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Thursday, June 3, 2021

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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Paul Quassa, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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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)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

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(Rankin Inlet South)

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(Hudson Bay)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the
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(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

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Minister responsible for Immigration;
Minister responsible for Indigenous
Affairs; Minister responsible for the
Utility Rates Review Council*

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government
Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

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Minister of Languages; Minister
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Corporation*

Hon. George Hickey
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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Minister responsible for Labour; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

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(Aivilik)

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

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of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Homelessness; Minister
responsible for the Status of Women*

Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

*Minister of Education; Minister responsible
for Nunavut Arctic College*

Calvin Pedersen
(Kugluktuk)

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Cathy Towtongie
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
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Third Reading8314

**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, June 3, 2021**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak,
Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie
Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon.
David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner,
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, Mr. Keyootak, can you say the
opening prayer, please.

>> *Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you,
Mr. Keyootak. Good day,
Nunavummiut. Welcome,
Nunavummiut, as well as those who are
following the proceedings of the House
as we do our work today.

Continuing on. Ministers' Statements.
Minister of Environment, Mr.
Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 641 – 5(2):
Baffin Island Caribou
Composition Survey**

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people
of Arviat, I say “good day” to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise
today to provide an update on a research
program to monitor Baffin Island
caribou. Composition surveys of North
and South Baffin Island were completed
in March and April of this year. These
surveys collect information on calf
survival and the ratios of bulls, cows,
and calves in the population.

This particular caribou herd experienced
a dramatic decline in numbers and the
population was estimated to be around
4,600 in 2014. In response to the
population decline, a total allowable
harvest of 250 male-only tags has been
in place since 2015. Recently harvesters
have been allowed to take up to 25
females from that total allowable harvest
of 250.

Mr. Speaker, both traditional knowledge
and scientific reports show that caribou
recovery can take decades, but the rate
of recovery may be faster in some
regions and slower in others. At this
time, based on the annual composition
surveys and hunters' observations, there
are some positive signs of possible
recovery starting in some South Baffin
areas. A health monitoring program for
Baffin caribou is now in place and will
investigate current caribou health and
observe any changes over time.

Mr. Speaker, the signs of recovery we
are seeing in Baffin Island caribou are
encouraging. They show that the
management actions we have taken to
stop the population decline are working.
Continuing with our management plan
will support a faster recovery for this

herd and allow abundant caribou for future Nunavummiut to harvest.

It is through our commitment to the guiding principle of Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq, respecting and caring for the land, animals and our environment, and with the support of our harvesters and co-management partners and the work of our biologists, we will ensure that Baffin Island caribou have the best chance at recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 642 – 5(2):
Renewal of the Canada-Nunavut
Bilateral Agreement on Early
Learning and Child Care**

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, all Nunavummiut should have access to affordable, high-quality and culturally relevant child care, no matter where they live in the territory. To make this a reality, Nunavut's early learning and child care sector has been growing through the support and hard work of the Department of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to announce that my department is in the process of renewing the Canada-Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement for another four years until 2024-25.

This funding has been vital in the development of culturally relevant, Inuktitut language resources for young Nunavummiut. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it has also allowed my department to provide specialized training for early childhood educators to ensure they have the tools they need to care for our youngest citizens.

In addition to the benefit of providing stable, long-term funding, the bilateral agreement allows for flexibility with short-term measures to minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on Nunavut's early learning and child care system.

Mr. Speaker, this renewed bilateral agreement also commits Nunavut to working with the Government of Canada to establish a Canada-wide child care system that will increase the quality, accessibility, flexibility, and affordability of early learning and child care for Nunavut families.

This bilateral agreement highlights the federal government's commitment to a strong early learning and child care system by addressing local, regional and territorial priorities and improving access to high-quality early learning child care opportunities throughout our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

**Minister's Statement 643 – 5(2):
Qulliq Energy Corporation
District Heating Systems**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon, everyone and those who are watching.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's district heating system projects in Sanikiluaq and Taloyoak. Once installed, the new alternative energy systems will heat nearby buildings by capturing residual heat produced at the power plant during power generation. The heat is then distributed through a piping system to the Qulliq Energy Corporation's district heating customers.

Unfortunately, like many projects around the world, there were significant delays in the Qulliq Energy Corporation's district heating system expansion projects due to COVID-19 public health restrictions and resource limitations. With swift contingency plans, the corporation has restarted the initial phases of the district heating system projects in Sanikiluaq and Taloyoak, which are now expected to be completed in 2021-22 and 2022-23 respectively. Two local buildings will be connected to the district heating system in Sanikiluaq. Five more commercial and institutional customers will be connected to the district heating system in Taloyoak.

District heating system technology has proven to reduce heating fuel consumption, cut carbon emissions, and help connected customers save on fuel and heating costs. The estimated annual

energy savings for the Sanikiluaq and Taloyoak projects alone will displace almost 340,000 litres of diesel fuel, the equivalent of over 900 tonnes of greenhouse gas. These initiatives are not only benefiting our communities but helping to mitigate the effects of climate change on our environment. With each new installation we are taking positive steps toward a cleaner future.

Major projects such as district heating installations are capital intensive and would not be possible without the support of federal funding. The Qulliq Energy Corporation would like to acknowledge the Government of Canada's support of remote northern communities through the Low Carbon Economy Fund. It is with thanks to this initiative that the installation of the district heating system in Sanikiluaq and Taloyoak will be completed.

Mr. Speaker, commercial and institutional customers in Iqaluit, Arviat, Kugluktuk, Pangnirtung, and Rankin Inlet are currently connected to district heating systems, and with the completion of Taloyoak and Sanikiluaq, the territory will have close to 30 active district heating customers. The Qulliq Energy Corporation continues to complete feasibility studies in communities that can further benefit from expansion in the corporation's district heating initiative. I look forward to the Qulliq Energy Corporation's new alternative energy projects that demonstrate its commitment to Pivaallirutivut, Nunavut's priority in developing and managing renewable and non-renewable resources for the long-term benefit of Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 644 – 5(2):
Nunavut Housing Corporation
Board of Directors**

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate three board members for their reappointment to the housing corporation board of directors today.

John Apt will continue to serve as chair of the board for another three-year term. He has been an integral part of this team since he joined the board in 2014. Last year he took on the role of chair after Bob Leonard passed away. We were glad to have his steady hand at the helm during that challenging time. He is joined by George Qulaut and David Evalik, both of whom have served the board of directors since 2018.

(interpretation ends) The board fulfills a vital role in guiding the direction of the housing corporation. Having so many directors return to their role provides welcome stability and also allows the corporation to reap the rewards of Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq, the development of skills through observation, mentoring, practise, and effort. We thank them for their continued diligence and leadership.
(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 Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Item 3: Members' Statements

**Member's Statement 923 – 5(2):
Rankin Inlet Pays Tribute to the
215 Bodies of First Nations
Students**

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize the people of Rankin Inlet for observing the findings of the burial site in British Columbia.

We have a large inuksuk in Rankin Inlet and Jacqueline Apak, who started this ceremony, Selma Eccles, Maani Esther, Kasson Nesbitt, Levinia Brown as the elder representative and for the fact that her and her siblings were sent to residential school in Chesterfield Inlet, she said the opening prayer. Also, there were members of the RCMP and we had people from Kamloops, British Columbia, who live in Rankin Inlet.

There was a case where Jennifer Floyd's sister never came back home and that time there were tears shed when she was telling the story of her sister never coming back home again. We will not forget those children who never went home.

Thank you to the people of Rankin Inlet and the RCMP for participating in that ceremony. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 924 – 5(2):
Wishing Baker Lake Students a
Safe Summer**

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is the last day of school for both the Rachel Arnngnamaktiq Elementary School and the Jonah Amitnaaq Secondary School. I'm sure all the students are looking forward to the end of the day dismissal bell.

Mr. Speaker, I'm certain that it has been quite the school year, dealing with everyday issues and then having to deal with COVID on top of that, but they persevered and made it through the school year. Some students will be graduating from high school this fall and I look forward to attending their graduation ceremony.

We also had a grade 5 farewell last week where the grade 5 students had 15 minutes to take pictures with their family and teachers and we parents were allowed to take part in the pictures, following COVID restrictions, of course.

I truly appreciate all of the hard work that the students, teachers, and support staff have put in; the late night studying, late night preparation work, and the grading late into the evenings that was put in throughout the school year. I hope you all have a restful summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Member's Statement 925 – 5(2): High
Arctic Relocation Activities**

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people that were relocated to the High Arctic are viewed by the rest of Canada as living in darkness. I want Canadians to know that it is incredibly bright up in Grise Fiord at this time of year.

One of the relocatees to the High Arctic has had a book published last year. The author will be doing a book signing tonight at 6:30 by the monument in Grise Fiord and there will be tea and snacks. I am so glad that this book has been published. Larry Audlaluk wrote this book reflecting on his experiences of the past and his life today. That book is now available for purchase.

I never thought that there would be an author coming out of Grise Fiord, so I am very proud of him. I encourage you to attend the book signing with an author in Grise Fiord. Zebedee Nungak, who we know from CBC, will be discussing this book on air come Monday. It is so exciting that this book will be discussed on air. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

**Member's Statement 926 – 5(2):
Congratulations to Jamie
Takkiruuq**

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to you all and Nunavummiut and to Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Jamie Takkiruuq, a Gjoa Haven resident, who has successfully completed his training as a Nunavut lawyer.

Mr. Speaker, only 25 students were accepted to this program which began in 2017. Jamie and his fellow students have been working very hard over the past four years, with intensive coursework often delivered by visiting professors.

Mr. Speaker, we have often stated in this place that we need more Inuit working in professions across Nunavut. We need professionals who have an understanding of our northern culture, life experience and background.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to note that Jamie is one of 16 Inuit who graduated from this program, and I believe he is the youngest of the students, who is 21 years old. Mr. Speaker, the law school graduates will now have a year to work within the legal system, practising their skills under supervision and mentoring.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jamie Takkiruuq from Gjoa Haven, Nunavut, and Kitikmeot, and the rest of the law school graduates on their success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of our fellow Inuit who gain skills in order to provide assistance in Nunavut. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

**Member's Statement 927 – 5(2): Elder
Care Homes**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is regarding elder care homes.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps my colleagues would agree with me if I said that sending the elders to Ottawa is not right. I think we can all agree that it is just not right, but according to the decisions that our government has made to date, there is a plan to build three elder care facilities in the coming years.

Our elders will still need to leave their home communities in the future and move to another community, leaving their relatives and their traditional land. They will have to leave their homes. Mr. Speaker, this is really unfortunate. In thinking about them, first of all, the elders have rights. They have a right to be helped and they have (interpretation ends) rights to care. (interpretation) With that in mind, whenever elders are moved to another community, it really affects their physical and mental well-being. It harms them. There are bad aspects to this.

The third thing that needs to be remembered is culture. Nunavut has a unique culture. My constituents want to stay in their homeland. They are attached by the heart to the land.

Mr. Speaker, I would like my comments to be considered by our government and I will have questions to the Minister of Health at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Sheutiapik.

**Member's Statement 928 – 5(2):
Family Members Lost to Tragedy**

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. I would like to remind the people of Iqaluit that although things are opening up, we still have to follow the guidelines.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I also rise today acknowledging that there has been a federal national action plan released during lunch hour today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour my late sister, Mary Anne Birmingham, whose case is still unsolved. To my late sister's biological mother, who unfortunately passed away on August 6 of last year, whose hope was to have the case solved, unfortunately passed since. I'm thinking of her today.

I'm also thinking about Debbie Kippomee, whose life was unfortunately taken away by family a member. I think of her family today. I'm thinking about every family member in Nunavut that has been impacted. I do think of you every day, but I'm sending you virtual hugs. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, we feel for those people. Members'

Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Member's Statement 929 – 5(2):
Congratulations to Law School
Graduates**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. I, too, wish to recognize a person, although the person's name was already mentioned since she is one of the law school students who graduated, my niece, Emily Karpik, whom I wanted to congratulate. As well, her brother is also graduating from the (interpretation ends) Environmental Technology Program.

(interpretation) I wanted to express the pride I feel in them as their mother was a very capable person who was constantly busy. She was my older sister who suddenly passed away during the month of Christmas, and obviously their mother is probably in their thoughts. Nonetheless, she would have been extremely proud of their accomplishments, so to try to compensate, I too am voicing my immense pride in both of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. I just want to remind the members that if you wish to speak, you can give me your name before our proceedings begin as well.

Continuing on. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. We look forward to having them back at some point.

Welcome to all of those watching the proceedings. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Pond Inlet, Mr. Qamaniq.

My apologies. We are unable to hear the member. We will try again. Mr. Qamaniq.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Are you still unable to hear me? I'll just go without the video, Mr. Speaker.

I send my regards to the residents of my community and say "good day" to my colleagues and the people of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services. In March this Assembly approved... .

>>*Indecipherable*

Can the minister provide an overview...(inaudible)...initiatives are underway to address family violence across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): My apologies. We could not make out the question. There's something wrong with the audio from Pond Inlet. We will get back to you, Mr. Qamaniq. My apologies. We will get back to you once the problem is fixed.

Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 1346 – 5(2): Public Housing Construction

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my colleagues and ministers, as well as all Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to return to a question I have been asking for the past five days and I will again attempt to get answers today. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation again today. I will again pose my ongoing query as from my perspective, my question seems rather clear and logical, so I will ask the minister again today and I would like a clear and concise answer now.

My question to the minister is: has any communication been sent to the chairperson and board of the Taloyoak Housing Authority explaining the problems that led to the cancellation of the public housing unit construction project scheduled for Taloyoak, 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. Thank you for that question. I say "good day" to you. Now, a letter detailing the issues has been sent to the local housing association office in Taloyoak and it clearly identifies the issue that caused the cancellation of the project. They will receive the reason for the deferral. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister stated that the contractor for the construction phase of the new public housing unit in Taloyoak was “unable to secure insurance,” thereby causing this cancellation. Can the minister clearly elaborate on the reasons why the insurance was not applicable for the project? 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 raising another question on this subject. To clarify, whenever the housing corporation releases a RFP, the procedures listed in the tenders include references to the number of units to be built in a community, and when the housing corporation chooses the winning bid, such as the company in Taloyoak who won the construction bid, they are asked for paperwork detailing their coverage during the construction phase and if the insurance is up to date. The company is required to provide a copy of that insurance to the housing corporation.

With that being the requirement, the company that won the bid was unable to secure the necessary insurance for the work and this became problematic to the housing corporation. The local housing authority is also required to have a copy of the insurance. Due to the lack of the formal copy being made available, it

caused this problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for clearly explaining the issue that caused the problems in Taloyoak related to the local construction project that was deferred.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask my last question in English so I will be well understood. (interpretation ends) Yesterday the minister stated that the Nunavut Housing Corporation will “continue to work with our federal partners...to keep ahead of rising construction costs for public housing.” Can the minister clearly explain what specific actions are being taken to address this problem? 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 the member for the question. We work with the federal government as partners on different projects and we have requested funding from them for increased housing construction projects in Nunavut. The main concern is the increased costs of building materials and insurance, as this is being felt throughout Canada. Those are the main concerns, but we have different pots of money for housing programs, such as homeownership, public housing, or other areas. We are trying to work with the federal

government in different areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Question 1347 – 5(2): Rankin Inlet Caribou Management

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the residents of Chesterfield and Rankin Inlet.

I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment, Joe Savikataaq.

Now, at this time, a vast number of caribou will be migrating through Rankin Inlet, perhaps next week or toward the end of the month. What preparations has the department made with regard to these *amirrait*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The caribou we term as *amirrait* are usually cows that have birthed calves and usually migrate around Rankin Inlet towards the end of June or the beginning of July. Rankin Inlet has two conservation officers and they will be busy overseeing the migration. However, if any resident wishes to provide assistance, they can go to the wildlife office to speak to the officers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The area where the *amirrait* cross is readily accessible as it is in an area that is about a 5- to 15-minute ride. It becomes quite dangerous to be close to that area when people are shooting at animals. In the past two years wildlife officers closed down the area for public safety. Has the department made any plans at this time to close the hunting area when the caribou are migrating through? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the caribou are crossing near Rankin Inlet on the highway to the mining site, I believe it becomes too dangerous. With more hunters in the area of concern, it would be closed for the hunters too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Minister of Environment. There are two areas where they cross, one is closer to the community and the other area is on the road to the mining site.

The last question I want to ask is with regard to the legislation in Nunavut where anyone may be prosecuted, fined, or both for wasting meat, but I have not seen that exercised. We have seen a lot

of caribou meat wasted and these local hunters and trappers raise this as a concern. For anyone who wastes caribou when *amirrait* are crossing the area, how can the legislation be enacted or accelerated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Ms...Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we already have existing regulations outlining the wastage of meat that is edible. Whoever abandons a caribou carcass with edible parts, if it is not disease-ridden, they would indeed be breaking the law.

The biggest hurdle we face is actually finding the hunter who wasted the meat. If a witness observed said hunter abandoning a carcass, then they can inform the wildlife officer of their observation of that hunter who abandoned the carcass. When you just find an abandoned carcass, it is almost impossible to determine who may have left it.

Now, if any resident sees any caribou carcass on the land and they witness the hunter doing that, then yes, that person can provide a witness statement about the abandonment and then it could proceed to court. However, when an abandoned carcass is just found, the wildlife officer would go investigate the spot and without any witnesses, it is almost impossible to determine the culprit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. First of all, I'm sorry as I inadvertently entitled you as Ms., Mr. Savikataaq.

Oral Questions. We will try the Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe you can hear me now. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, in March of...

>>*No audio*

...the Assembly approved the 2020-21...address family violence. Can the minister provide an overview of what new initiatives are currently underway to address family violence across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): My apologies, Mr. Qamaniq. I again apologize to you. Mr. Qamaniq, when you were asking your question, you were breaking up. I believe you may have a technical problem. I apologize. We will go back to you again after wrapping up with other MLAs. It may be a problem with your computer.

Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 1348 – 5(2): Digital Resources for Students

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good afternoon” to my constituents here in Baker Lake, and also, good afternoon, MLAs and the rest of the staff. It is a little bit different asking questions via Zoom, but we will get by here.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has indicated that his department purchased over 5,000 digital devices to support remote learning during the pandemic. Can the minister provide an update on how many devices have been distributed to students to date and in which communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, we have purchased 5,000 devices and to date, I believe, we have distributed to every school for grades 11 and 12, totalling 1,435 devices, these are iPads, and in addition to that, teachers have been provided laptops, 214, for a total of 1,649. 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 his response. Mr. Speaker, I fully support students having the right equipment to be able to continue their studies. Laptops and iPads are useful tools. However, having access to the Internet is also an important component of remote learning.

Can the minister describe what challenges his department has faced in ensuring that all students with digital devices have adequate access to the Internet and what steps have been taken to address those challenges? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we deploy the Internet-capable devices to all of our grade 11 and 12 students, each of them comes with an Internet stick, very similar to the one I'm holding, and they plug into the device and each Internet stick has the capacity of 10 gigabytes and these are on a per-month basis.

As for any challenges that have been experienced, I don't think there has been much in terms of challenges around accessing the Internet. I think there have been some minor hiccups around adjusting to stage 4 and we're not going totally online and using the online Edsby platform, but I think those are being addressed on a case-by-case basis and our school staff, the tech champions that we're calling, that are providing support to those students and parents that need support in this area. 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 his response. I applaud his work and his department's work in getting those devices set up properly. I'm glad to hear that each device has an Internet stick to go with the device.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that purchasing enough devices for Nunavut's students is a costly initiative. However, the use of digital devices is fast becoming a standard within

education and will no doubt remain that way after the pandemic is over. I encourage the minister to look for alternative means to ensure that all students have access to these tools in the future.

Will the minister commit to increasing the number of digital devices and related hardware that can be made available to Nunavut students to pursue educational opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank again the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, this pandemic has proven to be quite the challenge on the education front, but we have been fortunate to get the support, especially from the federal government, and that has enabled us to purchase a large number of devices for our students.

In addition to that, we have further opportunities and working with Inuit organizations too on getting devices into the hands of students that most need it. We will continue to provide and try to get those opportunities in place for maximum growth and learning opportunities for our Nunavut students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Question 1349 – 5(2): Baffin Island Caribou Management

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to

those who are following the proceedings in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, as well as my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to query the minister first of all on this issue I seem to have laid on the wayside as I haven’t asked about it, and that is caribou hunting.

Mr. Speaker, we were just informed about the most recent figures on caribou in the Baffin region, and it is starting to become more and more interesting to listen to today.

Mr. Speaker, how many communities in the Baffin filled their caribou hunting tags this season and how many communities were unable to use their tags? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I believe that’s directed to the (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River have leftover tags as they didn’t harvest their allowable harvest, which is unfortunate as 250 caribou have already been harvested; reaching the limit at 250 that closed the caribou season on Baffin Island. These two communities were the only ones not to fill their tags. 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 clarification.

Mr. Speaker, we face some geographical challenges where our hunters must travel to and both communities did not fill out their tags, obviously, due to distances involved and more so in the case of Qikiqtarjuaq. The areas that caribou can inhabit are not close by and we don't have the luxury of choosing different lands to go caribou hunting.

The lands where caribou can be found are quite distant and oftentimes, just when the route becomes navigable for our hunters, most of the tags have already been filled and the caribou season is closed. This is quite problematic to our community of Qikiqtarjuaq as we can only travel to the caribou hunting grounds during the winter and just when the snow becomes deep enough to travel on, the season closes.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister identify whether or not community organizations can set their own seasons that are more conducive to our geographic realities? We want to be able to harvest caribou when our hunters are able to finally travel to those lands, and I wonder if the minister can accommodate requests such as that.

For example, the Qikiqtarjuaq HTO would most likely be involved in this discussion. If the HTO wanted to work on setting dates for their local hunters, such as months or even weeks, how can they request changes to the system so that our hunters are accommodated? Can the minister provide some clarification on this matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to ensure all Baffin HTOs are aware of this information on how caribou seasons are set, I will try to provide a brief overview.

The government sets the overall total allowable harvest and allocates 250 tags for the Baffin region via the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board. Once the 250 tags are given to the QWB, they sub-allocate the tags to their regional community HTOs and divide the tags based on a set system. Now, once the communities are allocated tags, the local HTO decides how many tags will be free, when the season opens and closes, as it is up to each community.

The issues over the past two years have been the overharvesting by some communities from their allotted tags and the immediate closure once 250 caribou are harvested. Although each community is allocated tags as part of their share, it is the actual harvests that determine when the season closes and if the tags were not transferrable, then it would work.

However, when communities go over their quota and the number 250 is reached, such as we have seen over the two years, it means that Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River, although their tags are unused, are affected when the Baffin season is closed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response.

Mr. Speaker, with the two communities that I represent, our caribou hunting grounds are very far away, especially in Qikiqtarjuaq. If you are going hunting from Qikiqtarjuaq, it takes three days to get there. You have to travel for three days. Some communities can get caribou not too far from their community. There are differences like that. My two constituency communities have to travel the farthest to hunt caribou. By the time the season opens, the route is not good enough for travel, and by the time the conditions are good enough to travel on, the season is closed.

Would it be okay for the local hunters and trappers organization to set their months and dates because they know when the good season is and they know the conditions of the ice that they have to travel on? Can the community set the opening and closing of the caribou harvesting season and not just have their tags taken away from them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, it is up to the local hunters and trappers organizations to decide what to do with the tags and when they can be used. As I indicated earlier, the problem is that some communities tend to go over their quota and when they reach the total quota of 250, the hunting season has to be closed. If the communities haven't gone over the limit, then Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River can hunt their full quota. However, some communities went over their allocated tags last year and that is the case again this year. It is

up to the communities to decide when the caribou harvesting season opens. That's the decision that is made by the local hunters and trappers organization. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 1350 – 5(2): Isolation Requirements

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and they are regarding the mandatory two-week isolation requirement.

Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the role that the mandatory two-week isolation has played in keeping Nunavut safe and limiting the impacts of the pandemic on Nunavummiut. A year ago or even six months ago, I believe that the mandatory isolation requirement was both relevant and necessary, but today, as we are reaching approximately 60 percent of Nunavummiut who are fully vaccinated and here in Iqaluit that figure is closer to 75 percent fully vaccinated, and in Resolute Bay, I believe, it's up to 93 percent of the community which is fully vaccinated, I believe it is time to consider whether the blanket two-week isolation requirement remains relevant and necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I have not travelled and have not gone through isolation myself, but I believe it goes without saying that two weeks in a hotel room is a hardship. Mr. Speaker, I have heard very serious and concerning issues which have been faced by children who have suffered through this two-week experience.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative to reconsider the pros and cons of the mandatory two-week isolation, and I would like to state that I'm not a scientist, but I do believe the science that has indicated that those who are fully vaccinated are less likely to get infected and then pass on the COVID-19 infection onto others.

Mr. Speaker, the federal COVID-19 testing and screening advisory panel recently recommended eliminating isolation requirements for fully vaccinated Canadians. Mr. Speaker, I believe that a similar isolation exemption for fully vaccinated Nunavummiut would encourage the vaccination rate and see an increase in numbers.

Mr. Speaker, recently Newfoundland joined New Brunswick and Yukon in removing mandatory isolation requirements for fully vaccinated residents. Earlier this week the minister had indicated that the COVID-19 team is currently in discussions on the topic. I would like to ask the minister: when is it likely that the minister will be announcing whether or not Nunavummiut will also see mandatory two-week isolation requirements being lifted for fully vaccinated Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the questions and comments, and I don't disagree with the comments he is reading. Either we read them or hear them on the news daily.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a bit of a different predicament than Newfoundland and places down south that have road access to hospitals and if one hospital is full, they can drive to the next one and have many different options. Mr. Speaker, we only have one option and that's our health centres in communities, where we have overworked nurses and inadequate facilities often to take care of people who fall very sick, not just to COVID but other illnesses.

Every time COVID hits a community, as it did here in Iqaluit recently, the numbers go up very rapidly and it puts a lot of pressure on already a very overworked and under pressure health staff. Our nurses and doctors work tirelessly on top of trying to vaccinate Nunavummiut, and then they have to deal with the COVID outbreak. We have to be extra careful in terms of when we open the doors for double-vaccinated individuals to be able to travel freely within Nunavut or outside Nunavut into other provinces that may have COVID outbreaks.

Mr. Speaker, we are very seriously looking at that at this point. I cannot give you a confirmed date of when it will be, but I would just like to assure you that it will be definitely before the summer is over. It could be this week, it could be next week, or it could be the week after. Mr. Speaker, I'm not trying to give false hope. It's just that we are having that discussion and it will come, and I just ask you to please bear with us and be patient. We have to take all kinds of issues into consideration when we are dealing with this and I appreciate the patience of Nunavummiut. 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. I'm glad to know that these matters are taken into very serious consideration. I agree with the minister that Nunavut is under unique circumstances given our limited infrastructure, but I'm very grateful that the federal government has prioritized Nunavut in the rollout and distribution of vaccines across the country.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, Newfoundland had just recently updated their COVID-19 reopening plan in which they indicated that fully vaccinated individuals will be exempt from their mandatory two-week isolation requirements, but they also indicated that children under the age of 12 whose parents are fully vaccinated, those children under 12 will also receive the same exemption to the two-week mandatory isolation period. I would like to ask the minister next: is that an item that has been taken under consideration by the COVID team? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Exactly those things that we are looking at, Mr. Speaker.

If an individual such as myself, if I travel to Winnipeg and, let's say, by that time we don't need to isolate for two weeks and I have a grandchild or two that are under the age of 12 that are not

vaccinated, do we have to isolate for two weeks in Winnipeg then in this scenario until it's safe for my grandchildren to travel with us or do we take them home and have them self-isolate at home under monitoring? Those are the things we have to watch and deal with because, in this scenario, what would happen then if one of my grandchildren came to Rankin Inlet and ended up with COVID and didn't isolate? Then it would spread in the community.

We have to make tough decisions on these kinds of things, Mr. Speaker. It's very real. This COVID is not going to avoid children. It attacks everybody and it's a very dangerous situation. We are talking about those very things because there's nothing that says that children that are five, six, or seven years old will not get COVID when they come from down south and play in the parks down south and come home, that it won't be spread. It's a very real possibility, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for that response. I agree with the minister that, of course, youth are not at risk of catching the COVID-19 infection, but the fact remains that youth are still travelling and going through the two-week mandatory isolation period and facing undue hardship. As I indicated, I am aware of very serious concerns on that front.

Mr. Speaker, moving on to my final question, earlier this week when the

minister had indicated that this topic of discussion is being considered by the COVID-19 team, he had indicated that a number of boxes must be checked before any decisions can be made on lifting or amending the COVID-19 isolation requirements. To date, this Assembly and Nunavummiut are still unaware of what those boxes are and that is mainly due to the fact that the Government of Nunavut has yet to release a reopening plan. For my last question, I would like to ask the minister: when can Nunavummiut expect to see the Government of Nunavut produce and table a reopening plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question and I know my colleague knows I wasn't literally meaning "checking off boxes"; a check-off box.

Mr. Speaker, I will answer his last question the same way I answered his first question. As soon as we have those particular details available, I will be more than happy to share with the public where we are on the two-week isolation, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. I really appreciate the questions, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 1351 – 5(2): Pandemic Support for Students

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, everybody.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, in my constituency, which the minister is a part of, I have constituents whose children attend the French school and those whose children who attend the other schools which offer both English and Inuktitut language streams in the early grades and kindergarten.

Concerns have been raised with respect to the different levels of support which are being offered to students during this pandemic, depending on whether they are in English, Inuktitut or French language streams.

Can the minister clarify how his department ensures that the learning packages and other resources that are being provided to students for home learning are equitable across all language streams? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for her question. Mr. Speaker, regardless of what language a child is learning in our schools, our schools have developed learning packages and whichever stage they're in, that are being able to deliver those to students, and with that, those assessments would take place on the work that is being completed, but it

doesn't matter which language that they're learning. We're using the same material that the education program provides. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been brought to my attention that the students who are in Inuktitut language kindergarten classes are receiving minimal materials in their take-home packages compared to students in the French or English streams. Can the minister tell us whether this issue has been brought to his attention and, if not, what communication channels should parents follow to make their concerns known? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This concern hasn't been brought to my attention until the member has brought it into this House, and I would like to speak with her further, perhaps in between our sitting.

In terms of trying to address this situation, I would suggest that parents or guardians speak with their teacher or the principal and ensure that they're getting the work for whichever grade they're in and it reflects the education program that they're supposed to cover in class. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. I'll be sure to tell my constituency that.

Mr. Speaker, this particular constituent tells me that their child, who is in the Inuktitut stream, has had no opportunities for online contact with their teacher and no access to the Edsby program throughout this pandemic, even though these supports seemed to be available to other students. There appears to be a certain inequity in the support that has been made available based on the language of instruction.

Will the minister commit to working with his staff to ensure that teachers in all language streams have access to the same level of resources and support so that they in turn can ensure that their students receive equal education opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for her question. I would like to pursue this further and also with that, I'll bring this up at the...I meet regularly with the district education authorities on any matter that we're dealing with through the pandemic and I'll suggest that this be an added topic of discussion and see if there are suggestions to address these types of scenarios on learning packages.

I also just want to clarify around Edsby. It's a learning platform that could be used for all grade levels, but our resources currently have allowed for the higher grade levels to be prioritized,

being grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. For the lower grade levels, kindergarten and through grade... Those learning packages or take-home packages are being heavily used when schools are in stage 4 or stage 2 or 3 for that matter. Those are ongoing and will continue for schools in communities, whichever stage that they're in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 1352 – 5(2): Programs and Services for Elders and Caretakers

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, everyone is aware of the plight of our elders, who need help. We all know that this is an important and large part of the discussion.

Now, based on my understanding, the elders facilities do exist in some communities in Nunavut as they provide elders with some level of assistance locally. There are other facilities, however, that are operated by the Department of Health that are run with (interpretation ends) programs and services (interpretation) that seem designed with elders in mind specifically. That's my understanding.

My first question for the minister is regarding the facilities specifically for our elders that are made available and operated by the Department of Health through their (interpretation ends) programs and services. (interpretation) What are these (interpretation ends) programs and services (interpretation)

that are provided by the Department of Health specifically for our elders? What exactly are they? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we speak of elders, generically I think of Inuit elders who are categorized as our elders in our culture, so when you say it in Inuktitut, I may inadvertently only think of Inuit elders.

However, the programs offered to our elders here in Nunavut under the Department of Health are quite numerous which we manage, such as elderly care, irrespective of whether they are in a hospital or not, and we also have a home care program for elders with mobility issues to check on their health, especially when they cannot go to the health centres, and this includes their medication.

There are also many other programs operated by the government for our elders. We are compiling a list of what is available for older adults and elders so that it clearly outlines all the government programs and services and how they can be accessed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My next question is regarding family members who may have a role in taking care of a relative who is an elder.

Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my attention in my constituency that some family members have difficulty in terms of expenses when they take on a role of caring for a loved one. Some of my constituents have had to leave their jobs in order to care for an elder in their lives. I'm interested in what income support programs exist under the Department of Health to support essential family caregivers as they work to look after an elder in their life.

I know there are some federal benefits available, but they range in between 35 weeks and six months of eligibility, so they are time limited. Are there any programs under the health department that would provide income support to essential family caregivers?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question and I believe that there are home and community care services provided for elders who continue to live at their home or with their family members. I believe we work closely with the Department of Family Services to provide that service.

In terms of more details in terms of particular reimbursements or that aspect of individuals caring for their family members in their homes, I would definitely like to look into that matter. In saying that, if there are people out there who are going through that, I would definitely like to hear about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) In terms of keeping elders at home for as long as possible, I have also been told that family members or elders have needs with regard to their homes. They may need modification to the washroom or modification to the kitchen in order to make it safer for them and allow them to stay at home longer. That's my last question for the minister. In terms of home modifications, does the minister know whether there are any programs or services available to assist families or elders themselves to modify their homes? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the line of questions my colleague is giving me today. Mr. Speaker, it gives us a chance to discuss how important it is to take care of our elders at home first.

Mr. Speaker, there is a program within government where communities are able to have a choice, through their local housing association, to put up housing specifically for elders that have lower light settings and elder-accessible appliances and other things like that.

Having said that, if there are elders in Nunavut that find that all they need in their home is better access to use the toiletries, maybe, and better light switches to enable them to be able to be

more elder-friendly, better elder-friendly door knobs and all this other stuff, wheelchair ramps and all those accessories, we could have people go into the home and assess the situation and see where we could help the household be more user-friendly for the elder's particular needs.

I appreciate that every elder's needs are different. Some are more able to do things than others, but they would be individually assessed to see what we could do to make life easier for them in the particular house that they are situated. We could do that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

Question 1353 – 5(2): Homeownership Programs

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the residents of Nauyasat and Coral Harbour. Today I have some questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation regarding homeownership programs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, I have been a strong advocate for the homeownership programs that benefit residents of our smaller communities. I had recently received a number of concerns from my constituency regarding the length of time it takes to review, approve, and process applications to the corporation's homeownership programs.

In one case, my constituent was approved for funding last year under the

Home Repair Program, but the process has not yet been completed. Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell me today what issues are causing these delays and can she tell me what action the corporation is doing to address them? I know COVID is one of the issues. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question, my colleague. When homeowners seek support for renovation, there are different offices in place across the regions in Nunavut. However, the main problem is when the funds have been expended for the year and lack of people to do the construction, but I can look into the review process further because I haven't really heard anyone having problems to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. With respect to the COVID emergence on the world scene, the prices for lumber have gone up quite astronomically, as most materials have increased in cost. With the funding approved in our budget for capital items, I wonder if we may have to amend these amounts and if the projects can proceed smoothly. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr.

Speaker. In looking at the applications that are received in this area, the housing corporation will not ignore these additional expenses, particularly in understanding the different requests. As the member knows, there are applications that are submitted through the various homeownership programs, such as the Emergency Home Repair Program, the Home Renovation Program, or if there were issues with the heating system. All of these different things have to be included in the plans and it is clear that the additional costs will have to be factored into these proposals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for her response. Now, here in Coral Harbour there is a business offering lumber materials. Plywood and two-by-fours are available for sale here in Coral Harbour and the business owner offers that service.

Now, here in Coral Harbour I know of some people who need repairs done to their homes and, as I said earlier, the cost will be roughly the same as last year, and the lumber materials currently in Coral Harbour seem sufficient for these home repair projects. We want this business to succeed, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister would be able to provide assistance by using the funds

that were set aside last year so that the business owner can begin purchasing the materials for the upcoming summer. Will the increasing lumber prices be an obstacle? Thank you.

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 my colleague for that question. That was a piece of good information and it would be really beneficial if all communities had a local lumber yard with materials.

Once I know the details of the applications, I can ask my officials to look into them. As well, the applications in the Kivalliq region were in different program areas, which I mentioned, such as emergency home repair and home renovation. If we look at Kivalliq, there were 267 applications and to date, there are still 227 applications that need to be reviewed. Once we get a better understanding of all issues, I will be able to provide a more concrete response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members, please note that... . Ms. Angnakak.

Motion 116 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the member for Manirajak, that the time allotted for oral questions be extended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order and it is not subject to debate. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and question period is extended for an additional 30 minutes.

(interpretation) Thank you. I just want to point out that I still have two names on my list and upon their completion, we will proceed to the other items. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 1354 – 5(2): Community Morgues

Mr. Akoak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The questions I have concern morgues. I have continued to raise questions about morgues and our elders today, who also had to look after their parents, want to ensure their loved ones are carefully looked after when they become deceased, and they tried to assist their parents as they were taught during a different era.

Today I am grateful that our elders are able to receive more assistance. However, the current building that serves as our morgue is very dilapidated and that is the only place to hold the bodies of the deceased. The question I have concerns morgues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they again concern the issue of community morgues.

Mr. Speaker, this is the fifth time that I have formally raised this issue in the Legislative Assembly and I am going to keep raising it until the issue is resolved.

Our communities need adequate morgue facilities.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue in March, the minister told me that she could not provide an update on what progress had been made by the interdepartmental working group that had been established by the government to develop a strategy concerning community morgues. Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate today what progress has been made by the working group? 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. Under the integrated community sustainability plans, municipalities can apply to the Government of Nunavut's Department of Community and Government Services for funding for morgues and mortuaries.

I'm happy to say that the department has sent correspondence to the Municipality of Gjoa Haven requesting a meeting to proactively seek solutions to discuss the options for Community and Government Services to support Gjoa Haven's morgue. The receipt of the request was acknowledged by the municipality. The municipality indicated the intention to submit an application to the Small Capital Fund and that's where morgues and mortuaries, for this type, the funding would come from.

To date, no application has been received from the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven. I'm happy to say that Gjoa

Haven did submit it under the integrated community sustainability plan as priority 7 and to date, Community and Government Services has not received any correspondence from the municipality. The Department of Community and Government Services is willing to work with the municipality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how she did it, but she saw my second question all the way from Gjoa Haven, from the other end of Nunavut, so I just have one last question.

As the minister is aware, her predecessor indicated to me that the department is "committed to assisting municipalities with the costs of converting a surplus building into a morgue and visitation area for the deceased through its small capital fund with funding packages of up to \$250,000."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm which Nunavut communities have submitted funding requests to her department? I'm speaking for all Nunavummiut and I believe that every community does need one such facility. 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. Under the small building fund, there 11 of 24 municipalities that had

requested in the integrated community sustainability plan and the communities that have applied under this plan are: Arctic Bay, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Clyde River, Coral Harbour, Gjoa Haven, Kinngait, Kugaaruk, Resolute Bay, Sanikiluaq, and Sanirajak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oh, I'm sorry. I misunderstood. I apologize. Continuing on. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

Question 1355 – 5(2): Caribou Management

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, everybody, and good afternoon, Kuglukturmiutat.

My questions are for the Minister of Environment. Mr. Speaker, my questions concern the issue of caribou management.

As the minister will recall, I asked him a number of questions during our recent winter sitting concerning this issue. At that time I noted that his department had recently issued a tender for a Dolphin and Union caribou herd collaring project. The tender was awarded and the work was scheduled to begin in April.

The tender documents indicated that the capture crew "will be required to carry with them a Hunters' and Trappers' Organization observer for the purposes of monitoring the capture process." Can the minister update the House today on

the results of the project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The survey was done and the results are finalized and we're looking at it. For the capture program there, I didn't have time to read up on it, but the survey was done and it was successful and as we said, the population estimates were the very same as the last one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. Mr. Speaker, I continue to have concerns regarding the need for less invasive methods of wildlife collaring and tagging. I have personally witnessed the effects of herds being chased by helicopters and I believe that we need to pursue less invasive methods, such as less aggressive tagging of caribou during their migrations.

As the minister will recall, my colleague from Baker Lake also raised this issue in the fall in respect to the caribou in his region. Can the minister update the House today on what work his department is undertaking on the issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department believes that the current method of capturing caribou for the purpose of putting that satellite collar on it, this is probably the least invasive; there is no chemical that is involved. A caribou is picked out from a small herd and shot with a net gun from the helicopter. As soon as the caribou is down, a crew from the helicopter goes there, blindfolds the caribou and that calms it down, the net is taken off, a satellite collar is put on, and then the caribou is released.

Mr. Speaker, I have done that. I have been on the helicopter. I have shot the net gun. I have helped retrieve it. I have put collars on. I have done it all. When you chase a caribou, you have a timer in the helicopter. You chase a certain caribou only for a set time. If you can't get him with a net gun within that set period, then the chase is off and you look for another caribou herd.

Mr. Speaker, we do believe that this is the least invasive method and the amount of information that is gathered from the satellite collar for two years is worth it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the detailed response, very detailed actually, and I believe I may have other ideas, but I'll move on to my question and I'll communicate with you through other ways my other ideas in the future.

Will the minister commit to having his department meet with representatives of the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization and the Kitikmeot Wildlife Board on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we're always open to suggestions on less invasive methods of studying any animals, be it caribou or polar bear. Yes, I can commit to officials from our department meeting with the hunters and trappers organization in Kugluktuk or the regional wildlife board. Our staff are there to work with the local HTOs and with the regional wildlife boards. We're here to work with our stakeholders for the betterment of Nunavummiut and to have research done in the least invasive way for any animals that we study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. We will try again. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Question 1356 – 5(2): Status of Pond Inlet Domestic Violence Shelter

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Can you hear me? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, in March this Assembly approved the 2021-22 budget and business plan for the Department of Family Services, which included funding for initiatives to address family violence.

Can the minister provide an overview of what new initiatives are currently underway to address family violence across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am also thankful I can finally hear the question.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services does work to address family violence through community local support and funding towards violence shelters. The purpose of family violence prevention funding is to support community-driven solutions on the issues of family violence. When there is new funding, we certainly increase our initiatives in hopes also to increase the shelters, but a lot of the times our department is to provide support for community-driven supports to organizations, and hopefully for family violence shelters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. One of the department's initiatives which received funding in 2020-21 was to open new shelters in the communities of Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, Baker Lake, and Pond Inlet. Mr. Speaker, can the minister update this House on the current status of opening a shelter in the

community of Pond Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question. I know those four communities have been anticipating these shelters for some time. Unfortunately, though, I can't say. The funding came through the federal government through NTI. Our department is in the process of signing a contribution agreement with the hamlet to actually start the planning phase for the shelter in Mittimatalik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was a project that was going to come about quite some time ago. I'm sure it has something to do with COVID-19 and the delay in projects. Can the minister indicate when the funding is going to be used by the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. That was sometimes almost musical. (interpretation ends) Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So much for being named the one with good ears; I only heard part of his question.

>> *Laughter*

I apologize. If you can repeat the question, please. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qamaniq, please repeat your question for the last time. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When will the minister be able to contact NTI to see if they are going to provide the funding for these women's shelters in the four communities that were originally suggested through an agreement? When can we expect them to talk to the NTI staff to see when exactly the funding can be turned over to the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question. This process of getting funding from the federal government through our land claims organization is a new process, so it hasn't been ironed out yet exactly how and when. I don't believe that we're getting the funding to build. Even that hasn't been clear and NTI may be building it and we operate it. Once I have the actual details, I will gladly pass it on to the member. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Question 1357 – 5(2): Status of Qikiqtarjuaq Health Centre Replacement

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, when this Assembly met to approve the department's 2021-22 capital estimates, it was made quite clear to members that the Qikiqtarjuaq Community Health Centre would be the next project on the list. Can the minister provide an update on the status of the Qikiqtarjuaq Health Centre project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know whether you're talking about the community health centre or an elders' centre. Maybe I can get a clarification, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was asking about the project to construct the health centre in Qikiqtarjuaq. The new facility was previously planned to replace the current health centre as it is too old and dilapidated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that information in front of me right now. I will have to take this question as notice and get back to the member. I will have to talk with the Department of Community and Government Services first. I'll take it as notice, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Continuing on. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netsier.

Question 1358 – 5(2): Update on Air Terminal Building Replacements

Mr. Netsier (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for recognizing me again. I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

With Naujaat and Chesterfield Inlet included, I believe there are seven communities' air terminal buildings that have been in the plans for a number of years. There was a tender that was put out this winter. Can the minister update this House on the status of the tender that was issued earlier this year? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The tender for the five airport terminal buildings closes tomorrow for the Kivalliq communities and three communities have been bundled together. The tender is open at this time and it is set to close tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser: Thank you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We knew about the three that were going to be done through one contract. Are the other two projects being done separately or are they being bundled into one tender? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we divided them into three separate tenders. The tender for the Kitikmeot is one for Kugluktuk, the three ATBs in Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Chesterfield Inlet are being bundled as one tender, and the tender for Kimmirut has not been issued yet. This is the way we have divided the tenders and we have begun the tendering process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is regarding the three communities of Naujaat, Chesterfield Inlet, and Whale Cove that are under one tender. Why were the three communities combined into one contract? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a bit of a correction to what I stated earlier. The tender that I said would be closing tomorrow has been extended to June 10 instead. There were some questions, so additional days were added.

For the three that were combined into one tender, we were looking to see how we could make it cost less. Those three projects are very similar to each other and they are all in the Kivalliq region, so we decided we would put them under one tender. We expected that would work for our tenders for the airport terminal buildings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Continuing on. No. 7. Written Questions. No. 8. Returns to Written Questions. No. 9. Replies to Opening Address. 10. Petitions. Responses to Petitions. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 393 – 5(2): Government of Nunavut Ransomware Report

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the July 14, 2020 Government of Nunavut's Ransomware Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Notices of Motions. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Motions. First Reading of Bills. Second Reading of Bills. (interpretation) No. 19. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 65, Bill 70, as reprinted, and Bill 72 with Ms. Angnakak in the Chair.

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 15:32 and Committee resumed at 15:59*

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

Chairperson: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome back and welcome to those who have just joined us. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 65, 70, and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Madam Chairperson, we wish to commence with the clause-by-clause review of Bill 70, followed by the review of Bill 72, along with the supporting budget document. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. I would like to ask Minister Hickes: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. George Hickes: With the committee's indulgence, yes, Madam Chairperson.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: For the record, Minister Hickes, please introduce your officials and then you can proceed with your opening comments. Oh, sorry. Okay. Oh, yes, that's right, we're doing 70. I'm sorry; my mistake. If you can just introduce your officials.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. To my far left, Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services; to my immediate left, Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance; to my immediate right, Steve Mansell, Deputy Minister of Justice; to my far right, Colleen Stockley, Deputy Minister of Health; and behind my left shoulder, I've got Jimi Onalik, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

I just wanted to make one brief comment, a last-ditch effort for the

committee to reconsider the motion that they moved yesterday and to propose a counter-motion. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Hickes. We shall proceed. I ask members to go to Bill 70 in your binders.

Bill 70. I'm sorry, Mr. Main, I did not see you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Maybe to the minister's comment, I'm just trying to understand what the minister is proposing. We had a disagreement yesterday regarding policy. If the minister could just maybe clarify what he is proposing? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Just very briefly, I know I have spoken to a number of people since last night's motion that was passed. There's a lot of concern, especially from lower income and single parents, that this is removing an option for probably a year or maybe more, depending upon what the next government does, to have a matching homebuyer program for GN employees.

I'm sure some of the members may have heard from some of their constituents on the concern of the delay of this program. For every month that it's delayed, it's another month that somebody is not saving for a down payment for their home. I had hoped that the members would ask me further questions on details of the policy until such time as I can release it.

What I was offering or suggesting to the committee is they would put another motion forward right now to put the money back into the bill. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Hickes. I understand that the committee has already ordered this, so we're just going through the final approvals now.

Bill 70, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) 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. \$27,210,000. 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 70? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I agree to the bill as amended and reprinted and I, too, would like to note the minister's proposal to submit a new motion to amend the bill yet again.

As I previously indicated, I think that such a home savings matching program is extremely beneficial, but the program, I hope, will not die today. As I previously indicated, I strongly encourage the government to return when the policy is completed and the government has the full details of the program. There is nothing to prevent the government from doing so at our next sitting.

I just wanted to state that I agree to the bill as is and I look forward to seeing a new bill come forward. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have procedures and discuss many issues. Those are done. We can't take them back. We already passed the motion yesterday and it was passed. If any other motion is entertained, it shouldn't be at the moment. Yes, we will be open for the next one, but we already passed a motion yesterday. We can't revert back to that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. (interpretation ends) I think the government does have an

opportunity over the next seven days to bring back a revised bill if they would choose to do so, and then we can take it up at that time.

Okay. Let's go on. Do members agree to put Bill 70 on the orders of the day for third reading? Okay, is there being somebody...? Ms. Towtongie. (interpretation) Ms. Towtongie, we can't hear you. Ms. Towtongie, we can't hear you. I think you have your mic on mute. (interpretation ends) Is mine on? Okay. (interpretation) We couldn't hear you, Ms. Towtongie. We still can't hear you. (interpretation ends) Look at everybody's hands up now.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation) We can hear you now. Ms. Towtongie, we can't hear you. (interpretation ends) Every time I say that and she starts. (interpretation) Go ahead, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Can you hear me now? (interpretation ends) I'm being informed that I muted by the hosts, but I hope you can hear me. Please nod your heads if you do hear me. Okay.

With Bill 70, it has passed because as MLAs we can't agree to a policy that we haven't seen or have been consulted with, even though that's the prerogative of the government. We were informed that NTI was consulted on the bill. If so, are they willing to give matching dollars? Is that the agreement? Under Article 32, the government said that they have an obligation to work with NTI. Does that also include matching dollars for private housing?

That's my comment on the matter and I agree with Pauloosie. It was passed and I agree with that. Thank you.

Chairperson: Am I on? Can you guys hear me? Okay. Do members agree to put Bill 70 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Closing comments, minister.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am disappointed. This House has approved monies before policy has even been written with the Department of Environment with the green energy money. I am disappointed and I'm thinking that a lot of Nunavummiut and a lot of GN employees are going to be disappointed as well too, but I will let it rest. I do thank the members for their diligence and supporting the other initiatives in this bill, and I will leave it at that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, minister. Just a reminder that the government can bring back a revised bill.

I think now we're going to proceed to the review of Bill 72. Minister, if you would like to proceed with your opening comments. Minister.

**Bill 72 – Interim Appropriation
(Capital) Act, 2022-2023 –
Consideration in Committee**

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you. Sorry. I just had to grab the right paper and my apologies.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members. I appear before you today to present Bill 72, *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023*.

Through this bill we are seeking capital appropriations of just over \$40 million for next fiscal year. In doing so, we are thinking ahead to how we can best set up Nunavut's next Assembly for success.

Following the general election in October 2021, members of the next Assembly will not hold a full sitting until next fall as usual. Instead, members will spend their time being sworn in, participating in orientation, choosing the Premier and ministers through a leadership forum, thinking ahead to developing their mandate, and all the other activities required at the start of a new government.

Madam Chairperson, as a result, they will not consider next year's capital budget on the usual fall schedule. Instead, we expect the Assembly will consider the capital estimates during their winter sitting. This is the same approach previous Assemblies have chosen following an election.

Madam Chairperson, on this timeline, the 2022-23 Capital Appropriations Act will not receive assent until March 2022, just a few weeks before the start of next fiscal year. This creates significant challenges for some capital projects, particularly those that require longer preparation times.

Although the capital budgets are not available for departments to spend until April 1, the Assembly's assent of a bill enables departments and vendors to move forward in different ways.

The period between when the Assembly approves capital appropriations in November and when these appropriations become available in April is a busy one. Departments prepare, advertise, and run competitive tender processes for projects, vendors, source materials, and labour and we generally advance the work needed ahead of the summer construction season. This preparatory work is crucial to keeping projects moving.

As the next Assembly is not able to provide their assent until mid-March, the Government of Nunavut risks missing out on this important work unless we provide assent now, ahead of the election. If we do not enable the Government of Nunavut to move forward, we risk delaying or interfering with the delivery of the next year's capital plan.

Madam Chairperson, at the same time we respect that it will be members of the next Assembly who will be accountable for the use of public resources in 2022-23. As such, we do not want to approve more than necessary now. It is appropriate to leave the bulk of the decisions to future MLAs.

We worked with Community and Government Services and departments to identify only those projects that would benefit most from early funding approval.

Through Bill 72 we are seeking approval of \$40 million to fund nine capital projects across four departments. Six of these projects relate to vehicles and mobile equipment.

Members may remember that at the start of this Assembly, we had questions about departments placing orders for vehicles in early 2018 before we had approved their 2018-19 capital requests that March. We have learned from this situation and so are seeking the Assembly's approval now. We want to provide departments the ability to place their orders for vehicles early enough but with appropriate authorities in place.

As an example, we are seeking \$1 million so the Department of Community and Government Services can fund its long-standing Fire Truck Replacement program for municipalities. We are also seeking funds so the departments of Economic Development and Transportation, Justice, and Health can place orders for other vehicle and mobile equipment needs.

We are also seeking appropriations for three major projects.

First, we are seeking \$3,963,000 for the Department of Justice to fund its Ilavut Centre renovation in Kugluktuk. The project itself will upgrade the building to address issues related to inadequate water, sewer, and storage and will add a generator to provide emergency power, essential for a facility that provides 24-hour year-round care. Approving the project now will allow the government to award the contract early enough so that ordered materials can meet the sealift schedule for Kugluktuk.

Second, we are seeking \$2,132,000 million for the Department of Health to fund the Long-term Care Facility in Cambridge Bay. Approving the funding now will allow the government to publish an RFP in fall of 2021 rather

than wait until spring of 2022 and, as a result, avoids delaying the start of construction by a year.

Finally, we are seeking \$27.95 million for the Department of Health to fund the Kivalliq Seniors' Long-term Care Facility in Rankin Inlet. As members know, we exchanged several letters on this matter recently. I want to acknowledge and thank the committee for your input.

The main issue is that COVID has led to higher prices for building materials and increased uncertainty across the industry, driving up construction costs significantly. As a result, the construction costs of the Kivalliq Long-term Care Facility are higher than we initially expected. The Government of Nunavut requires more funding in 2022-23 to continue to advance it.

Moving this project forward is important to Inuit and other Nunavummiut, who we know want to see better in-territory care for our elders. While we remain mindful of costs, and they are substantial, we think delivering on our commitment to keep more of our elders in territory by building this new centre in Rankin Inlet is the right call.

Madam Chairperson and members, through this bill we are seeking you to help set up our government's next Assembly for success by enabling departments to better prepare for next year's capital needs.

Madam Chairperson, this concludes my opening comments and I would be pleased to take any questions. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, minister. Do members have any general comments before we proceed with the bill? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Just first of all, to the minister's opening comments, I also am very conscious that this bill that we're considering extends beyond the life of our Assembly and that it's the members who will be elected in the next government who deserve the say as much as possible in terms of future capital projects. As such, I am personally thinking about this bill in a little bit different way than I normally would look at a capital appropriation.

I am pleased to see that the bill does not include any further funds for the Eastern Arctic Underwater Fibre Optic Network project. That is a project which I have expressed concerns about quite a few times in the House. The conditions under which the project is proceeding, the circumstance surrounding circumstances keep changing. Technology is advancing very quickly and there are also some alternatives. I'm happy to see that we're not being asked to approve additional funds for that project in particular.

I just want to state for the record that I continue to have serious concerns about the planning process for long-term care facilities in Nunavut. I have spoken at length on this topic in the past and I don't want to repeat myself. I feel quite strongly that these facilities are very important, they're critical infrastructure, and that we do need to have the best plan possible in place to build for success in the decades to come for our elders.

We will get into more discussion, I'm assuming, on the bill in detail, but that's my general comments. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. I have no more names on my list, so we will proceed. (interpretation ends) Budget document page 4. *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023*. Justice. \$4,123,000. Agreed? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) First of all, I just wanted to say that the way the supporting documentation has been prepared for this project, I think, is... I really appreciate the amount of information that has been provided to the committee, particularly in that the department describes options analysis. It's not normal for us to see these types of information and I think it's valuable, even though this is a relatively small project.

On page 5 of the substantiation sheet, the schedule indicates that the government envisions it going for construction phase from June 2022 to June 2022-23. Do these dates take into consideration the escalating costs with regard to capital projects in general? In terms of the timeline and also the project budget, have the timeline and the project budget been adjusted to account for the rising costs in terms of capital? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Hickes. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The timeline would not be affected, but with regard to the costing aspect, Mr. Mansell would probably be best suited to respond to that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As the minister said, the timeline hasn't changed because we consider the project quite urgent, so we want to move forward, even taking into account the delays that are being experienced on capital projects. The Kugluktuk centre has some real needs that we need to move forward and focus on.

With respect to budget, this remains our best estimate based on the planning that has been done so far and working with CGS, we have been taking into account the changes with respect to costs and things, but we continue to think that we can get this extensive renovation done under that current budget. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, Mr. Mansell. (interpretation ends) Just one last question on this project, so it's a class "D" estimate and on page 4 it says its variance is 20 to 30 percent plus or minus in terms of the cost. The total cost, \$4.56 million, how much of that is a contingency or is there any contingency at all within that \$4.5 million? (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Our estimated budget is \$3.9 million. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. Yes, so I was referring to prior years. If \$3.96 million is the total cost, then how much of that is a contingency within that \$3.9 million? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Sorry, Madam Chairperson. Maybe I wasn't clear. With the amount that we're asking for, minus the \$3.9 million, that we estimate we can do the work with, the rest would be the contingency. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) \$550,000 is the contingency. Maybe I'm not reading this correctly. Sorry. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, roughly about 10 percent of the budget. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Are you done, Mr. Main? Who else? We have no more names on the list. Let me say this

again. (interpretation ends) Justice. Total Department. \$4,123,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Page 5. Health. Total Department. \$31,582,000. Mr. Akoak.

**Committee Motion 020 – 5(2):
Deletion of \$2,132,000 from Bill 72,
Interim Appropriation (Capital)
Act, 2022-2023**

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I move that \$2,132,000 be deleted from the proposed funding for the Department of Health's "Cambridge Bay Nunavut Long-Term Care Facility Phase 2" project in Bill 72, *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023*. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Akoak. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order, so we will take a 20-minute break before we proceed with the debate of the motion.

>>Committee recessed at 16:28 and resumed at 16:52

Chairperson (interpretation): We can finally begin. (interpretation ends) I call the meeting back to order. A copy of the motion has been given to all members and the motion is in order. Does the mover of the motion have comments to the motion? Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe that this \$2 million can be put to better use, where this is a plan for a building over in Cambridge Bay which would cost, according to the plan, \$70 million, but I have been asking for a better facility in

Gjoa Haven within the past years, as the ministers will know.

We already have a good, existing facility which is now too small, which cannot accommodate everybody that wants to go here. As an example I can give you, there is an elder from Taloyoak who is down in Winnipeg who wants to come up. He would rather be in Gjoa Haven in this facility.

We as MLAs and the government always want to keep elders in Nunavut, closer to their home. We're trying to avoid relocating people. There is no strategy at all for elders facilities that says we are going to keep the Gjoa Haven facility open, or Arviat, or smaller communities. There is no strategy, none whatsoever.

The facility here in Gjoa Haven, we have always had people come from as far away as from Kugluktuk. We have people there. Even from Rankin Inlet, we have people stay here. This is only a nine-bed facility and if we were to expand it to a bigger facility, it will accommodate the people from the Kitikmeot.

We are the centre of the Kitikmeot as I can see it. We are between two communities; Kugaaruk and Taloyoak and Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk. I know the government will say we are close to Cambridge Bay, which is only an hour away. I can tell them that Cambridge Bay is close to Gjoa Haven as well; they are only an hour away. They can be relocated here.

I bring this motion forward just because I want a better facility improved where there is an existing facility which will

cost less. It might cost \$30 million for improvements and the other \$40 million that you wanted to use can be used throughout Nunavut in smaller communities where elders can be looked after as a start. This is why I bring the motion. I believe it can be put to better use just to improve the existing facility here in Gjoa Haven where there is none in Cambridge Bay yet.

My last comment would be that a building design is not a requirement to meet sealift schedules, and therefore there is no justification that we can make this decision on behalf of the next Assembly. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Cambridge Bay long-term care facility was approved for planning in the 2018-19 planning process as part of our capital planning process. The total project cost was at slightly more than \$70 million based on "D" estimates. Approval of the interim capital appropriation of \$2,132,000 will allow for construction, tendering, and contract award in time for the 2023 sealift.

Commencing the detailed design work in 2022 rather than November 2021 will delay award contract and subsequently delay construction, tender, and contract award. Rejecting this element places the 2023 sealift of co-construction materials in jeopardy and will delay construction ultimate completion by one year. This means a delay in providing elder care in the territory of Kitikmeot elders and will

delay the repatriation of Kitikmeot elders currently under care in the territory.

I appreciate Mr. Akoak's comments about an elder care facility in Gjoa Haven, but we also have an elder care facility in Cambridge Bay which is located at our regional health centre. I can tell you that there are currently eight beds in that facility and we have a long waiting list, which includes members from every community in the Kitikmeot.

Members in this House talk about employment and training for Inuit in Nunavut. I mean, here is a chance for us to make sure that the training and employment for Kitikmeot residents is not delayed so that we can get our Nunavummiut back into employment so that they can sustain themselves, especially during this pandemic. We have a lot of people who... . Sorry; this is very emotional for me. We have a lot of people who rely on government for food and live through food insecurity.

Madam Chairperson, I am very disappointed that my colleague, especially from the Kitikmeot, has made this motion. I ask that he rescind his motion. Our beloved elders need this facility. Any delay hurts them, hurts me, and hurts everyone in this room. We talk about trying to take care of our elders and the members want to delay. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Ehaloak. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I was tempted to not even speak to this motion as recent history of this committee has appeared to

me to show that votes are predetermined. The committee has not even asked me one question.

Madam Chairperson, in fact the standing committee, where I would normally appear in-camera before these same members, disinvited me to the standing committee. I didn't even have a chance to appear before them to address any concerns.

Madam Chairperson, I am very disappointed today to yet again have to address a motion from members to remove funding from a bill that will clearly address our joint commitments under *Turaaqtavut*, funding that will clearly benefit the elders of Nunavut.

Madam Chairperson, a direct quote from *Turaaqtavut*, the mandate that we all committed to at the beginning of this Assembly, "Our priorities are: valuing our elders by listening to them, paying attention to their traditional knowledge, and meeting their needs for care in the territory."

Madam Chairperson, there has been much discussion during this Assembly about the need to bring our elders home, a goal which I believe we all share. As part of this discussion, some members have frequently brought up the concept of a senior strategy. We should not confuse the need for long-term care facilities with the need for a senior strategy. Member Main brought up the addictions and trauma centre and the strategy that led to the development of that project that is moving forward. It is the same thing that a senior strategy would look like. A facilities aspect is just one small component of a strategy. We do not require a senior strategy to

determine the only way to bring our elders home is to develop the necessary infrastructure, which means building long-term care facilities.

Despite the challenges faced during this Assembly from ransomware and COVID-19, our government has moved forward on our *Turaaqtavut* commitment to meet our elders' needs for care in-territory. We have developed plans for three regional long-term care facilities. I am pleased to see the first facility in Rankin Inlet is already approved in our capital plan. However, we know that we need more and that is why we want to continue making progress. I noted in my opening comments that we require approval on certain capital projects before the election in October so as not to delay tendering, procurement, or construction in spring of 2022.

Madam Chairperson, planning dollars for the Cambridge Bay long-term care centre is one of those projects that need approval now in order to proceed. We do not want to lose a year on this important initiative. We are asking for an interim appropriation for the initial design budget for a long-term care facility in Cambridge Bay. It will be left to the next government to decide on how to proceed. By approving this funding now, we will be setting up the incoming government of the next Assembly with the necessary information to make an informed decision on additional long-term care facilities.

Further, Madam Chairperson, by doing this work now, we will provide the next government with the ability to consider this project in the March 2022 sitting as part of the 2022-23 capital estimates. If we delay this design work, then this

much-needed long-term care facility will be delayed by a minimum of a year.

Madam Chairperson, I strongly encourage members to vote against this motion. A vote for this motion is a vote against bringing our elders home. Cancelling this funding adds a year longer and unknown dollars to the project later on. I sincerely hope that members will recognize the importance of this funding and will live up to the commitment that we all made in our *Turaaqtavut* mandate. I am requesting a recorded vote on this motion. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I support the motion that was moved by the Member for Gjoa Haven. I support it because the COVID pandemic has driven the prices of nearly everything upwards. We all know that the government is concerned about the large amount of expenditures that they are facing, and we try to make sure that we are conservative when we ask for materials and equipment.

Madam Chairperson, we fully support elder care facilities being established within Nunavut. What we support is the elder care facility in Gjoa Haven that doesn't require planning; it already exists and just needs an addition to increase the number of beds. Every bed costs money. That money could be put to good use with the elder care facility in Gjoa Haven. We have heard people saying that they're grateful that they're able to go the facility in Gjoa Haven and I believe that.

It doesn't seem like there is much work required to renovate the existing building to meet the needs of the clients who are currently living in Ottawa and other places.

Madam Chairperson, I look at it that way and those are some of the reasons why I support this motion. When COVID is over, if it ever ends, we can then take the proper steps to possibly think about setting up another facility, perhaps next year. Therefore I support the motion that was moved by the Member for Gjoa Haven. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Can you hear me now?

Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Netser: Okay. Thank you. Madam Chairperson, it isn't because we do not want our elders to be repatriated back home to Nunavut. When Nunavut was created, we envisioned all Nunavummiut benefiting from government programs, and up to today, those of us that are have-nots have not ever benefited from large projects like these. It isn't because Mr. Akoak is against the elders coming home. He is making a statement that it is time for the government to recognize the smaller communities.

Madam Chairperson, when I was a former member, a cabinet member of the Okalik government back then, I fought hard, very hard for that facility to be built in Clyde River and I was able to convince my members that it would be built in Clyde River. Clyde River has really benefited from government

spending. We can do the same if we dare to step off the boat.

When Okalik was our Premier, he made a call, as the Minister of Justice of the day, where the tribunal office would be and I made a case for Coral Harbour and today we have this office in Coral Harbour. It doesn't create a lot of employment, but it does create employment and two or three people that have permanent employment make a big difference to the local economy.

We need to move forward as a government where everyone is included. The *Turaaqtavut* mandate mentions that as well. I support this motion and I hope the cabinet members do too. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) What we're doing on this motion, Madam Chairperson, is debating and that, I believe, is one of the key functions of the Assembly is to allow for the free debate of ideas.

First of all, I'll say that I'm disappointed that as regular members, we have been put in this situation where we have to delete an item. I believe that the inadequacy of the government's planning process to date for long-term care facilities has been made clear. I feel that it's regrettable that we have yet to date not seen this government recognize the dissatisfaction from the regular members regarding the plan that exists, and I say "plan" that exists. There is no publicly available document that details

these three regional facilities, where elders are going to be relocated from, or how many elders will be relocated each year.

Madam Chairperson, we all want to see an end to the use of the Embassy West facility, but I would argue that it's not enough just to keep our elders in territory. What we need to aim for is to keep our elders in community, in community, and I don't care what community; Whale Cove, Coral Harbour, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, Qikiqtarjuaq, or Sanikiluaq. I believe that as a government, we should be doing everything we can to keep our elders in community and relocating them to another community, whether it's Ottawa or whether it's Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, or Cambridge Bay, should be a last resort.

Madam Chairperson, as I understand it, the current government's current plans, if they proceed, would see eventually six communities host elders' homes or long-term care facilities or continuing care centres. There are 19 other communities in Nunavut. I ask: what facilities, what services, and what programs are available to elders in those 19 other communities? It's not clear.

The Minister of Finance mentioned earlier that a strategy is not needed in order to decide on facilities. Madam Chairperson, the government's own report referenced in the supporting material, this is an April 2015 needs assessment, mentions the need for a strategy as a next step. Unfortunately that next step hasn't been taken and it appears to me that a step has been skipped in terms of jumping ahead to deciding where facilities will be built.

Madam Chairperson, I would like us to do a few things in Nunavut with regard to elder care and long-term care facilities, but if I had one wish, it would be that we as an Assembly would recognize the right to care that is held by every single elder in Nunavut; the right to access services that meet their needs. Use that as a foundation.

Madam Chairperson, I'm lucky that in my home community in Arviat we do have an elders' home already. Unfortunately the other community I represent, Whale Cove, does not have an elders facility. Do I think that it's reasonable for me to demand that Whale Cove get a level 5 dementia facility? Probably not, but I do believe it's entirely reasonable for me to demand, on behalf of my constituents, on behalf of the elders I represent, clear answers on what services, programs, and facilities are available to them.

I do believe that we need to remember that if the government's current plan goes ahead, elders will still be relocated, elders will still be moved from their home communities and particularly for those who are closer to the end of their lives, it's unacceptable. We need to do everything we can to minimize elder relocations in Nunavut.

Iksivautaaq, I do believe that this motion, if it passes, should be viewed as a rejection of the government's current plan for elders' care facilities in Nunavut. The Rankin Inlet facility is proceeding, but I'll wrap up here, Madam Chairperson.

The planning process to date, the government's plan falls short in a number of areas; number one,

consultations. It's in our mandate: listen to the elders. How many elders have been consulted on this plan for three regional facilities? How many communities? How many hamlet councils have been consulted on this plan?

Where is the partnership? As it is planned right now, the Government of Nunavut will be paying all of the capital costs and all of the operations and maintenance for these facilities. We don't have any partnerships that I know of in place. That's another area it falls short.

Finally, Madam Chairperson, it falls short when you look at consensus decision-making. We have a decision that was made by the cabinet, which is their prerogative, to construct three regional facilities, a decision that has been questioned, a decision that has been challenged, and we do not yet see any indication that the cabinet is open to changing their plans.

Madam Chairperson, I'll just wrap up my comments now with a comment from an elder. (interpretation) An elder once told me something that I have never forgotten. Since that person is quite elderly now, sometimes his childhood memories come to him because he has dementia. As their brain is diminishing, they tend to go back to their childhood mentally. I don't want elders to be looked at as children, but I have never forgotten that. I don't think we are supposed to send our children away outside of Nunavut, outside of their communities. I have never forgotten what I was told before, Madam Chairperson. I will support the motion. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When Mr. Main said this morning that elders should be brought back to Nunavut from the south, I believed that wholeheartedly. We are almost all Inuit here in this room and in the government and we talk about our elders and we know how much they want to come back to Nunavut. We don't need to be told by non-Inuit how we should care for our elders. We are Inuit. We want our elders brought back from the south. We don't want to say, "We want you back at these dates." We want you back in Nunavut now.

(interpretation ends) Priority one, let's get our elders to Nunavut. Fast priority. Do we want an elder facility in every community? Very much so. I am in support of that. Just like when we had to go to residential school and leave, our parents wanted us to come home, and when they put us into territorial high schools, that was at least a step closer to home, and we lived with that decision. It was good. At least we got to have high school in our own territory. Then we got regional high schools, and now we have high schools in Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, and in every community in Nunavut that has students going into grade 12. Did it take long? Yes, it did. Could it have been done faster? Of course.

Right now we are talking about taking our elders home. I have elders in Ottawa from Rankin Inlet. It was really hard for them to find out that we had to delay the elder care facility construction in Rankin

Inlet because of COVID, but now they have something to look forward to. Thanks to the hard work of this government, both sides, they will be able to come home a year later than planned, but they will be able to come home. To their home community? Maybe not, but to their home in Nunavut. That is what is important for me right now and it should be for all of us. We pound the table and say how much we want to help our elders and bring them home. In the next breath we say, “but not to that home, not ‘til we get it everywhere.”

I wish we could have done this sooner. I wish the previous governments fought hard and thought hard as we have for our elders. The First, Second, Third and Fourth Assemblies should have worked as hard as members around this table to make sure that our elder care facilities are done. Maybe now we would have been into the fact where we could go from regional ones to other communities. Maybe we would be at that stage. That’s where we should be headed, but should we leave our elders in Edmonton, in Ottawa and points south until such time that we have a plan to put one in every community in Nunavut? No. You go tell the elders in Ottawa that they have to stay in Ottawa yet for another year because we’re taking a look to see if the Gjoa Haven facility may be expandable. You go do that. They can’t wait any longer.

Have conversations, I do, with families of people in Ottawa who would love to be able to have their elder go at least to Rankin Inlet or at least to Iqaluit, where they can go and visit them, where at least their parents can look out the window and not see a highway or a tree or another brick building, but to be able

to look out their landscape, look at the land, to hear the howling of the blizzard, to be able to go out for a walk and pick berries and go fishing and go have tea on the land. They can’t do that in Ottawa, but they can do it in Cambridge Bay, they can do it in Iqaluit, they could do it, I’m sure, in Whale Cove and anywhere else, wherever we could put these facilities. They need these facilities now.

I hear my colleague, the mover of the motion, say it’s just as simple as adding more rooms to this centre in Gjoa Haven. Is it? Elder care facilities have come a long way, especially with COVID. They have to be very specialized buildings. In fact I would think that if we tried to open the current facilities in the condition they are now, we would have to go through a lot of building code changes. Those things aren’t just that simple. It’s not like turning a three-bedroom house into a four-bedroom house. It’s just not that simple. I believe the making of this motion, if this motion passes, is a sad day for Kitikmeot elders, who will have to wait maybe a year, maybe longer because of the decisions made in this House.

We talked about and you hear comments about “There are no policies in place or strategy.” Madam Chairperson, in this House, this winter session, I spoke about creating a long-term strategy for the care of elders, an all-encompassing strategy that our department is working on. It includes elder care facilities, but it’s a lot more than that. I agree with Mr. Main that we need to take care of our elders. Not all the elders want to go into an elder care facility and not all of them need to. Some of them can grow old

happily at home with support from this government.

We are creating a strategy that will outline those supports and services that we could provide. That's in the works. Unfortunately that strategy didn't start 'til this winter, but it is coming and it will be a useful document for future discussions around facilities in communities that could be used for elders. Do they require long-term care facilities in every community? Maybe. Maybe they require something different. That strategy will outline that.

To take this planning money away from a Kitikmeot long-term care facility is definitely not a step forward. It's going to hurt our elders. It may help the facility in Gjoa Haven so that some of the elders there may be able to go to the Kitikmeot one. I know some of them will be able to go to the Kivalliq one. It will take the pressure off that one in Gjoa Haven.

I think future governments and if we still can, while this government is in order, we can take a look at future plans for those facilities. I don't see a plan to close any current facility at this time. I can only see enhancements and use of those facilities for elders because we have a growing number of elders and I haven't seen anybody that would rather go to an elder facility down south. We have a long list of elders in Nunavut that want to grow old in Nunavut, that purposely do not seek help from medical services in case they get shipped points south. They just want to go to the Kivalliq, to Baffin, or Kitikmeot, or Qikiqtaaluk. They want to stay in Nunavut.

I fully support every comment that the members have spoken so far that we need those facilities, but we can't have them right now, but we can have a Kitikmeot one if this goes forward. If not, shame on us for standing here and pounding tables and saying we care for elders and we care for *inutuqait*. (interpretation) We say a lot of things and pound the tables saying that elders should be kept in Nunavut and we think the government doesn't care about the elders. That is why we are asking for planning money so that the elder care facility in the Kitikmeot can be planned, but we are being asked to change our minds. Why do you pound tables and say that you support elders, but now that we want to plan for an elder care facility, you're saying not yet? Elders are waiting in the south. They are hurting and they are waiting for us.

We have to do something as a government, and this money is not all that much. It will be used to plan an elder care facility in the Kitikmeot region. It is impossible to produce one in all of the communities right now. Once the regional centres get an elder care facility, then we can look at other communities that can get an elder care facility. We are envious of the communities that have elder care facilities. There are no plans to close any of them. There will never be enough room for the elders. We also need to support those elders who don't need to be in an elder care facility. We've got to plan for things like that. If we are going to be shutting things down because we don't like them, then where are we going to go as a government?

It will be a recorded vote. I hope you all make proper considerations and stand to

oppose this motion. Our elders should not wait for us any longer. Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for allowing me to make comments.

Chairperson: To the motion. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Perhaps you may not hear me well, but I will make an effort, and if you can hear me, I will carry on, Madam Chairperson.

I have been an MLA over the past two years now. I was elected to sit here in the Assembly. While this issue was being discussed as per the plans, I did make an effort to make changes or amendments to the plans to have a facility in North Baffin, and I wasn't agreed with. This wasn't even being considered.

While this is being discussed, the elder care facility in Baker Lake was closed and you now can expect in the Kitikmeot that the facility in Gjoa Haven will probably be closed too. It is expected that when the facility is built in Cambridge Bay, we don't need to build anymore facilities. Although they have said no closures will take place, it appears that the existing elder care facilities today will be closed.

If the Government of Nunavut is going to operate it independently, I think it is inconvenient. The airport in Iqaluit was constructed under a public-private partnership. If the elder care facilities can be built under a public-private partnership agreement, then more elder homes can be built in Nunavut.

I will support the motion when we vote. There are no plans to include smaller

communities and the current government we have will not realize these facilities. I'll stop there, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) To the motion. I have no more names on my list. Does the mover of the motion have his last reply? Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) As the standing committee, we're not saying that we're not in support of elders. We are always thinking of having our elders here in Nunavut. When words are put in our mouths saying that we don't care about our elders, it is totally unacceptable. We are continually in support of having our elders here in Nunavut. I wanted to say that so that our intentions are clearly understood. We want to keep our elders here and support them. We would love them to stay in Nunavut for their last days. That is what I was talking about.

(interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson, I was disappointed to hear Ms. Ehaloak say that we don't provide training and employment in Nunavut or in our long-term care facility. That's the message I got. We do have trained people and we do employ people here at the facility and we can get more. We can train more people as the facility grows. Minister Hickes has been at the facility when he was the health minister at the Fourth Assembly. He has seen it. He knows what it is like. We do need improvements and \$2 million can go towards improving a facility such as that.

(interpretation) I want to reiterate that it was said that we don't care for our elders. That is not true. I am saying that we love our elders and we want them to stay here. I will keep my motion as is. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) A recorded vote has been requested and of course 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 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. Okay.

Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Netser.

Ms. Towtongie.

Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Main.

Mr. Qamaniq.

Those opposed to the motion.

Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Kusugak.

Ms. Ehaloak.

Mr. Akeeagok.

Ms. Sheutiapik.

Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Joanasie.

Ms. Nakashuk.

The motion is carried; 12 in favour, 8 against. We shall proceed. Back to your budget documents. Page 5. We have a new number to present. Health. Total Department. \$29,450,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Okay. Next page. Page 6. Page 6. Community and Government Services. \$1,300,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Page 7. Economic Development and Transportation. \$3 million. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: That concludes that. Mr. Hickes, do you have any closing comments?

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to thank the staff that worked behind the scenes to prioritize this bill and the items within it. It is very difficult to prejudge what the next Assembly will want to

make as their priorities, but I think all the projects that were in the original bill are something that we can all agree that is needed in the territory.

Again, I just...I'm speechless, Madam Chairperson. No more comments. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Hickes. Do members agree that we have concluded with the budgetary details that support Bill 72?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Do members agree to order that Bill 72 be reprinted to reflect the deletion of \$2,132,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Thank you. It has been so ordered and when reprinted, Bill 72 is returned to the Committee of the Whole, the committee will commence with the clause-by-clause review of the bill. What is the wish of the committee? 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 out. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Good evening. Continuing on. (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 72 and can report that progress was made and that Bill 70 is immediately ready for third reading and that one committee motion was adopted, and furthermore, your committee has ordered that Bill 72 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. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Qamaniq. The motion is in order. (interpretation ends) All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

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

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 70 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022 – Third Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 70, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 1, 2021-2022*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 70 is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder that the Standing Committee on Legislation meets tomorrow morning at 10:30 Eastern Daylight Time.

Orders of the Day for June 4:

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 72, being reprinted

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) In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 114 – 5(2), this House stands adjourned until Friday, June 4, at 2 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:50*

