming obvious that it is slowly disappearing, as many elders are now passing away, and it seems that our language and writing is dying along with them. In many workplaces and offices, the usage of Inuktitut is eroding rapidly and everywhere you look, the language is no longer in use today and in every corner. I can even say today that our language is in danger now and that it is in a deeply concerning state.

We hear of many species of animals in Nunavut that are now at risk due to a variety of reasons, but in my opinion, animals will not disappear as we the government cannot control their actions. What we can control are the activities on the land, which can create the risk, and what I can state here is that our language, traditions, and writing systems are now endangered, and I can easily make that assessment. The reasoning is this: in organizations today, there are no documents available that are written in Inuktitut and there is absolutely no desire to protect Inuktitut or to even preserve it, although it is a recognized language.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why I am so deeply concerned is due to the future generations such as our children and our grandchildren, on whose behalf I am

becoming disconcerted as we will start losing our language and it will get to a point where it is no longer in usage.

Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude my statement as I have not finished what I want to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. The member is requesting unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? I don't hear any nays. Please proceed, Mr. Keyootak.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is becoming deeply worrisome to see our language becoming discarded and no longer heard in many places today, and as a matter of fact, this now also happens on the radio. I am almost always listening to the radio station, as some Inuit grew up listening to radio daily once it starts broadcasting at 6 a.m. until 9 a.m. During this entire morning programming, there is perhaps only a half an hour that uses Inuktitut as the main broadcast language and the remaining hours are generally aired in English only.

Back in the day, many of us recall earlier radio announcers who would host the entire morning shows only in Inuktitut with brief English translations. Now it seems to be the opposite and only the weekends seem to have the majority of programming in Inuktitut, what we call Saturday and Sunday in Inuktitut, where the host speaks mostly in Inuktitut for the audience as that seems to be only time conferred to using this language non-stop. I do know that the announcers

do not schedule the on-air programming and that they have no discretion to change the language used. Nevertheless, they must have to follow certain procedures or outlines of how their show must be aired.

In my opinion, I believe that improvements must be made, as we are usually informed and told that we must let our children hear the language and that language loss starts from not hearing it daily, speaking and listening to the responses. If we are to provide consistent language on-air programming and if we are going to expose them that way, then they are already in danger of losing the language, and our descendants are in a dangerous spot if all they will hear and listen to is English programming with no Inuktitut programs.

I am deeply concerned about this and I think there must be more discussion on resolving this. We must start doing something as MLAs. I am concerned about this issue and I do not want Inuktitut to be lost, and although I personally have learned a bit of English, I rarely use that language and I prefer to use my mother tongue. Furthermore, I generally read only in Inuktitut and this is what we must showcase to our younger people so that they may retain our culture.

To me, there is no culture without language. Our language forms an integral part in our cultural traditions and we can state that we are Inuit by speaking it, although I know some Inuit are incapable of speaking Inuktitut, and if they are unable to speak it, that is fine. Nonetheless, it is vitally important for those of us who can speak Inuktitut. If

we wish to retain our language, then please let us use our beautiful language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 919 – 5(2):  
COVID-19 and Medical Travel**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. I say "good day" to the people of Naujaat and Coral Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on the subject of the COVID pandemic. From the sidelines, we see the work that the government is doing and they put in a lot of effort to keep COVID from spreading to the communities, but we still have many questions about people who are required to go down south for medical treatment. The Department of Health sends patients to hospitals in the larger centres like Winnipeg for those of us from the Kivalliq and Ottawa for those in the Baffin region, and some people from the Kivalliq have been going to Ottawa. We are grateful for the care that is provided to us.

However, regular members were having a sitting when COVID-19 arrived in Iqaluit. At that time there was a requirement to isolate for two weeks and we were told once we returned to our communities that we had to isolate at home for two weeks. If anyone travels outside of the territory, either for medical or other reasons, they are required to isolate for two weeks.

We expected that we would be isolating in Iqaluit at that time. When I went home, my constituents started calling me and wondering why we didn't isolate in Iqaluit first before going home. There was COVID in Arviat for a long time and they were told to isolate for four months. That has been on my mind for quite some time.

Those were some of the concerns that my constituents brought up and I thank them for that. At the appropriate time I will have questions for the Minister of Health. Thank you.

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

**Member's Statement 920 – 5(2): Boil  
Water Advisory**

**Mr. Simailak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We usually have boil water advisories in Baker Lake in the spring when there is still ice in the lakes. Last year and this year we had a boil water advisory in the summer and it is due to (interpretation ends) climate change.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, we know that good water is required to cook food, make tea, make beverages for our children, and brushing teeth, but it is not possible at this time without boiling water first. That is one of the concerns in Baker Lake and I'm sure other communities in Nunavut have also been impacted by boil water advisories.

I will have questions for the minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 921 – 5(2): Staff Housing Program**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I have a statement today regarding the staff housing program offered by the government for its employees.

Based on what I'm hearing from government staff here in Arviat and also from elsewhere, as well as what I'm hearing from the Minister of Human Resources, I'm concerned about the administration of the staff housing program.

In response to questions on May 27, Minister Akeegok mentioned that "...we are in dire straits when it comes to staff housing." The minister also made a number of other statements that give me cause for concern. From where I sit as a regular member, Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why we are in dire straits when it comes to staff housing.

I have a number of question marks. Is it the new Staff Housing Policy that has been implemented since May 2019? Are these "dire straits" related to COVID-19 and the impact on the workforce in hiring or is it something else in terms of the availability of staff housing in the private market in terms of the units that are leased by the government or by the housing corporation for staff housing purposes?

I will be asking further questions to the minister on this topic. It is concerning when we hear about holdups in hiring

due to staff housing issues, particularly when we think about positions such as health professionals or other positions that should be or are considered priority by the government. Ideally we would not see staff housing issues holding up the hiring of individuals for these positions.

(interpretation) I will be asking further questions to the minister on this topic at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Member's Statement 922 – 5(2): Public Housing Construction**

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a short statement to make. First of all, I say "good day" to you, my colleagues, as well as my fellow Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to this issue I continue to return to on occasion, and it may be something onerous as you have heard many issues related to housing and the reason why I keep returning to this subject even since 2016 when I was first elected to the MLA role, representing Kugaaruk and Taloyoak, and I try to be equitable in representing the two communities to fairly represent them, especially with respect to infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, the delay in the public housing construction project will impact us, so I wonder if there is any way to either add or modify the project, as I believe that this project could proceed forward even now, and I am working hard to advocate on their behalf for these

units, as we now inhabit houses in a cold environment.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking questions on this subject at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. No. 4. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. (interpretation) No. 5. (interpretation ends) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. (interpretation) No. 6. Oral Questions.

Before we proceed further, I wish to inform my colleagues and Nunavummiut that Member Mr. Kaernerck will be absent from the House today.

Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 1336 – 5(2): Funding for Inuktitut Signage

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Languages, Culture and Heritage.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my member's statement, I'm concerned about the erosion of the Inuit language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, I had previously asked whether the workplaces are kept fully informed that they can make a request for funding that is available for Inuktitut language services and signage. I wonder if all workplaces and public places are informed of the funding that is available

for Inuktitut language services and signage. Are they all kept informed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question. The funding is available on an annual basis that businesses can request, such as a hotel. There is ongoing funding made available to non-governmental organizations. There has been no change to date. The employees are continually made aware of the availability of these funds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response. Mr. Speaker, I was also concerned about the isolation hubs, especially the one in Ottawa. I sympathize with the Inuit at the isolation hubs, especially the unilingual Inuit who only read Inuktitut, and there's nothing written in Inuktitut anywhere in the building, not even one piece of written material. A lot of rules are given to the clients to follow, but there is absolutely nothing written in Inuktitut about these rules. Can the minister indicate whether the isolation hubs are notified that there is a requirement to have written material in Inuktitut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like the question. We're very much aware that it is the responsibility of the Department of Health to have Inuktitut material available. Furthermore, they have a number of Inuit on staff and they are aware of the situation. We have noticed some instances in Nunavut where there is no written material available in Inuktitut, especially in the hotels, as well as other non-governmental organizations, but there is funding available to provide language services and documents in Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clarification. Mr. Speaker, can the minister delegate her staff or look into this herself?

I think the isolation hubs will still be utilized for a while. For the time being, the isolation hub in Ottawa will continue to be used. It became obvious that since there are still people staying at the isolation hub, it will continue to be used for an extended period. However, it is hard to predict when the COVID pandemic will end. Currently I don't believe there is anyone who can say when these hubs will be closed, but it became obvious that the hubs are still going to be used for a while when funds were requested for further operations of these hubs.

Can the minister instruct her staff or can she herself put more effort into having the isolation hub rules translated into

Inuktitut? Can the minister instruct her staff to do that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. In collaboration with the Minister of Health, we can look into how the rules are set up and how we may make improvements in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 1337 – 5(2): Alternative and Renewable Energy Initiatives**

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

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I have asked a number of questions in the House concerning the issue of alternative and renewable energy projects and initiatives for Sanikiluaq. One of these initiatives is a proposed wind energy generation project near the community.

When I last raised this issue with the minister in February 2020, she indicated that the Qulliq Energy Corporation would be working with the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation on this project.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Qulliq Energy understands the renewable solutions to climate change and how our communities can get away from diesel. There are a lot of companies out there that are working towards or trying to come up with alternative energy for Nunavut. We are currently working with the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation on alternative energy for Sanikiluaq, but due to COVID-19 there have been... . Because of the restrictions within Iqaluit, we will continue to work with the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation to work on looking at solutions for Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Rumbolt**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know COVID has been an issue in Iqaluit for the past while, but there are ways to work around COVID and still manage to move forward with the initiatives of the government.

It is my understanding that the success of initiatives like the wind power project near Sanikiluaq requires the Qulliq Energy Corporation to finalize its Independent Power Producers Policy. Earlier this year the Qulliq Energy Corporation awarded a contract to

Intergroup Consultants to “develop a pricing strategy for renewable energy suppliers to sell energy to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.” Can the minister confirm when this work is expected to be completed and will she commit to tabling the final report from the project in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Independent Power Producer Program is currently on hold until the Qulliq Energy Corporation receives its completed consultants’ report and the possible changes to the offered price of power. The Qulliq Energy Corporation expects this report by July. Until that report is reviewed, I can’t commit to the member, but I will definitely look into it and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Rumbolt**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my understanding that the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation has secured federal funding in respect to the proposed wind energy project for Sanikiluaq, and I think that the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation is eager to move forward with this project. Will the minister commit to having her officials at the Qulliq Energy Corporation meet with the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation at the

earliest opportunity to move this project forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The Independent Power Producer Program has yet to be approved by this government, and we are working on trying to do a pricing structure. Once we have the Independent Power Producer Program approved, we will share that information with all the members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

### **Question 1338 – 5(2): Airline Service and Airport Infrastructure**

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, everybody. Good afternoon to Kuglukturmiut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Mr. Speaker, my questions today concern the issue of airline service and airport infrastructure.

Earlier this year Canadian North announced that it will be phasing out jet service to the Kitikmeot communities of Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay. This is a concern for many of my constituents. Can the minister indicate what discussions he has had with the airline on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have had the opportunity to discuss issues with the company about both communities in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay as airliner passenger jets will no longer be going to these communities. They informed us that they had excellent backup plans to replace them with modern aircraft that is capable of carrying both large pieces and higher volumes of cargo. They stated that they would use the existing aircraft currently in use today in other areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. As the minister will appreciate, I believe strongly in the importance of modern airport infrastructure. I want to take a moment to recognize and congratulate one of my constituents, Christalyn Kaiyogana, who was recently profiled in the news as the community's first female airport maintainer. I congratulate you, Christalyn.

During the previous Legislative Assembly, the Nunavut Airports 20-year Infrastructure Needs Assessment report was produced and tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Can the minister indicate when an updated needs assessment report will be finalized, and can he confirm if his department is now considering paving Kugluktuk's existing



runway so as to encourage the return of jet service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I congratulate her; I echo your congratulations to her for being recognized.

Mr. Speaker, in the current costing that we have for any airstrip in our communities, to pave any of our airstrips, we are looking at close to \$50 million to \$100 million per airstrip. That is money that we currently don't have within our fiscal reality in this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, the spring 2017 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to Parliament* included a chapter titled "Civil Aviation Infrastructure in the North." One of the Auditor General's recommendations was that the federal Department of Transport "...should lead the development of a long-term strategy for northern airport infrastructure. The strategy should clearly outline the role that Transport Canada will play in addressing the infrastructure needs of remote northern airports." Can the minister indicate the extent to which the federal government has acted on this recommendation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for raising this very important issue. I have continued discussions with my federal minister colleague about the need for Northern Airport Capital Assistance Program and I will continue to advocate for that.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the federal government for providing and they have announced that the National Transportation Corridors Fund will continue. It is something that we will definitely try to get some funds through that program too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 1339 – 5(2): Correctional Facilities**

**Ms. Angnakak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of our territory's correctional facilities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is well aware, a number of serious incidents have taken place in recent years at the Baffin Correctional Centre. The most recent of these occurred in March of this year, when a fire at the facility necessitated the temporary transfer of a number of inmates to correctional

facilities in other provinces and territories.

Can the minister confirm today how many of these inmates have been repatriated to Nunavut, and can he update the House on the status of the investigation into the incident at the correctional centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The number of inmates outside of the territory right now, and it would include not necessarily just from the fire, we have...it just changed the other day. The number that I would quote would be 39 inmates are outside the territory in incarceration.

With regard to the investigation, that is being investigated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, so I wouldn't be able to comment on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his response. Mr. Speaker, there have been long-standing concerns about the challenges faced in staffing positions at our territorial correctional facilities, especially the high security facility here in Iqaluit. The government's most recent employment report indicates that the Department of Justice has almost a hundred vacant positions here in Iqaluit. That's a lot of vacant positions.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, his department awarded a contract valued at over \$172,000 to a consulting company back in 2015 to undertake an organizational review of staffing and overtime issues in the Corrections Division. Can the minister describe what specific actions have been taken as a result of that report to address such issues as training for staff and the lack of housing for employees, which I understand is a serious barrier to the recruitment of full-time personnel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member had a number of questions in there; I'll do my best to address them.

Mr. Speaker, when we're looking at staffing complements of correctional facilities, it has been a very volatile trade, I'll say. It has been very difficult to keep people long term and it's a very stressful position, but specifically some of the measures that have been taken...there have been numerous discussions. I'm sure the former minister had discussions with her senior executive as well as I have since I have taken over the portfolio.

I think one of the major components to work towards a solution in this is scheduling software that we're in the process of finalizing. There have been some hiccups and holdups, I guess, with the COVID, with the contractor, but there has been some progress made and I do look forward to that making quite a dramatic impact on the scheduling side

of things, but there have been overtime reviews of the staffing, there have been numerous training opportunities, which again has been impacted lately with COVID.

This last year has been very challenging from the corrections staffing standpoint, so I do want to acknowledge the work that the department is doing and trying to do better on and will continue. I appreciate the member's questions and I look forward to continued follow-up in this aspect of staffing for the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday my colleague from Gjoa Haven raised important issues concerning the implementation of the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act*, which has recently come into force. As the minister will recall, this Legislative Assembly passed a new *Corrections Act*, which received assent on June 6, 2019, almost two years ago. Mr. Speaker, this legislation includes many important provisions concerning activities at our correctional facilities. Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate when this new legislation will be coming into force? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is still quite a bit of work that is ongoing with regard to the implementation of the *Corrections Act*.

One of the aspects was in the recent budget of hiring the investigations officer and the deputy investigations officer. There are also a number of regulations that are still being drafted that we are working towards the summer of 2021 timeline for drafting and approving. We will see how it progresses on the regulation work as well as the hiring of those two positions that will be instrumental in implementing this Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary... (interpretation) I'm sorry. I believe the member was done.

>> *Laughter*

It's like I was trying to give the member unlimited questions.

Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

#### **Question 1340 – 5(2): COVID-19 and Medical Travel**

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I almost had a muscle spasm, so perhaps the Minister of Health can help me with that. I'm just kidding.

Now, as I stated in my member's statement regarding the COVID outbreak in Iqaluit, we were sent home and people in Winnipeg trying to get to Iqaluit or people from Ottawa trying to get to the Baffin had to change their plans.

Most people have to go through isolation for two weeks. There were questions

about the reasons that were used. It doesn't seem to be that people in Iqaluit are treated the same when it comes to the pandemic and they can be sent home directly. I was asked to raise this question, so I would like to ask the Minister of Health if that's the situation. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Even when you nap, I still support you. I'm just kidding.

Mr. Speaker, there are slight variations that can be construed as differences. Firstly, no patient is just sent home without directions. When patients from Iqaluit return home, they are required to isolate and this applies to the entire household for a two-week period. There are differences from the southern isolation protocols, primarily because of the infection rates prevalent at some cities, particularly right now in Manitoba. People who come from the south have to isolate for two weeks prior to returning to Nunavut.

Following the isolation requirements in Iqaluit and with many residents vaccinated with the first dose and many residents who have already received the second shot, it definitely reduced the spread of COVID here in Iqaluit. Our chief medical officer felt that the patients who travel home from here need to follow the two-week isolation period. In cases where a person flying from Iqaluit may be asymptomatic, they would follow the existing protocols, Mr. Speaker. If you are returning home from Iqaluit, you will have to isolate along

with other members of your household for two weeks, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. Now, we have heard in Iqaluit that there have been a lot of vaccinations happening, but there were some people who had gotten COVID even though they were vaccinated. Can the minister tell us how many people who have been vaccinated got COVID in Iqaluit? Thank you.

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

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date, as to the total number of people who have received both doses of the vaccine and were infected with COVID, I don't have the information in front of me on this table. I am not purposefully withholding this information, but I believe there are very few cases where people were infected after having the second shot after two weeks. I don't have the actual number, but I can provide it once I have it, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health and the government have strongly promoted the vaccine efficiency and to get a shot to protect against COVID.

In my constituency, some constituents just got their first dose in Coral Harbour,

where they got their first shot, and initially you had to return after 10 days to receive your second shot, and the person was anticipating the shot on that date. However, the person was told that only when they have 10 people eligible for the second dose, then the group would be provided the second shots. While the person waits for their second shot, will the first dose lose its efficacy to protect against COVID? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year when vaccinations were rolled out initially, the interval from the time that an individual received their first vaccine dose until the day that they were due to receive their second vaccine was very short. However, as more research was conducted and more was learned, it was found that the period in between doses could be expanded. Research continues to make progress today. I know some people have been waiting up to four months for their second vaccine.

Once a person receives their first dose of vaccine, the vaccine has ingredients that can help your body protect your body against COVID. The second vaccine dose works by making the first shot stronger. It is the same vaccine, but it works with the body to make it stronger. We don't want vaccines to expire. Some of them can be used in a vial that provides up to 10 shots. This is the reason that sometimes people have to wait; they have to wait until 10 people are ready and able to get their second shot in order to ensure that the whole vial is not wasted.

We know that as long as an initially vaccinated person receives the second shot within four months, it is okay, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

### **Question 1341 – 5(2): Condominium Issues**

**Mr. Lightstone** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and they concern the subject of condominiums.

As the minister is aware, I have been a strong supporter of actions to increase the range of housing options available to Nunavummiut. One of the programs that have been offered by the Nunavut Housing Corporation in recent years is the Government of Nunavut Staff Condominium Program.

Information published in the Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recent annual report tabled in this Assembly states, "In 2016-17 the Corporation acquired 62 residential units in Iqaluit with the intention of selling the units to Government of Nunavut staff (...) The Corporation advertised its intent to sell the condominiums to Government of Nunavut staff, held an information session and sought applications from prospective buyers. Expected sales were delayed due to obstacles in establishing a condominium corporation."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask: can the minister provide an update today on the current status of this program and can

she indicate how many condos have been sold within the past 12 months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleague for asking that question. There are 32 condos that have been purchased to date. That is the most recent number. The remaining condos are still available for purchase today. Meetings have been suspended as of late, but that's the number of condos that have been sold. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response. Glad to hear that 32 of these condos have been sold and purchased by Government of Nunavut employees.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled a letter from the Iqaluit Condominium Corporation Collective regarding concerns about increasing condo insurance premiums. Mr. Speaker, since this letter was sent to the minister in, I believe, April of this year, I would like to ask if the minister can confirm when the Iqaluit Condominium Corporation Collective will receive a reply to this letter, and will the minister commit to tabling a copy of the government's reply in this Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct that we have had quite a lot of problems with insurance and there has been an increase in the insurance rates to date. With respect to the letter from the collective on its concerns, we are almost completed with drafting the correspondence regarding their request for assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response. I'm glad to hear that correspondence is in the final stages of drafting.

The concerns raised by the condominium corporation collective are quite serious and they have stated that over the last three years alone, condo corporations have received insurance quotes seeing an increase as high as 285 percent, and I share the concern with the condo corporation collective that insurance costs will soon become unsustainable.

However, I recognize that the issues raised by the condominium corporation collective are complex, as the Minister for Justice is responsible for the *Condominium Act*, the Minister of Finance regulates insurance, and the Minister responsible for the Nunavut

Housing Corporation has authority over housing initiatives.

I would like to ask the minister: can the minister clearly describe what interdepartmental mechanism has been established to coordinate the government's response to the issues raised by the Iqaluit Condominium Corporation Collective? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. The housing corporation is going to be working with the Department of Finance, and this week the housing corporation is going to have a meeting regarding insurance issues with the (interpretation ends) Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation, (interpretation) which is under the federal government. That meeting is scheduled for this week, as the increasing insurance rates are of a concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

#### **Question 1342 – 5(2): Staff Housing Administration**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources and they concern the administration of the staff housing program.

Mr. Speaker, in an exchange I had with the minister last Thursday, the minister made reference to staff housing being very low. He also made reference to being in dire straits. I interpret these statements as being that everything is not all right when it comes to the administration of the staff housing program.

I would like to follow up with the minister to try to understand why a little bit. That's my first question for the minister. Why is the government in dire straits when it comes to staff housing? What is the reason or reasons for this situation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The stock of staff housing is the reason. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The stock of staff housing is the reason. Thank you, minister. The other day on the Thursday, the minister mentioned that "...I am confident that my department and all government departments will find a solution for very soon..." The stock of staff housing is the problem and there is going to be a solution coming very soon. Does this mean that the government is planning to increase the stock of staff housing very soon and, if so, how will this be done? I would like to understand the problem

that exists here a bit better.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you.  
(interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning there was a planned all deputy ministers' meeting to discuss and finalize on how to find ways to go through this, but that meeting had to be cut short because the majority of them had to attend the standing committee that was planned this morning. I don't know when the next meeting will take place, but that was a very critical meeting that was going to help; it probably won't solve it.

As I mentioned, it is the stock, and I want to commend this government of having a line item budget for building staff housing and also that Nunavut Housing Corporation has put out a tender asking any individuals throughout our territory to see if they can lease staff housing. We are trying, but at this current state, the volume of staff housing that we currently have is one of the major factors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main. (interpretation) I apologize. We are unable to hear you. We will make another attempt and if we can't solve the problem, we will move on. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I guess it was the Premier using his secret button again to freeze the Internet.

The minister mentioned a meeting involving deputy ministers or senior staff, and he mentioned that solved one of the major factors. Mr. Speaker, from where I sit, I can't help but feel that the administration of the Staff Housing Policy plays a major role in how the staff housing program works or doesn't work in Nunavut.

My last question for the minister is: what specific changes are being considered to the administration of the Staff Housing Policy? I'm not talking the housing stock itself; I'm administration of the policy. What changes are being considered to get out of the dire straits and to get into a better situation for staff housing in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you.  
(interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the staff housing allocation policy and the program, there is nothing significant that needs to change. We have a huge vacancy in our government, so you're looking at close to 500 vacancies and if you have a little over 50 staff housing units that are available, we need to manage that. What is going to change is how we manage it with the sheer volume of vacancies that the departments are asking to fill with staff housing, and it is time critical because we need to start hiring our teachers for this coming fall. We need to take all this into factor, but the policy itself or the program itself doesn't require much change. It has improved significantly in terms of that. I hope I was clear, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.



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

**Question 1343 – 5(2): Drinking Water**

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

Mr. Speaker, the importance of ensuring that all of our communities have access to safe and clean drinking water cannot be understated. In recent years a number of communities have experienced boil water orders. As I recall, Baker Lake experienced two boil water orders in 2020 due to high turbidity levels.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what specific actions her department is taking to reduce the number of boil water orders in Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Community and Government Services is engaged with interworking groups to develop a Government of Nunavut water strategy. The department is committed to developing a strategic, comprehensive approach to protecting Nunavut water resources and ensuring the safety of our drinking water. The drinking water strategy will ensure the security of the natural resource to support the environment and supply communities with sufficient clean, quality water for the present and for

future generations. A working group exists that includes representatives from Community and Government Services, the Department of Environment, and the Department of Health to ensure a comprehensive study is produced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. It sounds like a lot of work is being done on it and I'm very appreciative of that.

As the minister is aware, like she mentioned, her department's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities has been to "...complete the Government of Nunavut's Water Strategy and the Drinking Water Strategic Framework and Action Plan." Can the minister provide a more detailed update today on the status of this work and will she commit to tabling Nunavut's new Drinking Water Strategic Framework and Action Plan in the Legislative Assembly at the earliest opportunity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The working group has been working diligently. Even though we have restrictions here in Iqaluit, some of those restrictions will be eased within a few days and the three departments that I had discussed will continue to work on the water strategy. They do hold regular

meetings and have commenced to review past work on this topic and redefine the scope and finalize the strategy within the existing staff resources because again, as I stated with the COVID restrictions, we will continue to work on it. Once I have a draft strategy and once it is available to be publicized, once the strategy has been shared with cabinet and is approved, I am willing to share it in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. Mr. Speaker, the need for communities to have adequate water infrastructure is very important. It is also important that communities have more than one source of clean drinking water. Will the minister commit to having her department work with the Municipality of Baker Lake to identify and fill gaps in our community's existing water infrastructure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. From past experience, we know that Baker Lake has been having issues with their water treatment plant and in the near future we will be seeking funds to ensure that the water treatment plant is up to higher standards than what it is producing.

We have been talking with the Municipality of Baker Lake on alternative sources to get water to deliver to the municipality and its residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

### **Question 1344 – 5(2): Public Housing Construction**

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, this is very frustrating. The minister will not provide clear answers to my clear questions about the situation concerning the cancelled tender for Taloyoak's new public housing units. I am going to try again today, and I am only asking the minister to tell me "yes" or tell me "no."

Here is my first question: will the minister commit to directly contacting the members of Taloyoak's local housing authority to explain to them the situation involving the cancellation of the tender for the community's new public housing units, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. If they are submitting the question in a written format or even via a

teleconference, our officials can meet with the local representatives on this particular subject and they will be informed on the problems facing them that led to this cancellation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Yesterday the minister seemed to suggest that the Nunavut Housing Corporation still plans to construct new public housing units in Taloyoak. Will the Nunavut Housing Corporation issue a new tender for these units within the next month, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**: (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can he clarify the question? I didn't really understand it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Please clarify your question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister seemed to suggest that the housing corporation still plans to construct new public housing units in Taloyoak. Will the housing corporation issue a new tender for these units within the next month, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. I don't really understand the question. I apologize for that, but the housing units that were to be built in Taloyoak are not cancelled. It is in planning stages, but it won't be able to move ahead this year. It was clearly identified that insurance was the issue. It's not cancelled and it's still in the planning stages, but what I'm trying to say is that it won't proceed this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The minister has indicated that the tender was cancelled because of the high cost of construction materials and problems with the insurance. Will the minister commit to seeking a supplementary appropriation to cover the increased cost, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. During our last sitting, we did state that we had foreseen no problems and suggested that no changes will be made in the planning, but in between then we realized the dramatic increase in

the cost of building supplies. Yesterday I indicated how much the cost of a housing unit increased compared to last year.

The housing units slated for Taloyoak were going to be built by the construction company, but there were issues with the insurance, largely due to the increasing costs of building materials. We're not hiding anything here. I can indicate that the company that was going to build the housing units ran into issues with their insurance due to the skyrocketing prices of lumber, but that's what I can state at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

#### **Question 1345 – 5(2): Staff Housing Needs in Gjoa Haven**

**Mr. Akoak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. Good afternoon to the community of Gjoa Haven and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Human Resources is responsible for administering the government's Staff Housing Policy.

As the minister will recall, I wrote correspondence to him and the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation in April of this year concerning the issue of staff housing needs in my constituency of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm when he will be responding to my correspondence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I try to respond in a very timely manner. I'm going to have to go through my files to see if I have responded or if that was referred to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. If I recall, the letter was more on the construction and building of staff housing, not necessarily the allocation of staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Akoak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The letter also had questions to allocations of units to some or most of the working group in our community.

As the minister will recall, the specific issue that I raised with him in my correspondence concerns the need to provide housing to staff who provide critical services to the community in such areas as mental health and social work.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly indicate how his department works with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to determine the number of new staff housing units that are to be constructed and allocated in any given community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We work very closely with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. They're the ones that build the staff housing and maintain the staff housing, so we work very closely.

In terms of determining where those staff housing, as part of our allocation committee, we look at the number of vacancies and the number of positions that are in the communities and try to base those in terms of building more staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Akoak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the human resources minister is working closely with the Nunavut Housing Corporation minister, as we do have some members that are living in one building where they should not have to.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister may be aware, the Gjoa Haven District Education Authority recently wrote a letter to the Minister of Education concerning the urgent need for more staff housing in the community for teachers. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Human Resources indicate how he is working with the Minister of Education to address this specific request? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning all the deputy ministers were to meet and plan out related to the competitions that will be coming out and the current staff housing that we currently have. This includes all departments and that was a critical meeting that's going to shape in terms of moving forward in getting those competitions out.

The allocation committee for staff housing is by all assistant deputy ministers of the departments that work through on a monthly basis in getting this through allocating staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members will note that the time for question period has expired. We will proceed to Item 7. Written Questions. Returns to Written Questions. Replies to Opening Address. Petitions. Responses to Petitions. No. 12. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

### **Item 12: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters**

#### **Committee Report 039 – 5(2): Bill 65, Apprenticeship and Certification Act**

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to report that Bill 65, *Apprenticeship and Certification Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill, as amended and reprinted, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 65 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The member is requesting unanimous consent to allow Bill 65 to be immediately referred to the Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are none and Bill 65 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) No. 14. Notices of Motions. 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Motions. First Reading of Bills. Second Reading of Bills. No. 19. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 65, 70, 71, and 72 with Ms. Angnakak.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 114 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the committee, we will take a 20-minute break.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:09 and Committee resumed at 15:41*

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

>>*No audio*

**Mr. Lightstone:** ...document, followed by Bills 71 and 72, also along with the supporting documents. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (Ms. Angnakak): Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 70?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 70 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022 – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairperson:** I would like to ask Minister Hicke: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Mr. Hicke.

**Hon. George Hicke:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For the sake of time, I'm going to introduce all of my officials for the next three bills that we're going to be dealing with. To my far left, I have Kyle Seeley, Acting Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services; to my immediate left, Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance; behind him, behind me, Steve Mansell, Deputy Minister of Justice; to my immediate right, Terry Audla, President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation; to the next right, Colleen Stockley, Deputy Minister of Health; and to the far right, Jimi Onalik, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hicke. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Okay. Let's start this off. Yesterday we finished the day on page 6 of the supplementary binder, so if everybody can turn to page 6. Mr. Keyootak. Oh, before I go to Mr. Keyootak, I forgot I have to go through the formalities here. Let me put my glasses on. We're at page 6. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. \$500,000. Agreed? Mr. Keyootak.

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move a motion.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): I made another mistake. I apologize; I'm the one who made a mistake. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for recognizing me. I've got a couple of questions here for the minister and his staff. If the bill passes, how will it be rolled out? Will it be first come, first served? Also, will the monies be split up by region? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The application process itself is first come, first served. However, like I had stated a couple of times yesterday, as this program is expected to save the Government of Nunavut quite a significant amount of money over the long term through staff housing as well as public housing, I don't anticipate any applications being denied.

Like I had stated, the initial rollout of this program, if somebody has a lump sum of money in their bank account, they could step forward and put an application forward in this program. It would have an immediate impact. That's why I say this \$500,000 is seed money. If we do identify an increased need, we will react as quickly as possible as the Legislative Assembly will allow us to react, to make sure that there will not be a shortfall of funds in this program. The overall savings well warrants the path, if we need to, to add money to this program. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister, for the response. One last question; I'm looking for clarification for now. Since the current fiscal year began on April 1, what happens to a person that, let's say, bought a house on April 15? Would they be able to apply for this money or would it be too late for them because they already purchased their house? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Minister Kusugak, you said?

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

>> *Laughter*

**Hon. George Hickes:** I thought I was going to be able to get away without a response there.

Madam Chairperson, I would anticipate that this program isn't in effect yet, so the timeline would be very difficult to backdate. I doubt if that would be possible. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hickes. (interpretation) Are you done? (interpretation ends) Okay. The next person I had on my list is Mr. Rumbolt from yesterday. Mr. Rumbolt, do you still want to ask any questions? Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With this \$500,000, I just have a couple of questions. Will this program have a residency requirement similar to that of other housing programs where you have to be in the territory a period of 12 months before you can apply for such a program? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In addition to the one-year residency requirement, it is also part of it that you have to be an indeterminate employee, off probation, and a permanent resident stationed in Nunavut. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Again, similar to other programs that the housing corporation runs, will it also have an income threshold where you no longer qualify for this program after a certain amount of income? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. No, there is no income threshold on this. The only caveat, I would say, would be for deputy heads are not eligible for this program. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I wonder if the minister can explain why there would be no income cap on this program. For example, if somebody's got two people working in their family, income probably over half a million dollars within the family, and they applied for this program and qualify, yet they could very easily qualify for a bank mortgage without the help of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I wonder if the minister can explain that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The original goal or one of the main goals of this policy program would be to encourage people to remove themselves from staff housing or possibly public housing. Hopefully, if you're making \$400,000 or \$500,000 a year, you're not in public housing. In theory, you could be in staff housing for an extended period of time. This would give an opportunity and incentive for people to move out of staff housing, and it is anticipated because of the ten-year time frame, it would lead to a lot more retention opportunities with staff. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Rumbolt.



**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Why are the government and the housing corporation bringing this line item in through a supplementary appropriation? Why wouldn't you wait until everything was in place and you knew all the policies that were going to be needed to be changed or whatever for this program and bring it in during a regular budget process in the fall? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The policy is pretty much ready to go. Like I said, as Mr. Audla mentioned yesterday, there a couple of little administrative things that we need to finalize, such as CRA implications and things like that, but a topic that came up numerous times earlier today, the issue of staff housing availability is a very urgent need. The sooner we can get this program running, if somebody does have an accumulated fund that they have been planning to purchase a home or build a home, this would help expedite that process. The sooner we can get this program up and running, the sooner people can start taking advantage of it.

I hope that answers the member's question. If he wants me to elaborate any further, he has but to ask.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Rumbolt.

**Mr. Rumbolt:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I remember correctly, in questions from yesterday from Mr. Lightstone, you stated that the draft policy was shared with, I think, NTI. Again, you just stated that the policy was nearly completed. Why didn't the

department share that policy or draft policy with regular MLAs so that they could review it and also give their opinions on the policy? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson and members, if we did that with every policy, it would basically stall government operations and these committees would have to meet biweekly pretty much at a minimum, maybe even daily in some months and busy seasons.

There are continuously policies being created and worked on or updated across the Government of Nunavut. It is our job as cabinet to approve those policies, and it is the job of the regular members or RMC, Regular Members' Caucus, to hold us to account on those policies. That's the way it has always been.

With regard to sharing the policy with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, as was stated yesterday, I don't feel it has an implication with Article 32 as this is an employee benefit, but at the end of the day the information was shared.

That's what I can say. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Okay. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and I do apologize. I would like to just further elaborate on the Article 32 protocol that we share with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. It is an agreement between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik, not the Legislative

Assembly and Nunavut Tunngavik.  
Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I really appreciate this initiative that is being put forth. I think any incentive or encouragement to assist Government of Nunavut employees to get out of staff housing or get out of public housing and become homeowners is excellent and something that we desperately need. I fully support the idea of this new initiative, as well as I think it is a good idea that it is available to all Government of Nunavut employees regardless of income eligibility requirements. As has been noted in the past, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's income eligibility threshold for their public housing programs has been a barrier preventing many Nunavummiut who are actually able to become homeowners.

As we found out during yesterday's discussions and debates, there are still a lot of unanswered questions in relation to the rollout of this new initiative. As was previously stated, this draft policy was shared with Nunavut Tunngavik. The minister's response yesterday is that the policy was not complete and the government was not willing to share that draft policy with the Legislative Assembly. The minister's response today is saying that sharing policy with regular members would stall government operations or any policy drafting. I would have to partially disagree with that statement.

When policy is able to be shared with NTI or any other external organization, there is no reason why sharing that with

regular members would put any further stall than is already in place. As I have previously stated in this Assembly and during the winter sitting, the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories has a standing committee specifically to review draft policy, new policy, and major amendments to existing policy. That does not seem to be any hindrance or create much of a stall on their government operations.

Mr. Rumbolt had asked whether or not the government would be willing to share that draft policy with the regular members, and the minister had not given a clear response. Given the fact that this policy has already been shared with NTI and there are several remaining unanswered questions on the rollout of this new initiative, whether or not there will be increased incentive for Nunavut Inuit, lower income employees, and so forth, I would like to ask again if the cabinet is willing to change their stance and is willing to share the draft policy with the regular members. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hicketts.

**Hon. George Hicketts:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The member made a comment yesterday that we are here as legislators, and that's very true. We create and put into legislation laws that direct departments or the government to basically do certain tasks or work on certain projects or programs. Madam Chairperson, nothing has changed from that stance ever.

You task us through legislation on developing policies, programs, and regulations, and we do that. That's where the role of the Regular Members'

Caucus is to hold us to account on those policies, regulations, and programs. Nothing has ever changed in that. To my knowledge, other than Legislative Assembly policies, there has never been engagement from the Regular Members' Caucus in the development of new programs or policies. The input is created at the discussion or budget time.

Again, because of the election proceedings, the budget cycle is not normal this year. We want to get this program out the door as absolutely soon as possible so that people can start taking advantage of it or at the very least, to start the savings component to it. The sooner that can happen is the sooner the benefit for our employees will come to fruition.

I do want to highlight or maybe add to the fact that I did not anticipate the type of attention that this policy brought forward yesterday and maybe didn't do my due diligence in explaining some of the aspects, and I invite any and all questions to either be re-asked or new questions to be asked. I feel a lot more comfortable in answering them today. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Are you done? Okay. I have no more names on my list. Mr. Keyootak, you have the floor.

**Committee Motion 019 – 5(2):**  
**Deletion of \$500,000 from Bill 70,**  
**Supplementary Appropriation**  
**(Operations & Maintenance) Act,**  
**No. 1, 2021-2022**

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have a motion concerning this bill. I move that

\$500,000 be deleted from the proposed funding for the Nunavut Housing Corporation's "Homebuyer Matched-Savings Program" in Bill 70, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022*. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. (interpretation ends) There is a motion on the floor and it is currently being distributed and so with that in mind, we will take a 20-minute break as per the Speaker's instructions from the other day.

>>*Committee recessed at 16:00 and resumed at 16:26*

>>*No audio*

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have had discussions about this issue ever since it was raised with regular members. It is a subject that comes up repeatedly and the reason that I don't approve of this is because we have not seen any policies or details. We don't know what the policies will be. As members, we have not been properly informed of the details and I don't want to approve it because of the uncertainty as to how it will be implemented. Again, we don't have any pertinent information and that is why I made that motion to delete that amount. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Any other names? To the motion. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Hon. Joe Savikataaq:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm going to speak to the motion not so much in the budget but in terms of policies, legislation, and how it works.

As legislators, and we are all legislators here; regular members are legislators, we pass legislation. That is our job, to work with the regular MLAs to pass legislation. Once legislation is passed, the government carries out the mandate to do whatever the legislation says. Let's say it's a program like this, and we develop policies so that we know how we're going to administer the bill or the legislation that has been passed by the Legislative Assembly here. That's the role of the MLAs and us here, to pass legislation, but policies are developed by the government. The government, in consultation with stakeholders, develops policy and cabinet approves policy. Generally the MLAs do not get involved in policies. Once the policy is passed and is approved by cabinet, then the regular MLAs can hold us accountable to the policy that we have approved. They can criticize the policy and maybe ask for amendments to make it better suited for MLAs, but our job as a government is to pass policy.

As for sharing with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Article 32 is clear. The Nunavut Land Claims was passed in 1993, well before there was Nunavut. In the land claims, it's clear. It's a contract. The Government of Nunavut has to abide by Article 32, and Article 32 states that Inuit must be given the opportunity to participate in the development of social and cultural policies, and in the design of cultural and social programs under Nunavut. That's not an option; it's an obligation that our government has

under the land claims. We have to share and develop policies with NTI. The Article 32 policy I tabled last sitting has formalized and set out the clear guidelines on how the government intends to comply with the requirements of the *Nunavut Act*. It's not an option; it's an obligation. The Nunavut Land Claims was passed and ratified in 1993, and we as the government will live up to the obligations.

I just wanted to make it clear to all MLAs that there's a difference between legislation and policy. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Savikataaq. Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would have to say I'm very disappointed that this motion has been brought forward.

Initially, just some quick notes that I jotted down, by removing these funds, we have removed an important resource that would have had an immediate benefit and would have helped the GN employees start saving and taking steps towards homeownership. We have heard in this House many times the difficult situation we are in with respect to housing and the need to support homeownership and home-buying programs. It is very unfortunate that a program that could have had a real positive impact on these issues is potentially being cut. I think this decision does a real disservice and is a serious setback for those GN employees hoping to someday own a home. This program was brought forward with good faith and an intention to provide a real benefit to our staff, and it is very

unfortunate that we may not be able to proceed.

Madam Chairperson, we talk about \$500,000 and in the grand scheme of things and when you look at \$2 billion plus budgets, it doesn't seem like a lot of money, but that \$500,000 cannot even purchase one unit or build one unit to accommodate a staff house. That \$500,000 has the opportunity to immediately, if people had the money available, put 10 people, 10 families into homeownership positions. I look at families that are lower income or single parent incomes that are saving to try to get into the homeownership category of housing and may be this close, that maybe this is the program that's going to put them over the cusp. Maybe they have the \$20,000 to \$25,000 saved, but they need that little extra bump to bring them over the cusp to be able to actually achieve homeownership.

Madam Chairperson, I'm very concerned about this, especially with the timing of our Assembly right now. It would be very difficult to bring forward legislation or a bill in the next sitting. As we know, we already have a number of bills before this House. It would be left up to the next government to even decide whether they would decide to pursue a program like this. I think we need to strike while the action is hot and I strongly suggest that people not support this motion and in fact I suggest that the mover of the motion rescind the motion and ask me more questions if you're not satisfied with the responses that I provided yesterday.

This topic did not come up in standing committee, which is the normal process of bringing forward issues and concerns

of our budget. There was no lead up or warning, I guess I'll say, and it's not an obligation, but it has been traditional practice of the Assembly through numerous Assemblies to work together. I find frankly very disheartened that a motion like this has come forward where we did not have the time to plan and to address any concerns on this program. It has been in the business plan for a number of years. This is an option. There could have been suggestions made during the standing committee appearance that we could have implemented into the policy. I find it frankly an insult to this Assembly that those practices are not being followed, that that desire to work together for Nunavummiut is not being followed.

Madam Chairperson, this has the potential to take homeownership opportunities away from Inuit families in this territory and I do not want any part of that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Okay. Next name on my list is Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I can see the value in this new program that is being proposed. I think everybody would agree that homeownership is important, maybe not just for government employees but for everyone in Nunavut who wants to become a homeowner.

To the Premier's comments, I do understand the general responsibilities of legislators, but I do have to disagree that legislators are not allowed to look at policy, which seemed to be the nature of his comments. When the Committee of the Whole expresses an interest in a

particular policy or draft policy, I would expect that the government would be forthcoming in recognizing that legislators have an interest in a particular policy.

Clearly it's not the job of legislators to write policy, and I don't think there have been any requests from any of the legislators to write the policy. Are legislators allowed to provide suggestions for policy? I think that's something that needs to be discussed. I mean, if we could have gone back and received a copy of the draft policy following yesterday's meeting, perhaps we wouldn't have been where we are right now.

It's up to the mover of the motion in terms of whether he rescinds his motion or withdraws his motion, but from where I sit, Madam Chairperson, I can see both sides of this issue and I see the potential benefits, but I also believe that regular members, when they're sitting in the Committee of the Whole, when they express an interest in a policy, they expect that the government will be cooperative and will be forthcoming in terms of providing requested information.

At the end of the day, as the Regular Members' Caucus chair, I'll be voting with the majority of the members, but perhaps there may be an opportunity to cut short this debate if we could get a commitment regarding the draft policy and having it provided to the committee. I don't know if that comment is in order, Madam Chairperson, in terms of this motion in front of us, but I made it anyway. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Maybe I'll hand it back to... . No? Okay. Well, I stand corrected. Minister Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I, too, feel some regret in seeing this motion brought forward. We felt we had good expectations for this initiative as it will assist our employees, and we are always looking for ways to provide more benefits. That is one reason.

Further, when I assumed this portfolio, this was included in the business plans as an action item, and I presented the department's priorities here during my time on the witness table when the budget estimates were being reviewed. This item is being completed and the policy that will apply towards this is being drafted.

As my ministerial colleague, Minister Hicke, stated just previously, the questions that were posed were quite interesting to listen to, and further, the policies are being drafted, and this is how we amend them and make improvements. We listen to your suggestions and try to implement them into our plans where possible. This is something we all anticipated.

If employees are capable of leaving the Government of Nunavut housing units, then another employee will take their spot and use that particular unit. For the employees who are incapable due to a lower wage or perhaps our Inuit employees are the potential recipients of these benefits, and under the *Nunavut Agreement*, namely, Article 23, are areas where we try to introduce new initiatives

to engage our Inuit employees, as this is also good optics.

Once the policy is completed, yes, we will introduce it as we must always introduce any new directives or policies to be used. With that being the case, I will be unable to support this particular motion. If we pass this, our staff will be able to own their homes faster, as this would be easier for all parties. I was very happy to support that program when it was introduced. Although this is a separate matter, since I fully support that program, I will have to review that.

Further, if I can reiterate, Madam Chairperson, when we vote on the motion, I would ask that a recorded vote be used so it will show exactly who voted for this motion. I am requesting a recorded vote for this motion. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone, it's now your turn.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would just like to reiterate that I strongly support this initiative. I believe that more needs to be done to encourage Government of Nunavut employees to move up and out of staff housing as well as public housing.

We have been asking several questions over the last few days, including during standing committee meetings a few days ago, and many of the questions remain to be unanswered. I would like complete assurance that this program will be designed to succeed in such a way that will benefit Inuit and low-income employees.

Now, it has been pointed out on numerous occasions and of course there are many flaws with the Government of Nunavut's homeownership programs with regard to a number of things, including eligibility requirements and budgetary restrictions, and whatnot. There are also significant issues with Staff Housing Policy and household allowance for those employees which are not in staff housing.

Members of the Assembly have also pointed out that the new policy that is developed is not in touch with our communities. Just last winter sitting, one of the members pointed out that Community and Government Services had implemented a new policy which requires permits for new fuel tanks, which is strictly not appropriate in many of our communities which do not have a simple way to conduct the permitting process.

Further, I believe it's fundamental to consensus style government that members are made aware of and have an opportunity to discuss significant changes or new initiatives before they're made public. I know that the Government of Nunavut has never shared draft policy with members and this would set a precedent, but I believe that in doing so, it would be a move in the right direction to increase transparency and accountability, and it would ensure that all the members have a chance to review such policy and ensure that that policy which is developed, most likely in Iqaluit, will be in line with the needs of all communities.

I strongly encourage our government to come back with this initiative when the

program is complete and when the ministers are able to answer all of our questions. Like I said, I fully support this program and my only wish is to ensure that it will be created in an appropriate manner and all employees will be eligible, and more importantly, I would like to see an emphasis placed on Inuit and low-income employees. I know that the Minister of Finance does not have another opportunity to speak to the motion, but I strongly encourage any member of cabinet to come forward and make a commitment to share this draft policy with the standing committee.

Like I said, I fully support the idea of this program. My only wish is to ensure that it will succeed and as everything sits now, I do not have complete assurance and will vote with the majority of the regular members and will vote in favour of this motion as is. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm not trying to hide; I'm sitting behind here.

Madam Chairperson, if this legislation is not passed, it will not be good for the Government of Nunavut employees who have been trying to buy their homes for a long time. I heard earlier that it is for higher income earners only. That is not the case at all. I know of many government employees who are paying rent to public housing and they are paying maximum rent. They are trying to save money, but with the high cost of housing, it takes them a long time to buy snowmobiles and boats, and if they don't want to be in public housing, they save small amounts of money for a very long

time so that they can buy their own home. They don't have very much money and their income is used for food, snowmobiles, household costs, electricity, and they save what they can save so they can buy their own home.

Some people have to save between \$20,000 and \$40,000, and they fall short of that and their goal is to buy a new home. They are in government staff housing and they try to save to eventually buy their own home. Before they save that much money and they retire, they cannot stay in staff housing and they cannot get into public housing. If they were given between \$5,000 and \$20,000 in assistance, they would have bought their own home. This is what we are talking about today. We're not talking about policy. We're talking about if they would have their own home once their money is enough. That's what I'm talking about.

Who will be eligible to apply? Are they Inuit? Are they qallunaat? What will be the income threshold? Those will be set in the documents. They can be changed and amended in this House. Once the proposed funding is approved, the details can be set and for those of us who are sitting on this side of the House, your concerns are also our concerns. We want Inuit to become able. We have concerns just like you so that Inuit have their own homes and be capable. Homeownership is a great long-term benefit.

If it's not passed today and the funding is not approved, perhaps it would be discussed in the next government if it was to be introduced. The people who are saving money to buy a home were probably ecstatic when this was introduced, but they will just go back to



the way they were. Madam Chairperson, we will be able to amend the policies within the bill in the coming days and months during our mandate. This will have a great effect not only to those who are capable of homeownership but to Government of Nunavut employees who are trying hard to buy their own home. That's what I'm thinking about when this is being discussed.

I will not be able to support the motion, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for giving me this opportunity. This was introduced by regular members in the beginning. I do not like to see it being disagreed with.

I would like this to move forward because the biggest employer in the territory is the Government of Nunavut. As Minister Akeegok stated earlier, if those in government staff housing moved out and they bought a home, the staff housing unit they would vacate will be free. Another thing to consider is that even if long-term employees aren't in staff housing, they can get this assistance that will be available to buy their own home.

In looking at the housing corporation's homeownership programs, we have heard numerous times that income is too high to be eligible to apply. That's what we hear. This does not have an income threshold. If they want to get assistance of \$10,000, \$20,000, up to \$50,000, if they want to buy their own home, then this is available from the government.

The government is not looking outside. This is for government staff only. We all encourage homeownership. It will be unfortunate if the program doesn't proceed. The Nunavut Housing Corporation will not stop this. We will tell our constituents that the MLAs did not vote in support of homeownership for Nunavummiut. That's what we will have to say to our constituents. I also do not support the motion. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Ms. Towtongie.

**Ms. Towtongie** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion because we have to consider those who are in higher income brackets and those who are in the lower income brackets.

A lot of the motivation is to retire and move back south. If a government employee becomes a homeowner in Nunavut, they will then rent their house and retire while living in the south. That is my thinking.

To the Premier's comments, we are MLAs; we are not children. We understand this issue. With regard to what you mentioned regarding policy, if the government doesn't like it, it can make changes to policy right away because it is not legislation.

We have not seen the policy ourselves as MLAs. They do mention that they consulted with NTI. I can't agree to something without knowing the details. I have to be fully informed and I need to have transparency if I'm going to agree to something. I have considered this for a long time.

The northern allowance is for northern residents that is established and in place. Upon retiring, they will now have a building that they own. They can sell it at any time at an even higher price or use it as rental income.

The policy, for example, with the election nearing, I know we can work on it and be fully informed without being rushed. At this time we feel unprepared, so I will support Pauloosie's motion. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. I have no more names on my list. I would like to ask the mover of the motion, Mr. Keyootak, if he has any closing comments. Mr. Qamaniq, I didn't see you. Mr. Qamaniq, it's your turn.

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The goal of the policies is good, but without seeing how the policies are written, we can't just approve them. We cannot say whether the policies are good or not or need improvements. I think we should provide our input before this goes ahead.

The Government of Nunavut has staff housing in some communities, particularly decentralized communities. In my constituency, there are Government of Nunavut employees who are Inuit that apply for staff housing, but they can't be approved and they're not sure where to make complaints. I'm not being negative towards the other races, but I often get complaints from Inuit government employees that non-Inuit are given preference for Government of Nunavut staff housing. There are vacant staff housing units in my constituency that are designated for Government of

Nunavut employees. Since they can't get approved for staff housing, they usually live in overcrowded public housing units.

On behalf of my constituents, I will not be in support of this program. Once they're not rushing and we're provided with the details on how the funds will be appropriated... (inaudible)... which was requested. However, they are trying to proceed with it too hastily, so it is not set up properly. Further, our request for more information was denied outright. Specifically when it comes to policy, if the government was more open, it would be easier for the MLAs to either approve or deny these requests.

I will be supporting the mover of the motion to remove the proposed program. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Anyone else? I have no more names on my list. To the mover of the motion, Mr. Keyootak, do you have further comments to your motions? Mr. Keyootak.

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Based on the comments I have heard here, I will not abandon my motion and I want it to go through a vote.

There were some comments made that the government knew about these issues for a long time and the election is quite soon, and it seems like they are finally thinking about the voters when the election is coming up. It looks like our voters are finally being considered. Based on the comment that was made, since we were elected, I know that we have been constantly thinking about our

voters, but it seems like they're only being considered because the election is nearing and I don't like that.

For these reasons, I want to put my motion to a vote. I won't retract it and I want to request a recorded vote on my motion. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation); Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. (interpretation ends) A recorded vote has been requested. Because some members are participating via Zoom, I will ask those members to raise their hands when voting and when I call your name, you can lower your hand. Those members that are present in the Chamber are required to stand when voting and will sit down when I call your name.

Those in favour of the motion.

Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Pedersen.

Ms. Towtongie.

Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Main.

Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Netser.

Mr. Qamaniq.

I believe I got everybody.

Those opposed to the motion, either rise or put your hand up.

Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Kusugak.

Ms. Ehaloak.

Mr. Akeeagok.

Ms. Sheutiapik.

Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Joanasie.

Ms. Nakashuk.

Hopefully we got everybody.

Ten in support of the motion and nine against, so the motion has been carried.

Okay. I get it now. We are going to go back to our budget support document that we were looking at earlier. We were on the last page of that document, on page 6. Do members agree that we concluded with the budgetary details that support Bill 70?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Okay. Do members agree to order that Bill 70 be reprinted to reflect the deletion of \$500,000? Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Thank you. It has been so ordered and when reprinted, Bill 70 is returned to the Committee of the Whole,

the committee will commence with a clause-by-clause review of the bill.

We will now proceed with Bill 71. He wants closing comments? Yeah. Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will make it brief. I am disappointed that the motion was carried. I think of all of the precedents to establish the authority of the Regular Members' Caucus, I think this was the wrong one. This is going to hurt. Potentially it could take upwards of a year or more before a policy like this could get put in place now with the election looming.

What is done is done. We are going to continue to move forward in other avenues within our housing continuum that we are looking at bringing solutions forward, of which we thought was one step in. I am disappointed that this budget wasn't approved, but I do appreciate the questions and the support on the other aspects of this bill and we will move forward from here. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hickes. It's never a dull moment being a politician, I tell you. You never know what's going to come up.

I would like take maybe a five-minute break before we get ready for the next bill. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed at 17:08 and resumed at 17:24*

**Bill 71 – Supplementary  
Appropriation (Capital) Act, No.  
1, 2021-2022 – Consideration in  
Committee**

**Chairperson:** Welcome back, everybody. We will now proceed with the review of Bill 71. Minister Hickes, you can proceed with your opening comments. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I appear before you today to present Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022*.

Through this bill we are seeking to increase the government's capital appropriations by \$157.84 million in 2021-22. Of this total, nearly \$136 million relates to capital carryovers, a term members are familiar with.

Madam Chairperson, the need arises when departments do not fully spend the capital funds appropriated to them in one fiscal year but still require the authority to spend this money in future years to complete projects.

As the Government of Nunavut's appropriation process requires annual approvals, the government is asking to "carry over" funding approved for capital projects in 2020-21 so we can continue to work on them in 2021-22.

Through Bill 71 we are seeking to carry over funds for 140 projects. Internally we consider carryover requests in two groups.

The first group includes 113 projects where the Government of Nunavut has already made financial or contractual

commitments to continue. We refer to these as “FAM compliant” or “Financial Administration Manual compliant.” Bill 71 seeks approval of \$105.5 million to allow the Government of Nunavut to continue these projects in 2021-22 and meet our commitments.

The second group includes 27 projects the Assembly has approved but the Government of Nunavut has not yet reached the stage where there are legal commitments to proceed. We refer to these as “non-FAM compliant.” Bill 71 seeks approval of \$30.4 million to enable the Government of Nunavut to move these projects beyond initial stages.

I would like to remind members that the Assembly has already approved these projects through previous capital plans. We are not seeking new money for these projects. We are asking approval to continue to move these projects forward in 2021-22.

At this point in the year the amount we are asking to carry over is still based on estimates. We will determine the final numbers once all entries are recorded as part of the 2020-21 year-end financial statements. We will return in September to request adjustments if necessary.

If the Assembly does not approve these appropriations, all previously approved capital funding would lapse as of March 31, 2021. The Government of Nunavut would need to either cancel the projects or defer working on them until appropriations are again available.

Of interest, \$18.1 million of our carryover requests relate to the North Baffin Energy Management project,

which the Assembly approved as a somewhat unique non-cash appropriation in March 2021. Outside this project, our ‘core’ carryover amount is about \$118 million, in line with past years.

In addition to carryovers, we are also seeking an additional \$21.9 million for other capital costs.

Specifically we are seeking \$2.9 million to advance the design of the Nunavut Recovery Centre, something our government feels strongly about. In collaboration with Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, we are committed to working towards building an in-territory facility to help Nunavummiut with addictions.

We are also seeking \$19 million for the Department of Community and Government Services to continue to operate the construction isolation cost until September 2021. These construction hubs are a key part of our government’s efforts to reduce and slow the spread of COVID into Nunavut. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hickee. Are there any general comments? Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Just very briefly, I remain concerned about the annual carryover; the pattern of carryovers. I would like to see over time the amount of capital carryovers be reduced through quicker and better management of capital projects.

I am happy to see the Nunavut Recovery Centre capital project moving forward or additional funds being sought for it, and I'll tell you why, Madam Chairperson. Everything I have read about this project has been very well planned out from the very beginning and it started with the development of a collaborative strategy. It's a unique project. I really like the fact that we have three funding partners as opposed to the GN being in alone on this project.

Along with having multiple funders of a project like this, the fact that it came forward through a strategy is, I think, an example of best practices for the government. I have mentioned this before and I'll mention it again. I believe that a similar project should have been and should be followed for elders' long-term care facilities in Nunavut. From where I sit, the Nunavut Recovery Centre approach seems to be the way to go and I remain hopeful.

On the construction worker isolation hubs, we had quite a lot of debate or discussion around these isolation hubs in previous sittings and it really pains me to see how dependent we are on outside labour for capital projects in Nunavut. I think we need to look at these isolation hubs as a signal of something that's bringing our attention to the fact that we do not have enough tradespeople certified in Nunavut, we have far too many unemployed people in Nunavut, and we need to change the current practices of relying on outside labour.

I think that if the pandemic continues, the construction isolation hubs continue, it just adds to our costs and they are hidden costs, in my opinion, and those are the costs associated with the high

number of unemployed people we have across Nunavut. I do understand the need for isolation hubs. I'm not saying that isolation hubs are bad, but I'm really troubled by our continual reliance on outside labour and journeypersons, and I look forward to us moving away from that in the future. (interpretation) I'm done. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Keyootak.

**Mr. Keyootak** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you.

**Chairperson**: We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Okay. Let's do this again. I'm just asking those on Zoom: please raise your hands either for or against. It's very hard to see when you don't raise your hands. There's a motion on the floor. All those in favour. All those against. Abstained. You're a little late, Mr. Lightstone. The motion has been defeated. Okay. We keep going. Okay. We're going to now go to clause by clause. Bill 71...oh, am I doing the wrong...? Okay. Sorry again. If papers are in front of me, I will read them. Okay. Page 4. Office of the Legislative Assembly. Not Previously Authorized. \$70,000. Agreed?

**Some Members**: Agreed.

**Chairperson**: Page 5. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Not Previously Authorized. \$41,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** What's that? Mr. Netser, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Netser** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just a brief question to the minister's opening comments about the 27 not signed contracts that the government currently has. I wonder if you've got the time... I don't really need to see how many they are, but what's the range like, from \$5,000 to \$150,000 to \$300,000 contracts? (interpretation) Thank you. ...(inaudible)...

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Mr. Netser, please repeat your question as I didn't hear it.

**Mr. Netser:** Let me repeat myself, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) Thank you. Regarding the 27 contracts that Minister Hickes stated were not signed, I don't really need to know who the contractors are, but I would like to know what the range is like for the contracts, (interpretation ends) from \$5,000 to \$500,000 to \$1 million, (interpretation) if the minister can elaborate a little bit on that and, if he doesn't have that information, (interpretation ends) he can provide that information whenever he has the opportunity. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's my final question. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. They range anywhere from, I believe, the lowest is \$14,000 and the highest is the North Baffin Energy Management project at

\$18 million. The majority of them are around the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range, although there are three within the \$2 million to \$3 million range, but there are grouped projects; upgrade community arenas is one, as well as the tank farm in Coral Harbour, which I'm sure the member is interested in, and a garage project. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Are you done, Mr. Netser? (interpretation ends) Okay. Page 5. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. \$41,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** If the members on Zoom can tell me if they agree, nod your head or put your hand up or something. Okay. Alright. Page 6 and over to 7, I believe, yes. Finance. Page 6 and then go over to page 7. \$3,564,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 8. Justice. Not Previously Authorized. \$510,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 9. Culture and Heritage. Not Previously Authorized. \$450,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 10 and it flips over to page 11. Education. Not Previously Authorized. \$14,555,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 12. Health. Not Previously Authorized. \$20,145,000. Agreed? Mr. Main, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I wanted to ask about the \$2.9 million for the Nunavut Recovery Centre capital project. I'm referring to the briefing notes that were provided to us. On page 2 it mentions "To accelerate the project schedule, CGS and Health have requested design phase funds in spring 2021." This would allow for an RFP to be issued by early summer 2021. Just where it refers to the accelerated project schedule, I wonder if we could get an update in terms of when the project is scheduled to be in construction and completed. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't have that exact information in front of me; just give me a moment, please.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My apologies on the delay. These funds would allow for the planning to be able to provide a submission for capital dollars in '22-23 in the March of that year. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) The project schedule right now, when is it currently planned to be in construction and then completed? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Again, some of it would be dependent upon the acquisition of the capital dollars to proceed with the project, but the anticipation is if it's approved in March '22-23, then construction would start that year. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

I'm sorry. As far as the length of the project, I would have to check it. I think it's a three-year project, but I would have to confirm that; four-year project. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

My apologies. When it's within the planning cycle, it's hard to actually have all these numbers at your fingertips and I do apologize, but it is anticipated to be a two-year construction period, so it would be available in 2024. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hickes. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) When it comes to the construction, it's a very large facility we're talking about here. Just as a comment, I would love to see a training plan attached to this project where we could have Inuit apprentices on site. It's a two-year project. It's not long enough to complete an apprenticeship, but it's long enough to get two years in and I think that that is something future Assemblies will have to consider, the future Assembly, when they're looking at the capital ask from the department.



I wanted to ask about, on page 2 of 2 of the briefing material, it mentions Nunavut Tunngavik's involvement and it says, "Options for development on Inuit-owned lands," which there are some in Iqaluit, I believe, and then further down on page 2 it says the Toonik Pond site was deemed to be the best location and would best support the programming needs of the clients. Is this Toonik Pond site on Inuit-owned lands or is that Crown lands or other, city lands? I'm not sure what the land tenure looks like in Iqaluit. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't have that level of detail with me, Madam Chairperson. When we're looking at the planning process, that's one of the components is they look at the site location, so that would be dependent upon where would be best suited, where the team deems it to be best suited as well. In the information that I have, it states that Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated will be working with the Government of Nunavut to identify land space, so I'm sure those considerations will be taking place. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Reading this briefing material, it looks to me like a site has been chosen and, that is, the Toonik Pond site and so I was asking. This is a capital appropriation under the three funders. The information we have been provided seems to suggest that Inuit-owned lands would be a contribution. I'm not sure if it would be an in-kind kind of

contribution to the project or if it would be market value or if there would be a cost associated with that.

Does the Department of Health know whether this is Inuit-owned land or not? I want to understand in terms of the financial contributions that are coming from the different partners. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have to get confirmation, but early indications from my staff here is that it's city-owned land, that location. With that being said, Madam Chairperson, it is one of the suggested sites that were put. There are a couple of other sites, I believe, or at least one other site that was being proposed. That, again, goes into the planning cycle of where, when you look at access to municipal services and those types of things and the location, all those facts are taken into consideration.

Just to backtrack a little bit from the member's earlier comment about the apprenticeship, that's a component of all of our contracts that we sign with contracting agencies to have apprenticeship programming associated with large construction builds. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) The reason I asked about the training plan and the need for a training plan is it's my

understanding that there hasn't been a single training plan completed under the new process, which involves working with the Department of Family Services, and it's something that holds a lot of promise and I'm just trying to connect the dots here with capital projects, construction isolation hubs, and the lack of tradespeople in the community.

It was just a comment and I would really look forward to seeing a training plan that's actually approved and put into place. I think the \$80 million jail project would have been a great first crack at that, but I guess it didn't work out.

(interpretation) I have no more questions at this time. (interpretation ends) I don't have any further questions.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) We're on page 12. Health. Not Previously Authorized. \$20,145,000. Agreed? Okay, I understand Mr. Qirngnuq wants to ask a question. Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have wanted to get information from the minister regarding the repairs to Taloyoak's old health centre. Can you briefly explain what sorts of repairs are required? I wanted to get that clarified, hence my question, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. There's \$423,000 associated with that. The carryover is needed to upgrade the health centre's

mechanical system and that work is expected to be complete by March 2022. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Mr. Qirngnuq, do you have further questions? Are you done? (interpretation ends) Okay. That was for \$20,145,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Environment. Not Previously Authorized. We're on page 13. \$2,289,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 14 and it goes over to 15 and 16. Community and Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. \$96,379,000. Agreed? Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I have a few different items I want to ask questions on here and I will start on page 14 of the bill. Right in the middle of the list of projects, the EAUFON marine survey, there's a carryover amount of \$200,000 and what I wanted to ask about this marine survey is that this is for fibre optic cable installation.

It's my understanding that in many other jurisdictions, when this type of survey is completed by a public government, the data associated with that survey becomes public because it's something that could be of use to the private sector. That's my question on the marine survey. Has the department received any requests to share this data with the private sector or are there any plans to do so?

(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm sure members are tired of hearing my voice, so I'll let Mr. Seeley have a shot at this one. Thank you. Through you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. To the member's question, we have received requests from a variety of commercial entities as well as other agencies and governments with a great amount of interest in the surveys. There is a lot of interconnectivity between the projects just by nature of it being a global web of fibre. The non-disclosure agreements permit that information is shared with those partners as appropriate. To answer the member's question, yes, we do receive those requests and where permitted, the survey results are made available. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Seeley. I think I only have one more question on this. Who has been provided the survey data and who decides whether the survey data is shared or not? Is it shared by default or to share the data, does there need to be some sort of approval process that the department goes through?

(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and through you, I think Mr. Seeley is probably best suited to respond to that. Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, minister. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The process for sharing that information is dependent on who is paying for the survey to complete the research. As we know, it is quite expensive and quite in depth. Depending on who is paying for it, that is who owns the information and that is going to help determine how and when we can share the information and with whom.

From a process perspective, as I mentioned, we do receive requests and those are all vetted appropriately. If there is interest in a more detailed example or explanation on what the process could actually look like for interested parties, I'm sure that we can map that out and share that with those interested parties. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Seeley. I'll move on from fibers to solid waste facilities. There are a number of solid waste facility upgrades that are listed here, and I remember the bundles from the capital estimates and I recall reading in the information provided that the cost of these solid waste facilities was rising over time and that there was a situation

where additional funds would be needed to complete the facilities.

I guess my question, with all of these solid waste facility upgrades and some of these facilities are quite small, is this just planning and design money that is being carried over? Does the department have any opportunities to secure additional funding so that these solid waste facilities will be completed? I'm trying not to get too detailed; I'm trying to look at all of these projects together, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Once again I think Mr. Seeley might be best positioned to respond to the member.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, minister. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for the question regarding solid waste sites and the variety of projects that are listed in the carryovers.

The matter of the pricing and the planning of the solid waste sites are very near and dear to our department right now. Solid waste sites are an integral part of operating a safe and healthy community, and many communities' solid waste sites have exceeded their projected life span and are problematic from a community living perspective.

The development of the new solid waste sites and the funding that you see in the carryovers is planning funding for planning studies to examine exactly what parameters the new solid waste

sites would be developed within. The situation with those planning studies is that until the regulations are actually established and developed on solid waste site specifications and what's required, we are in a position where we can't go forward until the regulations are actually developed and we can't go back because we have identified that these sites are required.

Therefore, some of these planning projects are in a bit of a delay pattern until we finish our work with the regulators on the development of the specifications for solid waste sites in Nunavut. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main:** *Ma'na*, Madam Chairperson. What is the anticipated timeline for finalizing the regulations and seeing these projects move forward? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Again, Mr. Seeley might as well continue with his response.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, minister. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'll stop far short from committing for a timeline for when those regulations will be developed by those other regulatory bodies. This is one item that is identified in our departmental business plan to continue and to engage with the regulators to make sure the specifications are developed at the

earliest possible time so that we can move forward with the development of new sites or improvements to existing sites to ensure that they are compliant with those regulations when developed. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On the construction isolation hubs, which are on page 16, the briefing material references the sources of funds for these isolation hubs. The request here is \$19 million and assuming that this \$19 million gets approved, what is the total cost of these isolation hubs from when they have been set up until September 30, 2021, which is projected? I just want the total cost on these isolation hubs. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I know the member understands why I can't give a precise amount. It is dependent upon usage and how many times people have to go through the isolation hubs to get here as we're going through different jurisdictions with vaccination numbers, including ourselves vaccinating transient workers into the territory. At some point it will have an impact on the usage of those hubs. We are covering the maximum anticipated need that would be the \$19 million. Hopefully we won't need it all. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister (interpretation ends) Similar to the questions we asked yesterday about the isolation hubs or I guess I'll call them general isolations hubs, the quicker we can see construction workers who are fully vaccinated to bypass the hubs, the more money we stand to save. Is this something that is on the table? Is this something that we can hope to see in terms of these construction isolation hubs? I guess the real question is: what is stopping the Minister of Health from exempting fully vaccinated construction workers from going through the hubs? I'm trying to understand whose decision it is and what is required for that to happen. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairperson:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Ultimately that decision would come from the Dr. Patterson's office. He is responsible for making sure that we are staying safe and I think he has been doing an exemplary job so far. At the end of the day it would be under the chief public health officer to determine exemptions. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have no further questions on this one. (interpretation) I'm done. Thank you.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) I'm just looking to see if anybody else wants to ask questions. No? Okay. We are on Community and Government Services.

Not Previously Authorized.  
\$96,379,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Page 17. Economic Development and Transportation. Not Previously Authorized. \$17,456,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Family Services. We are on page 18, the last page on this one. Mr. Main, do you want to ask a question on this page? Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I wanted to ask about the case management system, which is listed for a carryover of \$1.71 million and I've had some discussions or raised this particular project in the past and I'm looking for an update in terms of the project status and why it continues to not move forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The information I have is that although the project did start, like the member mentioned, in the 2019-2020... I almost said 1920 and then that would have been a long, long time ago again.

>> *Laughter*

...of which \$2 million was carried over from that fiscal year to the next, out of which vendor and monthly service costs of the project management contractor were paid, and there is still an

outstanding balance of \$1.7 million to carry over to continue the project moving forward.

I don't have the level of detail. Maybe the member might want to follow up with the minister on this project and I'm sure she would be happy to provide further details. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Mr. Main, are you done? (interpretation ends) I actually have a question on this page. I just want to know the Eskimo Point Lumber Supply building, Rankin Inlet, what that entails. Is that a private company or is that government-owned? Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It's to do some office renovations for what's called the Eskimo Point Lumber Supply building in Rankin Inlet. They have been leasing the property to accommodate employees in Rankin Inlet and the current lease is on a month-to-month basis. A new office building to lease with Eskimo Point Lumber needs some tenant improvements. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

**Chairperson:** Thank you. We're on page 18. Family Services. \$2,381,000. Do members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Go to Bill 71 in your binder. Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022*. Clause 1. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 2. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 3. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Go to Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary Amounts Appropriated for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2022. Total Supplementary Appropriation. \$157,840,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 4. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 5. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 6. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Clause 7. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Do members agree to Bill 71 as a whole?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Do members agree to put Bill 71 on the orders of the day for third reading?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairperson:** Mr. Hickes, would you like to provide your closing comments, please.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I didn't have to call on many of my colleagues or my support here today, but I can assure all members and people that are watching that there is so much knowledge around this table that it's sometimes a challenge for me to keep track of it all. I really appreciate the deputy ministers that have attended here today to help support me through these bills.

I appreciate the members' questions and I look forward to fulfilling some of these contracts and moving forward with our capital plan. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

>> *Applause*

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Hickes. I'm not sure what the wish of the committee is. Do you want to go on to the next bill? Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to move a motion to report progress.

**Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried and I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from the witness table.

**Speaker:** Order. Order. (interpretation) No. 20. (interpretation ends) Report of the Committee of the Whole. Ms. Angnakak.

**Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Ms. Angnakak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bills 70 and 71 and can report that progress was made and that Bill 71 is immediately ready for third reading and that one committee motion was adopted, and furthermore, your committee has ordered that Bill 70 be reprinted prior to the clause-by-clause review of the bill. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) There is a motion on the floor. (interpretation) Is there a seconder? Mr. Qamaniq. I don't think he's there.

>>*Laughter*

Oh. I'm sorry. He is not here. Mr. Rumbolt. (interpretation ends) Okay. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

21. (interpretation) Third Reading of Bills. (interpretation ends) Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

**Item 21: Third Reading of Bills**

**Bill 71 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022 – Third Reading**

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Cambridge Bay, that Bill 71, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022*, be read

for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 71 is ready for assent.

(interpretation) Continuing on. (interpretation ends) *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

**Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Note that there is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislation with the Minister of Justice tomorrow at 10:30 Eastern Daylight Time.

*Orders of the Day* for June 3:

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. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions



15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 65
  - Bill 70, as reprinted
  - Bill 72
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you.  
(interpretation ends) This House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 3, at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:16*

