

NUNAVUT HANSARD  
UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT  
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2023  
IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

*Corrections:*

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**PLEASE RETURN ANY CORRECTIONS TO THE CLERK OR DEPUTY CLERK**

## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeeagok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Environment; Minister of Economic  
Development and Transportation; Minister of  
Energy*

**Joelie Kaernerck**  
(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**  
(Uqqummiut)

**Karen Nutarak**  
(Tununiq)

**Daniel Qavvik**  
(Hudson Bay)

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and  
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible  
for Immigration; Minister responsible for the  
Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for the  
Utility Rates Review Council*

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**  
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the  
Financial Management Board; Minister  
responsible for the Nunavut Housing  
Corporation*

**Hon. Joanna Quassa**  
(Aggu)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;  
Minister of Languages; Minister  
responsible for Seniors*

**Bobby Anavilok**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**  
(Cambridge Bay)

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

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

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

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible  
for Suicide Prevention*

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**  
(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**  
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield  
Inlet)

**Solomon Malliki**  
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the  
Whole*

**George Hikes**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister  
responsible for Homelessness; Minister of  
Human Resources;*

**Hon. Craig Simailak**  
(Baker Lake)

*Minister of Justice; Minister  
responsible for Labour; Minister  
responsible for the Qulliq Energy  
Corporation*

**Hon. David Joanasic**  
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*Government House Leader; Minister of  
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## Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1
Ministers' Statements .....	1
Members' Statements .....	5
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.....	7
Oral Questions.....	8
Tabling of Documents .....	30
Notices of Motions .....	31
Motions.....	31
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters .....	32
Report of the Committee of the Whole .....	81
Orders of the Day .....	81

**A.**

**Daily References**

Tuesday, March 7, 2023 ..... 1

**B.**

**Ministers' Statements**

184 – 6(2): COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccines (Main)..... 1  
185 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Meeting in Cambridge Bay (Quassa) ..... 3  
186 – 6(2): Canada's Top 100 Employers for 2023 (Nakashuk)..... 3  
187 – 6(2): Incident Reporting and Harvest Management System (Akeeagok, D)..... 4

**C.**

**Members' Statements**

233– 6(2): New School for Taloyoak (Quqqiaq)..... 5  
234– 6(2): Stop Suicide Now (Malliki)..... 6  
235– 6(2): Happy Birthday, Uncle Bobby (Brewster) ..... 6

**D.**

**Oral Questions**

361 – 6(2): Medical Boarding Home for Rankin Inlet (Sammurtok)..... 8  
362 – 6(2): Iqaluit Deep Sea Port (Hickes) ..... 10  
363 – 6(2): Suicide Prevention (Malliki)..... 12  
364 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the Inuit Language (Kaermerk)..... 14  
365 – 6(2): Airline Oversight (Quqqiaq)..... 16  
366 – 6(2): Nunavut Household Allowance (Lightstone) ..... 18  
367 – 6(2): Anuriquak Nukkiksautiit Project (Qavvik)..... 21  
368 – 6(2): Building Code Act Exemptions (Savikataaq)..... 23  
369 – 6(2): Leasing Activities (Killiktee)..... 24

370 – 6(2): Creation of Associate Deputy Ministers (Brewster).....	26
371 – 6(2): Child Care Subsidies (Hickes).....	28

**E.**

**Tabling of Documents**

112 – 6(2): 2020-21 Report on the Community Transportation Initiatives Program (Akeegok, D) .....	30
--	----

**F.**

**Motions**

016 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment – Notice (Malliki).....	31
016 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment (Malliki).....	31

**G.**

**Bills**

Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 – Nunavut Housing Corporation – Consideration in Committee .....	32
Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee .....	78

**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Tuesday, March 7, 2023**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Before we proceed, Ms. Quassa, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker:** Good afternoon, colleagues. People watching TV and listening to the radio, welcome. The sun is shining today and people should be shining too.

I don't know what I've been told, but someone here is getting old. Happy birthday, Mr. Main.

>>*Laughter*

Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 184 – 6(2): COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccines**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. It's a nice, clear day outside.

**An Hon. Member:** Happy birthday.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, today I want to remind Nunavummiut that COVID-19 continues to pose a serious health risk. The virus continues to circulate worldwide and mutate. Fortunately we all have free access to vaccines to protect our families and communities.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I know that many of my fellow MLAs are 'boosted' already and I encourage everyone to follow their lead. Please call your health centre and get vaccinated. The vaccine rate in Nunavut for children six months to 11 years old is

concerningly low. Only 2 percent of children under four have received two doses of the vaccine and only 55 percent of children 5 to 11 have received two doses.

**An Hon. Member:** Shame, shame!

**Hon. John Main:** The number of other Nunavummiut going for a booster shot is also low lately. Only 40 percent of Nunavummiut have received a third vaccine dose and less than 10 percent, a fourth.

Evidence has shown vaccine protection against COVID-19 infections fades over time. Booster doses of COVID-19 vaccines can further enhance or restore protection that might have decreased over time. Follow the ‘six month rule’ and boost your protection if:

- It has been six months since your last COVID-19 dose or
- It has been six months since you’ve had a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection.

The COVID-19 vaccine is recommended even if you had a COVID-19 infection as immunity decreases over time.

(interpretation) If you haven’t been vaccinated or have not brought your children to be vaccinated, please make an appointment. Same if you need a booster shot, please make an appointment.

(interpretation ends) The COVID-19 vaccine is our best tool against severe illness or death. Nunavummiut may be tired of hearing COVID-related information, but please consider this an important reminder. Vaccines save lives. Do not listen to the misinformation out there. The studies have been done. The vaccine is safe and it works.

Appointments for first and second doses are still available for all Nunavummiut six months and up. Booster doses are available for all Nunavummiut aged 11 and older. Call your local health centre or public health unit to make an appointment.

While you’re at it, please get the flu shot too. Respiratory illness is on the rise. It is resulting in more medevacs and putting strain on our health system. We have the flu and COVID vaccines available, so let’s all take a shot or two to help keep everyone safe and healthy. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers’ Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

**Minister's Statement 185 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Meeting in Cambridge Bay**

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good morning” to everyone here and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues that the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit met in Cambridge Bay from January 23 to 25, 2023.

Mr. Speaker, during this meeting, the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit discussed a range of topics, including how to provide advice to the government regarding policy and legislation, how to protect Inuktut, justice issues, elders mentorship framework, and planning for future Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit conferences.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the Government of Nunavut's interdepartmental Tuttarviit group also attended this meeting. There were discussions on how Tuttarviit and the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit can work together to ensure *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* is integrated into the government.

Mr. Speaker, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values are integral in our society. In the spirit of Ikajuqtigiinni and Piliriqatigiinni, we will work with our partners toward continuing to integrate *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* into the design of policies, legislation, programs, and services.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit members and the Tuttarviit members for their commitment to promote the use of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in our government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 186 – 6(2): Canada's Top 100 Employers for 2023**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the Government of Nunavut's recognition as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers for 2023 in Canada's Top 100 Employers Competition. The results of this Canada-wide competition were announced today in *The Globe and Mail* by Canada's Top 100 Employers Project.

It is my pleasure to announce that this winter, for the second consecutive year, the Government of Nunavut was recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2023 in Canada's Top 100 Employers Competition. We pride ourselves in



maintaining a diverse workforce and increasing Inuit employment in the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, for the sixth year in a row, the Government of Nunavut was recognized across Canada as one of the top and best employers in two categories: Canada's Top Employers for Young People and Canada's Best Employers for Recent Graduates. These accolades demonstrate the Government of Nunavut's commitment to Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq, the development of employee skills through observation, mentoring, practise, and effort.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the work our employees put into developing and running programs and services for Nunavummiut and their continued efforts to develop themselves and their careers. Thank you for making the Government of Nunavut one of the best employers in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Minister's Statement 187 – 6(2): Incident Reporting and Harvest Management System**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to be at my best as one of my children is here. Their eyes are on me now.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on an initiative being undertaken by the Department of Environment. After five years of development, (interpretation ends) the department is getting ready to implement a new online enforcement database which includes incident reporting and harvest management. This online system will allow for a more efficient collection of enforcement data and harvest information from across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to wildlife enforcement, our conservation officers and wildlife guardians collect large amounts of harvest reporting information for wildlife research. This new tool will allow for all day-to-day information collected by our staff to be entered and collected digitally in an online database.

Plans for expanding the system are already in the works, with the intent to have all enforcement forms fall under the system, as well as moving towards issuing electronic licences and permits in Nunavut.

This system will greatly improve the efficiency of wildlife operations across the territory and will allow for more thorough and accurate data collection and sharing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Item 3. Members' Statements.

Before I go to the first name, colleagues, I wish to advise that the Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak will be absent from the House today.

Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

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

#### **Member's Statement 233– 6(2): New School for Taloyoak**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I go on to say my member's statement, I want to say happy birthday to my constituency assistant, Bob Takolik Lyall. (interpretation) I hope that you have a good day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the importance of schooling and good facilities in which to deliver our education system.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, I recently rose in this House to address the ongoing school closures in the community of Taloyoak and how I have been hearing from residents, parents, and students that they would very much like to get back in the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, I was very, very pleased today to note that just a couple of hours ago, the Government of Nunavut issued a request for tender to build the new high school in the community of Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, this is very good news and something that I have been supporting very strongly in my time as an MLA.

Mr. Speaker, I share the view of many of my colleagues that education is indeed the foundation of success. It is an important stepping stone on the path to our future.

Mr. Speaker, our youth deserve safe and comfortable environments in which to learn. Our teachers deserve to have adequate spaces in which to deliver the education curriculum to their students.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that it takes time from planning to the design and then on to the actual construction of a facility. Mr. Speaker, it is very encouraging to see that this project has reached this stage of the process. I look forward to the groundbreaking ceremony at the start of construction and hope to be in attendance when the school doors open for the first time to admit the students of Taloyoak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Member's Statement 234– 6(2): Stop Suicide Now**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to call on our government to take stronger action to stop suicide in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, right across our territory, suicide is happening at an unbearable rate.

Mr. Speaker, sitting in this House since the beginning of our term, I have been hearing from my colleagues how suicide is affecting our constituents. Our youth are begging for help. One life is too much to lose this way.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut has the highest rate of suicide across Canada. Nearly every family, if not every family, in Nunavut is affected by the suicides. The impact of suicide is felt by friends, family members, children, parents, and grandparents.

Mr. Speaker, this cannot continue. We cannot continue to lose our youth, our family members, our friends, and our neighbours. We cannot continue to suffer with this loss.

Mr. Speaker, all Nunavummiut deserve a good quality life. Quality living, being a part of productive society, optimistic for the future, and enjoying a life long, our constituents deserve that.

I call upon this government to take action now to stop the suicide. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Member's Statement 235– 6(2): Happy Birthday, Uncle Bobby**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to Iqalummiut and to my uncle, Bobby, in Taloyoak, who shares a birthday with Minister Main.

Mr. Speaker, I think a lot of people are aware here that I'm a very strong advocate of building resilience in our communities and especially through family relationships, and so I want to pay tribute to uncles today.

Uncles have an incredibly important role to play in raising children. They teach children to be brave and trusting by throwing them miles into the air and always catching them. They teach children to be adventurous by giving their time and willingness to go out and play, go for a walk, drive, boat ride or snowmobile ride, no matter what the weather.

Uncles teach children to laugh, mostly at the world around them but at themselves through their humour and teasing. Through their teasing, they also teach children to stand

up for themselves and others. They teach children to have pride in themselves and who they came from by including them in traditional activities, teaching them important family values along the way.

Uncles teach children to love unconditionally by listening to their hurts and helping them navigate relationships and by loving their nieces and nephews with all of their hearts as an extension of the way that they love their brothers and their sisters.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to reassure my uncle Bobby, Robert Takolik Lyall, that I am still and now more than ever a very philosophical person thanks to him. Johnny Oscar Fred, happy birthday, uncle Bobby. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** I have no more members' statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

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

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to recognize as well as acknowledge this person, whom I believe is known to most of my colleagues here, but I wanted to say his name: Lew Philip.

>>Applause

I would like to welcome him to the gallery.

>>Applause

He was just recently appointed as an Inuit Qaujimagatugangit board member on February 22, 2021. He is also the chairperson of the board. He was also a member of the environmental expert elders committee.

I believe we all know that Lew was an RCMP officer for 28 years and he's retired now. He retired as a corporal and retired before he became a sergeant. He retired in 2004 and when he was special constable, he assisted many people in Pond Inlet, Iqaluit, and Nanisivik, where he was stationed. He would also help assist the criminals in the justice system to support them. When he stopped working for the RCMP, he worked for the Baffin Correctional Centre for four years.

Now he is an elder advisor for Nunavut Arctic College and he has been there since 2017. This coming May, he will retire and he has said that he will retire in May. Lew also is a helper in church as a layperson and he has a red necklace and he has been in service for the church for 17 years.

Lew is very happy to incorporate Inuit knowledge and traditional knowledge into our ways of life today. He is a family man and he cares for his family. He never lets his family go hungry and he works hard and diligently, even with any kind of job. With all the busy stuff he does, he is also a carver.

I would like you to welcome Lew Philip to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome to your Assembly. (interpretation ends) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I try not to recognize people who have already been recognized, but in this case, Mr. Lew Philip, who was just recognized by the Hon. Joanna Quassa, is a constituent of mine and I'm very appreciative of the knowledge that he holds and I hope he feels that.

During the last campaign, I met with him and his wife at their door and I'm always available and my door is always open to Mr. Philip. I really appreciate what you bring to this territory and what you brought to this territory, and anything that I can do to help forward any initiatives that you want seen in this House, please feel free to reach out to me. Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 361 – 6(2): Medical Boarding Home for Rankin Inlet

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Good day to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet and Nunavummiut, as well as my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I have raised the need for a boarding home in Rankin Inlet many times in this House. Back in June 2015, I questioned the Minister of Health of the day on this issue. At that time, the minister stated that the department was negotiating with Health Canada and part of those discussions included a proposed boarding home for Rankin Inlet. To date, nothing has materialized.

Last year, on March 8, 2022, I again raised this issue with the current minister who replied, “Indigenous Services Canada supports the Government of Nunavut pursuing the option of establishing a boarding home in the Kivalliq region.”

Can the minister explain why there has never been any progress on establishing a medical boarding home in Rankin Inlet even though a number of Nunavut ministers of Health have stated that they are working with the federal government in support of this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for his question on this matter. With respect to this matter, based on my briefing notes, there was a prior feasibility study on the construction of a regional boarding home based in Rankin Inlet, nevertheless, the figures stemming from this feasibility study indicated the infrequency of medical patients who fly to Rankin Inlet at this time.

Now, whether a boarding home would be contemplated is something the Department of Health is not considering at this time, and the medical travellers who may need to overnight are placed in a building with a restaurant, as accommodations with them are preferred. This is where it stands right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I appreciate that the Department of Health has made arrangements for day rooms at the local hotels for medical clients who are travelling through the community. However, if the hotels are full, there is no place for these medical clients to go.

Can the minister confirm whether he is aware of situations where people are again being left stranded at the airport and can he describe how his staff addresses the urgent need for accommodations for medical clients travelling through Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whenever an emergency situation arises, generally where a person requires assistance during their medical travel, they are provided with numbers they can call if they experience any issues and these are readily available and included. These numbers are specific to each region, and for the Kivalliq region, there is a toll-free number that one can call.

Furthermore, regarding the issues the member just raised about the medical travellers requiring (interpretation ends) day rooms (interpretation) the medical travel personnel from their community usually makes these arrangements prior to travelling, if the person informs them that they are scheduled to fly for medical purposes. If the patient will be

waiting in Rankin Inlet, they have to inform their local worker of the need to have a day room, and if they do it in time, then they usually are successful in obtaining a day room.

Now, when this request comes in on the same day of their travelling, then if the patient arrives into Rankin Inlet and wants to get a room upon landing, then this becomes a scheduling issue and causes problems. It is important to inform your local worker about their upcoming trip and request accommodations beforehand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware there are medical travel phones that medical clients could phone to, but a lot of times when they call them, they're told that there are no rooms in the hotels.

Mr. Speaker, for several years now, every time I ask about a Kivalliq boarding home in Rankin Inlet, I am given to understand that this initiative has support. However, it does not progress. Will the minister commit to raising the option of establishing a medical boarding home in Rankin Inlet with his government colleagues and with the federal government representative at the earliest opportunity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just previously, I mentioned the feasibility study that looked at the overall number of passengers, and based on the total number of medical patient passengers, the researchers were all employees of the Department of Health, and the decision was made, based on these figures, that it wasn't feasible to look at this option due to the low numbers.

(interpretation ends) Average of four travellers a day (interpretation) is what the final amount came to. Based on this very low value, the concept of a boarding home hasn't been prioritized for Rankin Inlet, as our priority at this time is to focus on our local health centres and to modernize them. The other priority is looking after our elders, by looking at elder specific facilities.

The facility planned for Rankin Inlet is already at \$60 million which is being designed and planned, and you can already see the building under construction and these are the two main priorities we are focussing on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

### **Question 362 – 6(2): Iqaluit Deep Sea Port**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

I would like to follow up with a line of questioning I had for the minister on March 1, in addition to the minister's statement that the minister made on March 6, Mr. Speaker, where the minister talked about the first vessels to use the Iqaluit deep sea port.

My first question, Mr. Speaker, is: under what authority were these two ships permitted to dock at the Iqaluit port facility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That port was built substantially, and completion was done, and once we were made aware that the fuel tankers needed to use that we contacted all of the authorities to make sure that this would be a viable option, and through those exchanges that was granted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would appreciate seeing a list of those authorities.

Mr. Speaker, in the minister's statement of March 6, in the last paragraph the minister stated that "The success of these two operations, under extremely challenging conditions, will help inform our planning for future seasons."

Mr. Speaker, when a port authority or an authorized entity has operational control, liability responsibility rest with them. Who carried liability insurance for these operations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll commit to providing this level of information to the member and to this House in terms of who held the liability and which authorities our department had discussions with in order to have those two fuel vessels come in at a very late season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do look forward to that information from the minister.

Mr. Speaker, also in the minister's statement of March 6, the minister stated in the third paragraph "...in mid-November, it became apparent that we would have to advance this plan and have the facility ready for two fuel tankers arriving near the beginning of December."



Mr. Speaker, I have been asking questions on the operational plan for this facility for over a year now and the minister hasn't been able to provide any clear timelines. My final question: were any fees charged to the shipping company, and if so, what were they and how were they calculated? If not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were no fees charged for this. This is a government port that is in place right now. It is not an authority yet. If we need to determine that, and as I committed in my minister's statement, I will be providing an update in the spring sitting in terms of the operational plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

### **Question 363 – 6(2): Suicide Prevention**

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, As I stated in my member's statement, it is important that our government takes stronger steps to stop suicide now. We recently approved the Department of Health's 2023-24 budget, which includes almost \$5 million for suicide prevention. Can the minister provide an update on how his department evaluates the suicide prevention programs that are funding by this \$5 million? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question.

First of all, (interpretation ends) around the topic of suicide I just want to say that I fully understand that there may be some frustration or feelings that not enough is being done and a single suicide is too many, and I just want to acknowledge all the individuals that the member had mentioned, the families and communities who have been impacted; especially recently.

In terms of the evaluation of the monies that are directed towards suicide prevention through the Department of Health, the grants and contributions funding, through the Upigivatsi Fund, those are evaluated based on the criteria established in the program and then through the other monies that go towards our programming and staffing, those are evaluated on a year-to-year basis through the business planning process.

There is a lot going on. There is a lot of exciting work happening under suicide prevention. After the United Life Summit in Cambridge Bay late last year, it brought together more than 100 stakeholders in Cambridge Bay to work towards the next version

of the newest Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy. We are anticipating that the new action plan will be ready for release this spring and it's something that has required a lot of work from the partners and we are headed towards that as a milestone. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, minister.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I noted that the Embrace Life Council, Nunavut's dedicated suicide prevention organization, has recently begun advertising a range of classes, including yoga, ear acupuncture, and firearms safety. These kinds of initiatives can certainly have an impact on promoting health and safe lifestyles. However, it is not clear how these relate directly to preventing suicide. Can the minister describe how these suicide prevention activities are developed and whether there is any requirement to show how these might prevent suicide before they are delivered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When it comes to the proposal-based funding, which is called the Upigivagitsi Fund, we have been undergoing a review of that funding. In previous years I believe that the range of eligible activities has been very broad, and so my staff have been looking for how they can target funding better to get more targeted activities happening through those programs. In terms of the specific programs that are mentioned, I can't speak to the particulars of those, Mr. Speaker, but you know, in terms of the suicide prevention strategy, the four partners around the table are the Department of Health with the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik, the RCMP, as well as Isaaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujiqatigiit, the Embrace Life Council.

The position of the Department of Health is that suicide is a problem that is so big we cannot look at it simply through a narrow focus on health services and health activities. It has to be much broader than that. It involves things like safe storage of firearms, education of firearm owners, and that's where our partners at the RCMP come in very handy or they're a big asset to us. So there is a lot going on the suicide prevention file, Mr. Speaker, and I do have more information but I do not want to ramble on too long. If the member would like me to elaborate, I certainly can. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for this effort. (interpretation ends) Over the years we have heard of number of research projects and studies on the suicide epidemic that is crippling Nunavut. Researchers work with the Department of Health to collect information, details, and statistics on suicide in our

territory, but it seems the report of these studies don't reach the people who are most impacted. The result of these studies could help direct our prevention activities. Will the minister commit to tabling the results of the most recent studies focusing on suicide in Nunavut, and more importantly, will he commit to tabling any recommendations on preventing suicides that have come out of these reports? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I will commit to that, to the extent that I am able to, keeping in mind that there may be some studies out there that do not maybe belong to the Department of Health. In terms of tabling them, I can certainly look at what we can table in terms of additional information because it is, as the member mentioned, I think it is very important to have that free flow of information and statistics which can help inform our actions.

Mr. Speaker, I just finally wanted to add on, the United for Life Summit, some of the key themes that were highlighted by the participants were better support and funding for non-governmental organizations, increased involvement of some stakeholders in terms of the suicide prevention file who haven't been participating as much in the past, creation of safe spaces for youth and LGBTQ2S+ youth in particular, and finally another theme that was raised and that summit was the use of social media in the prevention of lateral violence in terms of the bullying prevention topic. I just wanted to add those for further background. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

### **Question 364 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the Inuit Language**

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the minister of Culture and Heritage, and they concern her department's role to better align the Government of Nunavut.

From January 23-25, they had a meeting in Cambridge Bay and reviewed the policies, bills enacted into legislation, and further, how best to protect our language within our territory of Nunavut. What I wish to first direct to the attention of the minister is your recent statement on how to utilize *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and whether this government can fully realize the inclusion and incorporation into government operations?

How long with this immersion take for the department to fulfil this based on this previous assertion about the usage of the IQ committees, along with the Tuttarviit or foundation that are connected to the government? How long before we see actual cases of Inuit traditions, culture, language being actually illustrated or shown by this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank my colleague for wanting further information. Mr. Speaker, in regard to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, there is a lot of information involved and new information being learned.

We are continuously working to incorporate it into the government system. It is going to be lifelong work to incorporate it, so I cannot give you a definitive date for when it will be fully completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Kaernerk

**Mr. Kaernerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the time I was first elected, the first issue I brought up in this House was the lip service paid to the Inuit language, and how better to institutionalize the language into government operations.

I kept advocating for this, and due to a myriad of reasons, many elders anticipated being able to directly work with government once the Nunavut government was created as it was going to operate in a way familiar to Inuit, that it would strengthen our culture and language.

With that, lip service by the bureaucracy is the biggest problem we face, just using trendy words in vogue with the public servants, just spouting the words “service”, “collaboration”, “training” and with these examples, they are just words if you cannot understand the gist of the language. We have to lay the foundation first in order to strengthen the language and the culture with Nunavut.

The legislation we draft, review, enact and implement, and this includes many policies and other directives, and this is the reasoning why this needs to be incorporated. I now want to ask on November 7, 2022 an announcement was made about the direction the minister wanted to follow.

And further, the deadline is coming closer as well. Now with the closure dates so close, how did you debate the possible executive directives each minister can contemplate? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for his question. In regards to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values, we are working on it constantly. Whether we reach the completion date on one target, or need to extend a completion date, it is always a moving target.

Policies are being reviewed on an ongoing basis. We have objectives that need to be reviewed constantly and then we make the required changes. With the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values, the same thing applies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernerk.

**Mr. Kaernerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, when discussing these policies and bills, it does take time to draft up relevant legislation, and I am well aware of that, since back in 1999, the territory of Nunavut was established.

Today, here we are in 2023, multiple years have already slipped past to now, from 1999 to 2023 now, and based on that, should we anticipate another 23 years before we see the Department of Culture and Heritage make any progress or remain stuck on the exact same matter related to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* after the latest meeting of the committee?

Should we expect another marathon review or interim period we have to be patiently waiting for? Should we expect our elders within Nunavut, to have to wait? Many elders require interpreters, so the government should visit them instead bringing along an interpreter to assist their non-Inuit bureaucrats, opposite of current practices we see today which places the onus on the elders.

Will another marathon type of review be required for the bills, policies which I alluded to earlier, so another long review is your only answer to this? Can the minister please elaborate on this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* or the Inuktitut language is being applied and we still have a lot of work to do to apply it more within the government system. We have the Inuit language authority that still needs to do quite a lot of work.

We still have a lot of work to do. There are changes required in the policies to make sure that the Inuktitut language is applied. I can't say when the completion date would be because it's a lifelong experience, because it's a living process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

### **Question 365 – 6(2): Airline Oversight**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Netsilik, I frequently receive concerns from my constituents regarding airline service to the two communities that I proudly represent here in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department's 2021-2024 business plan indicated that one of its priorities was to "monitor impacts of the Canadian North airline merger and provide analysis and advice."

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is also aware, one of his department's senior officials sits on the advisory board that was established by way of a federal order and council.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of the advisory board's work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members be aware, we have translators that are trying to translate for you. Please slow down. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The advisory board was established by way of a federal order in council, and they have been directed to monitor the impacts. We don't see those reports, but our official, who sits on the advisory board does. This was under the direction of the federal government, and we have supported them and do the required work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies to the translators. I'll slow down a bit. Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that the Government of Nunavut does not have the jurisdiction to dictate how private airlines set their airfares and schedule their services, Mr. Speaker.

However, I also understand and recognize that the Government of Nunavut provided millions of dollars to the merged airline to keep it flying during the pandemic and I understand and recognize that our government's medical travel contracts are a significant portion of the airline's annual revenue.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how his department conveys community concerns regarding service issues to the airline's ownership and management? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I generally meet with the leadership group and especially Johnny Adamie, who is the current president. We usually hold scheduled meetings, and further, he recently appointed an employee here in Nunavut who works with him into the role of the vice-president, and this person is our main contact point for Nunavut.

The other person I have ongoing dialogue with, especially when concerns are voiced publicly, I immediately forward the concerns to our contact. Also, we work with the Calm Air company, and I held meetings with the president to discuss the public concerns and usually, we send them to the most senior officials with who I am familiar with.

Also, with respect to the (interpretation ends) medical contracts (interpretation) we recently appointed an employee who handles only this contract and any delays or missed flights that didn't proceed, these are the types of details that are usually known about quite speedily.

In using these tools, it allows us to review our options to improve the service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the 2019 federal Order in Council that approved the merger between Canadian North and First Air included certain conditions that the merged airline has been required to follow in respect to such matters as cargo fares and frequency of service to communities.

Mr. Speaker, it has recently been reported that the airline is in the process of applying to the federal Minister of Transport for some of these conditions to be reviewed.

Can the Nunavut Minister of Transportation indicate what our government's position is regarding the airline's request? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for questioning this and giving me an opportunity to update the members about this. Canadian North has asked the federal Minister of Transport to lift some of the terms of conditions and they have filed to the minister and the minister has asked me specifically what my thoughts are.

Through our government I was able to write a letter indicating that the terms of conditions for the monopoly stay the same within Nunavut. One of the concerns that the Canadian North management had was a lot of the terms of conditions that are set are outside of our jurisdiction because within our jurisdiction, our terms of conditions for the medical and duty travel are pretty much the same as the terms of conditions that are imposed by the federal minister.

So, I have written a letter to that fact to say that our terms of conditions need to mirror with our medical and duty travel. So that is the position that our government has taken. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Question 366 – 6(2): Nunavut Household Allowance**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the very first question that I asked in the Legislative Assembly was on March 6, 2018, exactly five years ago yesterday.

As the minister will also recall, those questions were directed to him and they partially concerned the Nunavut Household Allowance. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Household Allowance was originally introduced fifteen years ago as part of the 2008 Budget Address.

Over the past decade and a half, the amount of the allowance has remained unchanged, at \$400.00 per month.

Mr. Speaker, I have been consistently pointing out that this needs to change as there is currently insufficient incentive for Government of Nunavut employees to transition out of subsidized housing.

I would like to ask: for the record, can the minister explain why the amount of the Nunavut Household Allowance has not changed by so much as a penny over the past decade-and-a-half? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the record, I was not the Minister of Finance back in 2018 in the previous government. I was then the Minister of Housing. Since then, we have had a number of Housing ministers and a number Finance ministers over the years. In fact, we have changed government, Mr. Speaker.

The household allowance, no, has not changed since that time, Mr. Speaker, but it is one that I am having discussions with the Minister of Housing Corporation whenever I could sit down with him to have those discussions around what and how we can begin to change the \$400 allowance. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Household Allowance Policy is administered by the Department of Finance and formally sunsets April 1, 2024, in just over a year from now.

As the minister is also aware, his department's business plan indicates that one of its priorities has been to "Undertake a review of the Nunavut Household Allowance program as a tool to encourage employees to move from Government of Nunavut staff housing into private market rental units or homes of their own."

That is good news, as it aligns with what I've been saying needs to be done.

However, the business plan under the current year, it indicates that the status of this priority has been "deferred" to the 2023-24; next fiscal year.



I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to update the house as to why this important initiative has been delayed and whether or not any work was conducted in this current fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's important to realize that it is one thing to encourage staff that are in government staff housing to transition out to their own homes, but when you're in a community; I'll use this fine community of Iqaluit as an example, Mr. Speaker. There are no houses to transition to. There are no lots in the city if you're interested in creating and buying your own home and get housing. There is no where to transition to, Mr. Speaker, so it makes it very hard when you are trying to work to get people or to get staff to move from staff housing into the market and out of staff housing when there is no market. I mean, there is a market out there, but all the houses are taken.

So those are some of the real challenges that we are facing, Mr. Speaker. If I can add and say that the Minister of Housing has put out a request with some regular members to review some of the housing programs that are out there, and this is one of those programs that the Housing Minister looks forward to having discussions with some of the regular members that we will be taking a look at some of the programs that are available out there and how could these programs together be more effective.

I'm looking forward to those discussions in that, Mr. Speaker. I realize that I'm mixing two ministerial hats, but I think it requires it in this answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do understand where the minister's coming from. There is a very limited housing market available currently in the City of Iqaluit, but if I do recall correctly, there were approximately 45 condos available for purchase in the near future. It's still unclear why this important initiative was deferred and whether or not any work or discussions had occurred between the Department of Finance, the Department of Human Resources and the Nunavut Housing Corporation about this specific issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut household allowance of \$400 a month is not only an important tool to encourage people who are capable of becoming homeowners to leave their subsidized staff housing, it's also a very important tool to assist our struggling homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, the rate of homeownership in Nunavut has been declining according to CMHC over the last 10 years, and looking at the public service annual report, which includes a breakdown of human resources cost, the cost to compensate and provide benefits to our public servants; the rates have risen across the board from overtime and other compensations.

However, there is one line item that sticks out, and that is the Nunavut housing allowance, which has actually seen a decline in the public service annual report. Looking at this annual report alone, there has been a decrease from approximately 875 employees receiving this household allowance in 2018-2019 down to approximately 750 employees receiving this benefit in the most recent year 2020-2021.

Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that we must act sooner rather than later to provide support and assistance to our homeowners, and more importantly, encourage those who are capable to make room in our much-needed subsidized housing units.

Mr. Speaker, with that being said, I would like to ask: can the minister outline how this review will be conducted, and will he commit to reporting back to the House during our upcoming spring sitting, on the status? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the last couple of years, the work around this subsidy had stalled. There were union negotiations that took place and work with the union members on that, so there were some substantial reasons for delays. We will continue and we are continuing to work with Human Resources, the Housing Corporation, and Finance to work on seeing how we can best implement this so that it is beneficial for homeowners in Nunavut. I understand and we understand, I believe, as a government how hard it is for Nunavummiut today. We see constantly, the price of fuel and energy costs going up and it is a struggle for every homeowner to make ends meet.

At an appropriate time when the report is complete and ready to be tabled, I would be more than happy to share it with my colleagues in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

### **Question 367 – 6(2): Anuriquak Nukkiksautiit Project**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon Sanikiluarmit.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. When the Premier of Nunavut recently visited Sanikiluaq, he had an opportunity to learn about the Sanikiluaq high displacement renewable energy demonstration project, which is also known in Inuktitut as the Anuriquak Nukkiksautiit Project.

Mr. Speaker, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association recently allocated \$7 million towards this project, and I want to publicly express my appreciation to the association for its investment. Mr. Speaker, can the minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation provide an update today on the status of the corporation's involvement with this important project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the member for their question. In regard to the project that is taking place in Sanikiluaq, the Qulliq Energy Corporation does continue to increase its efforts to reduce Nunavut's dependence on diesel by developing programs that promote the use of renewable energy, so this is an exciting program that is taking place in Sanikiluaq.

Currently, there have been talks between the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the proponent. I'm going back and forth really quick. Well, no. Currently, they are at the connection impact assessment stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last November the Nunavut Impact Review Board released its decision regarding the regulatory next steps for the Anuriqjuak Nukkiksautiit Project, and I am glad that the progress is being made.

Can the minister clearly indicate what needs to be done in order for the Qulliq Energy Corporation to enter into a power purchase agreement with the project's proponent? Thank you, Mr., Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for his question. There would be a few more steps that would need to take place to make sure that they have all their ducks in a row, and to make sure that their impact on the grid will not be too much or too little.

We want to ensure that when the light switch is flicked on, that the light will go on, so there are still quite a few steps to take place before a power purchase agreement is signed off on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister recently announced the new power rate restructure for Nunavut. Can the minister clearly explain how renewable energy initiatives like the Anuriqjuak Nukkiksautiit Project will be impacted by the new rate structure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Independent Power Producer Program, which is what this project would be under, there would not be an impact as there is an agreement; Qulliq Energy Corporation would be purchasing the power from

the proponent at the rated cost of diesel. The new rates would not be affected at the customer stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq

**Question 368 – 6(2): Building Code Act Exemptions**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope everyone here is having a good day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the Minister of Community and Government Services. This pertains to when my colleague, MLA Ms. Brewster was questioning the minister on the *Building Code Act* yesterday as pertaining to cabins.

The minister replied, and I'll quote from the *Blues*; I am aware that these are unedited. I will quote from the *Blues* from March 6. The minister stated "for traditional activities, hunting camps or fishing camps or other similar buildings used for traditional activities that are not used or intended to be for commercial purpose are exempt from the building code as such."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know under what section of the *Building Code Act* that the exemption exists, because I would like to find it, because that it is good news that cabins and other building structures that hunters use, or shacks around their home, or storage facilities for their equipment, if they would be exempt too.

Under what section is the exemption of the Nunavut *Building Code Act*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. As part of the building code regulations, section 9 states that general exemptions, 9(1) a building or occupancy permit is not required but may be obtained for (8) accessory buildings not greater than 20 square metres in area, or B, non-structural alterations and repairs where the value of construction is \$40,000 or less. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is good news to hear that there are two exemptions under 20 square metres, which is roughly 12 by 16 I believe, and any projects that are less than \$40,000. Just to confirm with the minister, if someone wanted to build a structure that was less than \$40,000 for non-commercial purposes, that structure would be exempt under this regulation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As stated in the general exemptions for building or occupancy, a permit is not required as I stated in my first response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is very good news because sometimes there are hardworking, overzealous employees that may ask for building permits. I have seen in my community where building permits were asked for on structures that were being built outside a person's house for storage that I believe were way under \$40,000 and some of them might have even been less than 20 square metres. That's good to hear and I will inform my constituents that if they're building a structure that is less than \$40,000 and less than 20 square metres that Nunavut's building code does not apply to them and they're exempt. Just to confirm that with the minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to add that accessory buildings, so in support of a main structure on a property such as a garage or a shed that is less than 20 square metres as stated under the regulation exemptions, and non-structural alterations and repairs to buildings where the construction value is less than \$40,000 such as painting, finishing, flooring, siding and roofing do not require a building permits or inspection. These projects must still meet the building code design requirements, so I would recommend that continues on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### **Question 369 – 6(2): Leasing Activities**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the minister of Community and Government Services. (interpretation ends) The Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for administering the government's Leasing of Commercial Real Property Policy.

(interpretation) The minister is aware a number of members of the Legislative Assembly have raised concerns about the lack of office space in Nunavut's smaller communities. (interpretation ends) This has impacted the ability of departments to fill important positions and deliver important programs and services to Nunavummiut because there is simply no space in which to work.

As minister will recall, his department recently issued request for proposals for a provision of office space in the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River. However, these request for proposals were unsuccessful. When will the department issue new requests for proposals for office space in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Our Real Property Division tries to meet the needs of all the government departments' office space needs, including if that needs to look at leasing from the private sector, we will try to do that. In this case, when there is any unsuccessful bid through the tender process, we will have to go back to the drawing board on how to proceed.

I do want to add to this: my department did pursue a tenant improvement fund for leased office space, and we do hope that this will expedite where we do have current leases and do any improvements to that lease in a more efficient way so that those important office spaces get utilized at the earliest potential. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there are lots of positions out there that are available. The reason why I am stating that is because we know what's available in our communities. We do have a few of those available in our community. (interpretation ends) The community of Qikiqtarjuaq needs space for a community health representative and a mental health representative. (interpretation) These are very important positions for our communities and we need them in our community. However, there is a lack of adequate space for them to work in because the lack of space in the nursing stations and to run important programs or the benefits for our residents. As I stated, the two positions should be filled and the community requires that.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Municipality of Qikiqtarjuaq has contacted the minister's department for an opportunity to lease a space. However, the Municipality of Qikiqtarjuaq has not received a response. Will the minister commit to ensuring that his department responds to the municipality's proposal at the earliest opportunity? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is the very first time that I heard from the member, so I will look into that for the member, but if there is no office space available for rent, if there were other opportunities to lease, we always look into it. Perhaps the municipality of the community... . If we need to review that we shall do that. This is the very first time that I heard about the issue so I'll get back to the member about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, they have to inform you. This was dealt with back in 2021, and we've been working on it since then.

(interpretation ends) As I noted in the preamble to my question, the Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for administering the government's leasing of commercial real property policy.

Mr. Speaker, however this policy expired in December of 2015, which is over seven years ago. (interpretation) Before I get to my full question, I would just like to make a comment. I would like to invite you to come to our community so that you can evaluate the building with us. The building is available and the community has been waiting for it; it has been renovated, and there is space available. The community has never been given a response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, when will this important policy be updated? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Leasing of Commercial Real Property Policy is nearing completion. We have some most recently proposed amendments to it and there is the expectation that the amendments to the policy will undergo a decision this spring 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

### **Question 370 – 6(2): Creation of Associate Deputy Ministers**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up today on the Premier's recent announcement concerning the creation of new associate deputy minister positions within the government.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that I was the only member to have been caught by surprise by this announcement, given that there was no mention of this initiative that I could see in any of the ministerial mandate letters that the Premier recently tabled, no mention of it in any of the departmental business plans that we are currently considering, and no mention of it in the recent budget address.

For the record, can the Premier clarify when and how this idea came to be? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you Mr. Speaker and I thank my member colleague as well for bringing forth a very exciting initiative I was very proud to be able to announce in this House.

I think we all understand the public service we do have, as outlined in Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement* is a constitutional agreement that ensures that we have a representative workforce, especially at the highest level.

Looking at the most recent TRPS report in terms of how many Inuit employed are in the public service, I am looking at just from last year; the executive branch alone only constituted 38 percent. Through those mechanisms and through the constitutionally protected Article 23, our office initiated an associate deputy minister program throughout the government system that has been tried, that has been proven successful throughout.

Through looking at our obligations is where the origination of the creation of those positions stem from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's recent announcement concerning the creation of the new associate deputy minister positions across the government indicated that cabinet has "approved a policy enabling all departments and agencies to assign an associate deputy minister for up to three years."

Mr. Speaker, I am aware that the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs is responsible for administering the government organization policy. However, the only version that is publicly available indicates that it sunsetted back in the year 2021.

Will the Premier commit to tabling a copy of the new policy before the end of our current winter sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that note I just want to mention as well that under the current direction that we did provide, that I was very pleased to be able to ensure that up to three departments so far have initiated the appointment of those very crucial positions as we start implementing the *Katujjiluta* mandate and the action items that have been identified throughout that bold mandate. In order for us to be able to fulfil this mandate, it was important to ensure that we have the people to see that through.

That's one thing to bring the item forward, it's another to implement it and I'm really pleased to be able to have that direction through our office of the creation of the associate deputy ministers. With that, I can commit to looking into the policy, the numbers referenced, and I look forward to seeing if that's something we could fulfil within the sitting as the member mentioned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that my colleagues and I will have time during the Premier's upcoming appearance before the committee of the whole to explore some of the important details of this initiative. I for one am very curious as to whether or not the new associate deputy ministers will have actual staff who provide supervisory responsibilities, which is a fundamental aspect of executive leadership. Given that the Premier answered that three departments have already initiated these hires, my last



question for today is this: can the minister indicate if the new associate deputy ministers will be hand-picked and appointed by his office, or will the positions be filled by open and competitive competition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The departments are responsible because the associate deputy ministers do report directly to the deputy minister, so the appointments of those very critical and crucial positions will be at the discretion of the departments. There have been different avenues used to date, ITAs or direct appointments are the two avenues we have taken so far. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

### **Question 371 – 6(2): Child Care Subsidies**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my temporary duties on Friday, I was unable to pose the questions during Committee of the Whole to the Minister of Education, so I am going to take today's opportunity during question period to do so. When we are talking about the subsidies on the early learning and childcare initiative that the federal government has supported, the \$10 a day daycare as the first phase of, which I do applaud the minister being one of the leaders in the country to implement that program. The \$10 a day daycare is great, but to be frank, Mr. Speaker, there's not enough space as to meet the current need. Many childcare centres are not at capacity or regularly run at limited capacity due to not having backup staff if workers aren't able to work that day.

Mr. Speaker, the most obvious solution is to have a full compliment of staff to support full utilization of all potential spaces and fair salaries are needed to accomplish that for our childcare workers.

Mr. Speaker, what is the current timeline to implement the second phase of that federal program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question on this subsidy. The plan for the wage enhancements will be coming out by the end of this year, so by the end of 2023 we will have our quality framework available to ensure that we are able to enhance the wages of those childcare workers that are in our childcare facilities across the territory. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't stress enough how important it is to have fair compensation for our childcare workers. It has been one of the most obvious things that we can do to make sure that our facilities are running at full capacity.

Mr. Speaker, during the minister's appearance on Friday, I am looking at the Blues in minister's committee of the whole appearance, and it states that the training aspect for early learning and childcare workers is an ongoing piece of early learning and childcare framework. The minister stated that we can only do so many at a time, and Nunavut Arctic College is also supporting this work by offering training in that field in the community of Arviat and Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, I do recall later in the appearance, and I am subject to correction, that the Nunavut Teachers Education Program is currently being run in 15 communities. That to me says that it's a priority.

Mr. Speaker, the early learning and childcare programming through the Nunavut Arctic College is in two communities. Why is this not given an equal level of priority considering the dire need across the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. The minister was asking about education and now he is asking about the Nunavut Arctic College. I will speak to the Department of Education, and training. Under the *Early Learning and Childcare Agreement*, there are funds under that agreement for the Department of Education to undergo training. As I stated on Friday, the department has worked with the three regional Inuit associations to establish training, which happened earlier this year, and also at the three regional centres, and in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the three regional Inuit associations. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very well aware in my reference to Nunavut Arctic College is supplying a service that is contracted to them by the Department of Education, so I think that should be clarified. Also, in the *Blues* from Friday's appearance, the minister stated that they are utilizing creative ways to support childcare facilities, creative ways to support training services to childcare centres on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at how many facilities are short staffed, how does the department support training so that facilities have sufficient staff to remain open while existing staff access these creative ways of training? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. The early learning and childcare training has happened. Regional training sessions were held in the Kivalliq in January and the Qikiqtani in February. The Kitikmeot centre has received individualized training support from the regional training planned by the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

From my understanding, that training that happened happens when times are most convenient for our childcare workers and they attend at the times when they are available. This training does have to take place over periods of time, and this is just the first initial portion, so not all the staff were in attendance for the training. However, there are operational codes for the childcare centres and they figure out how many employees can come to the training and they cycle through. This type of training is ongoing and we look forward to more of our early childhood educators to be trained and to get things like their First Aid, CPR, and those other things that they need to be working in our childcare facilities across the territory. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. Members be aware the time allotted for question period... . Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request unanimous consent to extend the question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Open Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 112 – 6(2): 2020-21 Report on the Community Transportation Initiatives Program**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am quite pleased to announce the 2020-21 Report on the Community Transportation Initiative Program applications, Mr. Speaker.

I have been notified that the Inuktitut version will be completed shortly; however, due to timing, this document is just the English version of the report for the time being, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Item 14. Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Item 14: Notices of Motions****Motion 016 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment – Notice**

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 9, 2023, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that pursuant to the provisions of Rule 3, when the House concludes its present sitting, it shall adjourn until May 24, 2023.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. I recognize the member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Item 16: Motions**

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my extended adjournment motion No.16 – 6(2) today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with Motion 16 – 6(2). Are there any nays? There are none. We will now deal with Motion 16 – 6(2). Mr. Malliki, proceed.

**Motion 016 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members.

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that pursuant to the provisions of Rule 3, that when the House concludes its present sitting, it shall be adjourned until May 24, 2023.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters; Bill 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21, Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 14 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:15 and Committee resumed at 15:46*

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

**Chairman** (Mr. Hickey): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In the Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the main estimates and business plan for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and if time permits, the Department of Family Services, followed by Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does the committee agree we will first deal with Bill 18?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 – Nunavut Housing Corporation – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** I do, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does the committee agree to let that happen?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses in. Thank you. For the record, Minister Kusugak, can you introduce your officials please?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Chairman, to my right is Eiryn Devereaux, President and Chief Executive Officer. To my left is Sol Vardy, Interim Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you minister. As we did both opening comments yesterday, I will start the proceedings off today with a request for any general comments to the opening comments. Seeing none.

Just for committee members' information, the structure of this proceeding will be a little bit different than we have seen with the departments. We have the detailed proposed budget, starts on page O-4-2. I would ask members to please go to that page. So, under O-4-2, we have: Headquarters, \$12,332,000. Any questions? Because its in a different section of the binder, I will give members a moment to go to the appropriate page. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and welcome minister to our proceedings. On the letters of expectation for the chairman of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, that was issued on May 27, 2022. Almost a year ago. Under Inuit Employment Plan, the corporation would like to increase its Inuit employment from 45 percent, which it currently was at the time, to 50 percent. Can we get an update from the minister on the progress of the number of Inuit positions in the corporation? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are at 49 percent as of now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and staying on with positions, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2023-24 main estimates indicates the number of positions located in the corporation's headquarters is increasing from nine in 2022 to 13 in 2023. What is the reason, and what accounts for the increase? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a couple of reasons for that. If I could have Mr. Devereaux give you some particulars on that, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Devereaux, please proceed.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. If I understood correctly, the difference in terms of additional positions, we do have a number of positions coming forward that we are looking to fund internally, and those are a finance position and IT position and a reporting position relative to the federal CMHC programs, and all three of those positions are targeted for headquarters in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Devereaux. My math is usually pretty good, but the member asked a question to go from 9 to 13, to me that's four positions, Mr. Devereaux mentioned three. Does Mr. Devereaux have another position have another position up his sleeve? Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** I'll get back to the member with the other one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Sorry Mr. Devereaux, I missed that response.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Mr. Chairman, I said I'd have to get back to the member with the additional one. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. If it would be possible before the end of this proceeding to get that information because we are voting on a budget to create new positions so it would be nice to know what they are. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on with positions, I would like to know how many positions for headquarters are in Iqaluit and how many positions are out of Iqaluit? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I read this graph right, there are a total of 47 positions in Iqaluit and 74 positions in other communities in total, but as of right now, there are 23 positions filled in Iqaluit and 52 in other communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we can get an update staying on with the letter of expectations that I referred to earlier. Under the condo program there they talked about they would like to get them sold as quickly as possible. Can we get an update on the status of the condo project? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know where Mr. Savikataaq got the numbers, it's just that there are three positions not four on the initial question.

In terms of the condo program, we are moving forward on the condo program. As of right now, the accounting... it was a wall of mist, Mr. Chairman. In a nutshell, our finance department has worked to ensure that the accounting for the condo program are all in line, and in fact we will be having an audited financial statement that includes specifically the condo program by the end of March, and overall we have 60 condo units in the portfolio, 24 units in plateau called the condo corp 16, and 36 units in the road to nowhere also known as condo corp 17. We had previously sold 13 units in the plateau and currently anticipate approximately another 10 or so buyers of units in both plateau and road to nowhere.

Mr. Chairman, we do have 10 current occupants of the road to nowhere condo units who were given permission to occupy around the beginning of 2020. We recognize there are concerns around the delays over the last two years in getting purchase and sales agreement completed. We are now at a point to execute a sale agreement and have given a timeline of completing this process over the next four to eight weeks.

Mr. Chairman, we are hoping that we could have all this complete and dealt with by early fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I'll thank the minister for the update. Staying on with the letter of expectation letter, this is to the chairman of the Nunavut Housing Corporation board, the homeownership program. I won't read all of it, but just the last sentence says "We will continue to improve on the homeownership assistance programs. One input to this process will be commissioning a homeownership study to measure the size of the Nunavut private market potential and the need of Nunavummiut."

Can the minister update whether they've started this study, if they've completed this study? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the study is being completed and I look forward to sharing the information that comes out of that, Mr. Chairman. As we go through the study and have it completed, I'm anticipating by summer we should be able to have a clear understanding of the homeowner program that Mr. Savikataaq is talking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) This will be my last question on this branch here. In 2022-23 ministerial letter that I've been talking about to the board of directors, that was tabled on June 13, 2022 and the response to the letter of expectation was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 8, 2022.

What new priorities do you plan to include in your 2023-2024 letters of expectation to the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Housing Corporation? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're just working on that right now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think just have one question right now. In the earlier response regarding the 13 positions in the 2023-24 fiscal year, and then the subsequent updates from the minister stating that there really are only three new positions and not four as indicated in our notes, my question is whether or not the Nunavut Housing Corporation plans to create a position for an associate deputy minister who is a Nunavut Inuk? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.



**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again on the increase and decrease, in taking a clear look at change in numbers there was an increase of four positions, but we also decreased one position. So overall the numbers turn out that we went from 121 positions in total to 124. There was four increase but then one was decreased elsewhere.

Mr. Chairman, in terms of the question, yes we will be filling that position, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister if you could tell us what the plans are for filling that position. I know that we had a response today that some positions have been filled already through direct appointments and internal transfer assignments. If the minister, through the Chair, could let us know whether or not there is a possibility for that process to take place or whether or not there will be a competition for the position of associated deputy minister within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this case, Mr. Chairman, we are reprofiling an existing vacant position in the associate position and we are looking to hiring a local person from within the corporation up to that position. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister for that response. Given that this is a new program or a new project, has a job description been created and has it gone through a job evaluation process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister responded earlier that a vacant position will be reprofiled to create that associate deputy minister positions. How will the roles and responsibilities and duties of that vacant position be filled in the absence of hiring for that vacant position? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are doing some realignment of profiles and jobs within the corporation and that is how we are going about it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am really interested in knowing what the roles and responsibilities of that associate deputy minister position will be, especially with regard to whether not the position will be a standalone position or whether or not there will be additional or any human resource functions regarding supervising different teams and how the organization will be restructured in that event. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I don't have an issue providing those details moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no more names on my list under this page. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your 2022-23 ministerial letter of expectation to the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Housing Corporation you asked that the corporation "Work to establish a formal memorandum of understanding with the Department of Human Resources to transfer staffing functions to the Nunavut Housing Corporation."

As of today, what is the status of this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are still working through that process, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2020-21 annual report on contracting, procurement, and leasing activities were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 27, 2022. When will the 2021-22 report be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will make sure it is tabled before the last day. Toward the end of this week, Mr. Chairman, is my goal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I look forward to that report. This is my last question. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2023-26

business plan indicates on page 8, under Corporate Governance, that it is increasing by 28.9 percent from \$1,978,000 in 2022-23 to \$2,549,000 in 2023-24 fiscal year. What accounts for that increase? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my last question.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That pretty much is the increase in salaries as per the collective bargaining agreement, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. The next name I have on my list: Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, again, minister and your colleagues. I would like to welcome back Ms. Vardy to our Assembly. I'm very happy to see you again. I have full confidence in you as director of corporate service and executive finance officer within the Department of Family Services, and I have that continued confidence in you as the interim chief finance officer with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I hope that the minister will be able to convince you to make it a more longer term posting.

For my first line of questioning, I would like to follow-up on Member Quqqiaq's question regarding the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Human Resources and the Nunavut Housing Corporation to assume the responsibility of the staffing function.

I was wondering if the minister would be able to elaborate a bit about that specific issue and provide some context about when the idea had first come forward and any sort of progress that has been made in recent months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very early on in our assignments to Housing Corporation by the new government the corporation was looking at the need to fill these very important positions and because there is such a long list of hiring shortages within Human Resources, we, and when I say "we"; the senior staff of Housing Corporation, had meetings with Human Resources and began working on and drafting a memorandum of understanding in terms of hiring and I'm glad to say that we have just signed that off very recently.

We are beginning to take over hiring of staff, directly, ourselves. It's so new that it's still going over, some of it. The change over, I guess, and it's going smoothly, so Mr. Chairman, we anticipate doing that fully by ourselves in the very new future, but that work has begun, Mr. Chairman, I'm glad to report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From what I gather from the minister's response, the intent of the MOU and assuming the staffing function is to expedite the hiring process of Nunavut Housing Corporation's vacancies or competitions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that is the goal, is to ensure that our staff are hired in a timely manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I hope that the objective will be accomplished and the Nunavut Housing Corporation will see some improvement in the time it takes to complete or fill job competitions.

I guess I would just like to highlight a bit of concern about the authority of delegating the staffing function, not to this particular function, but when the Department of Health had assumed the authority to assume the staffing function of nursing positions, at that time I think we were very heavily reliant on agency nurses to fill positions, and the department had placed more emphasis on hiring casual nurses as opposed to indeterminate nurses. I just hope that the Nunavut Housing Corporation will not follow down that same path with this MOU on assuming the staffing function. But with that being said, I was curious if this MOU is indefinite or if there is any sort of sunset or review period built into it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The housing corporation is working along the same guidelines or the same path as the corporation such as Qulliq Energy Corporation, they are a corporation and so the housing corporation is walking down that same avenue and working towards hiring and retaining our own staff that way. In terms of using it as a quick gap fill to fill casual positions, no that's not the intent of our corporation. Our goal is to hire as many long-term employees as we can and filled them with qualified as much as we can, Nunavummiut into these positions.

In terms of if it's a short-term or long-term, I don't have that memorandum of understanding with us but I would be more than happy to share the details of that, of its longevity or not when I have that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Just to get confirmation, has that MOU been signed and agreed to already or is it in the works of being agreed to? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Yes, as I stated it is fully agreed and signed to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you for clarifying this, so I look forward to seeing that. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you minister for committing to share the contents of that MOU with the committee. I agree with your standpoint in moving in the same direction as the other territorial statutory corporations or agencies. So you had indicated that NHC is intending to move in the direction of Qulliq Energy Corporation in their own delegated staffing authority, and looking at Qulliq Energy Corporation's organizational chart, it includes human resource division which includes seven positions.

So my next question on this topic will be; I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to elaborate on the current status of NHC's human resources division. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have three or four staff in human resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So referring again to Qulliq Energy Corporation, their complement of seven positions in their HR division for a total of 208 employees within the energy corporation.

Now I do recognize that Nunavut Housing Corporation has far less positions, 124, but I guess the next question is whether or not the complement of three human resources positions will suffice to manage the increased workload along with this staffing function. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will see, you know we just put both feet on the ground in this, the memorandum was just recently signed and I'm sure we're not going to go on a hiring spree, but I just used QEC as an example of a corporation that hires their own staff. I didn't mean that to mean that we're going to follow their footprints when it comes to their human resources department, just to make that clear.

In terms of will we need more employees than the three or four that we currently have as moving forward, I don't have that knowledge at this time but it's something we will see as going forward what kinds and how many more staffing staff we may need as we begin to complement the human resources sector of our corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, minister, I appreciate that response. I would like to move on to my next line of questioning and it's in relation to policy development, which I'm assuming would go under this page.

When it comes to the development of policy within the Nunavut Housing Corporation, one area which I have been highlighting on consistently over the last five years was eligibility criteria of Nunavut Housing Corporation programs being a bit too exclusive. Specifically, the income eligibility requirements of many of the corporation's programs excluding so many Nunavummiut that would benefit from participating in those programs.

I'd like to ask the minister if he would be able to provide an update on any sort of policy development in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd love to. I think we've had many discussions in this House and outside this House with many of my colleagues in this Chamber, and I think more importantly with people from outside the government. We've had a lot of conversations with homeowners and want-to-be homeowners and all different sectors.

We are currently looking at the kind of programs that the housing corporation has, and much like Mr. Lightstone, I agree that we need to be more inclusive and that we need to broaden the eligibility because sometimes people that have a bit higher income still need that support and sometimes even more so because their support group is much bigger. Mr. Chairman, we are looking at that right now.

In taking a look at the different; Heating Oil Tank Replacement Program, the Downpayment Assistance programs, and we could go on. We are taking a look at that right now and in fact, if I can, Mr. Chairman, you know I've asked for input from the regular members and I'm very pleased to note that we have three regular members that I will be meeting with, with our team. We will be reviewing these very programs and getting input from yourselves in terms of the eligibility and taking a look at the criteria and where it may need to be tweaked up or down or sideways.

So I'm looking forward to that discussion and at those meetings we will open the books and take a really good look at how we could improve them. Not just the eligibility, but take a look at the whole criteria and the amounts that are there to ensure that they're benefitting who they're meant to benefit and to ensure that it's more inclusive and less exclusive. We have a lot of work to do because I want to have that work completed before the fall, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone, if you don't mind, I'd just like to get a clarification from the minister on something. Does the Nunavut Housing Corporation have full autonomy in establishing those income thresholds for homeownership and other

homeowner programs? Or does it have to be agreed to by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the federal programs, the federal government has those guidelines but for the programs that we administer, we have the say in eligibility, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'm sure I could think up a few more questions but Mr. Lightstone, please proceed.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister for his response, I'm very happy that you stated that you would like to have some amendments prior to the NHC's capital request in the fall sitting. That was actually going to be my next question, but I guess I'll rephrase it: How optimistic is the minister that changes will be implemented at or prior to the fall sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. I do apologize for jumping in and just... I wasn't reading your mind properly. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very optimistic, Mr. Chairman. I think if we can do the work quickly and diligently, I can see... I can see the future.

>>*Laughter*

I can see us going and dealing with some of these longstanding issues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister Kusugak. I knew you were going to say that. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you very much minister. So, I would like to move on to another area with regards to policy development and this is an issue that has been raised every year with the corporation, and that is the issue of employees being placed in between a rock and a hard place, when they reach the end of their career with the public service after spending much of that time in subsidized staff housing.

So, I was wondering if the minister would be able to update the House today: how many occurrences in the current fiscal year has the Nunavut Housing Corporation had to deal with employees who were retiring while in staff housing?

Secondly, if he can provide an update on any policy development specifically in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Excellent line of questioning. Minister Kusugak

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for the excellent line of questions but unfortunately that is the Department of Human Resources that would be in better shape to answer that question, because although we do assign staff housing, we don't assign staff housing, we just make sure that the houses are ready to be resided in. Not to sidestep it Mr. Chairman, if I knew the answer I would gladly give it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I appreciate the minister's response. The Department of Human Resources is responsible for the staff housing policy itself but if I recall correctly, the Nunavut Housing Corporation is involved every time an employee is put in that situation when they retire while in staff housing. If that is the case, I would just like to ask the minister if he would be able to provide some figures as to how many times that has occurred so far this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When an ex-Government of Nunavut employee vacates a house and they go onto the housing wait list, that goes into the local housing associations wait list. I don't have details in terms of how many of those on the wait list are retired Government of Nunavut employees on those wait lists.

So, I could commit to trying to find that number through talking with the local housing associations, but I don't have a master list of government employees that have vacated their government unit and are on the public housing wait list, but I can commit to trying to find that number, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** I do apologize Mr. Lightstone, I have to interject again. Is the minister aware of how many people that are currently in staff housing have their names on the public housing wait list? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, because that public housing wait list is with the public housing associations across the 25 communities. So, we would have to find out how many of those hundreds of people on the wait list are existing government employees or past government employees, Mr. Chairman. So, the short answer is no.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I appreciate the minister's commitment to look into that. This is again an issue that has been raised with the corporation for a number of years, the issue of employees retiring in staff housing as well as with the Department of Human Resources.



When I asked that same question to the Department of Human Resources, if I recall correctly, they do not track or monitor that information either, the number of employees who retire in staff housing.

I do not have a question, but just a comment and recommendation that the Nunavut Housing Corporation really needs to get a grasp on the situation. I highly recommend that some sort of tracking mechanism be in place so that we may have a better grasp as an Assembly at this time next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree. I think it is a very hard fact to find and it is something that we are working with the Department of Human Resources on, and I've said in the House on a couple of questions from the Mr. Chairman himself, and I believe Mr. Lightstone earlier in the session; we are trying to find ways that we could help existing people that are in government staff housing that are going to retire and need to move into public housing.

It is hard to fast-track that because there are people who have been on the housing waiting list for years, so to bump up government employee into the public housing wait list in place of someone who has been homeless for three years is very unfair for everybody.

There are some ways that we are looking at and I will state again that to see if there could be swaps between government employees in public housing units that would like to move into staff housing units and so on.

So we are having that discussion and trying to find not an easy way but a real way where this could be solved because I could see the argument from the people on the public housing wait list that have been waiting for years where there would be disagreements I guess.

It depends on what side of the unit you are on, no pun intended there, but it is a very tough task to deal with, especially when you sit in my position and you are dealing with homeless people, staffed people and public house people.

It becomes very difficult, but we will definitely try to find a solution. Thank you for the long answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, minister and your officials, welcome to the chamber.

(interpretation ends) The status of housing reports 2022 was tabled on Legislative Assembly on November 8. What specific items in the *Blueprints for Action on Housing*

will be prioritized during the 2023-24 fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will be working through the Nunavut 3000 program to ensure that those initiatives go forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you minister. (interpretation ends) The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2022-26 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year was to conduct housing needs and demand study in collaboration with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation draft 2023-26 business plan indicate on page 9 and I quote, "that scope of work has been developed and the Nunavut Housing Corporation has engaged a consulting firm to produce an updated housing needs and demand study. Phase 1 includes a data inventory gap analyst profile for all 25 communities in Nunavut and anticipate to be completed by January 2023."

Which consulting firm is undertaking this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the member's question, this is almost completed, it is 90 percent complete.

Mr. Chairman, we are working the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and we envision that this will be completed within the four months.

**Chairman:** Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. He did not respond to my question. Which consultant are you going to be using? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. DPRA is the firm. (interpretation ends) I don't know what the acronym is for, but it is the consulting firm called DPRA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On April 13, the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada announced that the 2022 federal budget will invest \$300 million to “co-develop and launch an Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy.”

To what extent has the Nunavut Housing Corporation been involved in aiding development? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Mr. Devereaux through you respond to that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. The federal government, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has launched this particular strategy that the member referenced.

Currently, they are in the process of working through that. I know there is a national survey that’s out right now.

All 13 provinces and territories are involved with providing feedback and input into the development of the strategy, as well as various Indigenous groups across the country. I don’t have the timeline for when the federal government hopes to finalize that strategy, but I know it’s actively in the works as we speak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) In May of 2022 Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated released it’s Nunavut Inuit Housing Action Plan. The plan indicates that new Inuit housing entities will ensure that funding is used in the best way to improve housing for Inuit.

Community member, municipalities, the Government of Nunavut, and the Government of Canada are important. To what extent will the Inuit housing entities undertake work that has previously been under the responsibility of Nunavut Housing Corporation. That’s my last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the government are working together. We provide support if they ask for it. We work very closely together. We have a vision where it doesn’t matter who builds the houses, we will support them in any way if we can because we have to end homelessness and shortages of housing in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. That's the last name on my list. I'd just like to follow up with one of Mr. Malliki's questions. I see Mr. Qavvik has a question. Please proceed.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon minister. On your business plan page 12, the last bullet, in accordance with the Nunavut 3,000 housing strategy began construction of approximately 360 housing units, including approximately 198 public housing units, 10 GN staff housing units, 106 affordable housing units and 46 market housing units.

I know our government is very ambitious to achieve this realistically with the amount of tenders being cancelled from last year, is this achievable? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) It's an ambitious project but I think we'll be able to meet our deadlines, and we have ended the contract in Cape Dorset, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, Coral Harbour and Kugluktuk. We would like to see how it would touch our budget. We have an agreement with NCC. This is going to be our first year and we believe that we will see an increase in housing in the upcoming years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 9 business plan, the second last bullet, work with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated regional Inuit organization to address Inuit housing needs in Nunavut, the status of progress indicates Nunavut Housing Corporation collaborated with NTI, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on a proposal for \$500 million in federal funding for housing to addressing the housing needs in Nunavut.

Has there been a response from the federal government on this federal request? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This was one of the first times I think where we had the Government of Nunavut Premier and the heads of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and other Inuit leaders go down and have a presentation to seek this kind of funny, money,

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Chairman, not funny money but this kind of money and we still haven't heard back yet, they're still working on it and I'm looking for a favourable response on that from the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'm sure with regards to housing, we'll take whatever money we can get, whether it's funny or not. Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question. On page 10 in the business plan (interpretation ends) The last bullet, initiate a review of existing housing stock in all 25 communities to identify buildings to renovate or repurpose.

I'm wondering whether at the earliest opportunity if that review will be tabled in this Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're anticipating the review to be finished by the fourth quarter of 2022-23 and we are going to take a look our whole inventory of houses, what needs to be demolished, what can be repaired and salvaged, Mr. Chairman. At this time, I do not know if we will be tabling our findings in the House, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Just to confirm the minister's response, the fourth quarter of 2022-23 is in about three and a half weeks. Just to get a confirmation of that, Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** That is true, Mr. Chairman, but Mr. Chairman also understands that it is one thing to tally up all that information and then put it into working information. So; yes, and yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you for that clarification. Mr. Qavvik, (interpretation) are you done? (interpretation ends) Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under "Priorities" in the business plan, on page 11, under the first bullet, it says (interpretation ends) "Work with members of the Purpose-Built Housing Working Group and a consulting firm on production of phase 2 of the housing Need and Demand study which will inform a joint business case for elders'...".

(interpretation) My question is in relation to elders who have their own homes or private homes. My question is if elders with private homes are included here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they are included. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is always ongoing work that is required. With the elders who would like to release their private homes, would you be working with them directly or what is going to be included in that study when we are talking about the elders who would like to release their private homes and what their options are? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll use an example where there are four-plexes that are dedicated to elders. I believe we will also have to do a study for elders who are living independently and some who require a little bit of assistance.

We are looking at elders who are living independently in their own homes or in a house, including someone who will provide support to the elder by way of cleaning and providing that type of support. We are looking at different options when it comes to assisting elders who live independently. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually, the reason I switched to this question earlier was due to this issue, and I will just use an example here about private homeowners.

When they own their own home but they have reached a point where they are considering the option of selling their home and moving to a public housing unit. In looking at the process they follow, has anything changed from the time the building was bought and they moved in to inhabit the unit.

What are the practices being followed today, when anyone especially an elder wishes either to sell or trade their unit, much like how tenants with good credit ratings can trade up or down with other tenants, so this would apply to a homeowner wishing to trade down to a public housing unit? Due to all of the additional inflationary pressures, there was a case where their house was bought by the corporation and they moved to public housing. What about those elders who would like to trade their own homes and move to public housing because it's too hard for them to provide the operations and maintenance of that building? How does it work? I would like to know exactly what happens in that situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. An elder who owns their own home who would like to release that house, they are provided support by the Nunavut Housing Corporation. To make it clear; an elder living anywhere in Nunavut in their own homes, who want to release their house, their house it bought. It would be put on the market and if there is no buyer, then the Nunavut Housing Corporation would

purchase it at the appropriate price. That house would then be owned by the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Once a house is bought, then it would be the property of the housing corporation. Then the individual would either live their, or trade for another unit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope the two elders are listening because I just received a call from them asking me to ask a question here during question period to the Minister of Housing.

They were given wrong information. They were told that the house would be taken over and not bought. The house would just be taken over. They were told that the local housing authority has that as a policy, so I asked them not to do anything else until I checked into it. That happened to an elder who was recently left by her husband, so that is why I'm asking the question.

I know there are many communities and many other people would like to know this information. It would be good if they all got the same information. That is why I'm asking this question and I'll stop here for now. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I know the minister did elaborate quite well on this program/policy, but it might be, just for the sake of people listening, Minister Kusugak, if you can outline exactly the different options of... . It sounds like Ms. Killiktee's constituents were under the impression that just the ownership would change but that they would stay in the unit, which I am aware is an option, as well as the option of Nunavut Housing Corporation purchasing the unit and then that elder going into another mode of housing.

Maybe if the minister could just elaborate a little bit on how that program works. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I don't want to get into the individual situations here. I think those warrant respect to the individuals that conversation, or I, or someone has that one-on-one with the individual Ms. Killiktee is talking about.

(interpretation) We will discuss what you are talking outside of this House. It has to do with our policies and regulations. (interpretation ends) Just in a nutshell, Mr. Chairman; the understanding we have is that if an elder wants to no longer own the house that the individual owns and wants to move into a public housing unit, normal practice is that the house the individual is in is put out for public interest to see if the public is interested in purchasing the unit. If there is no interest from the public, then the housing corporation would look at purchasing the unit if its purchasable at a fair market value, and then the local housing association then comes into play and would decide with an individual if the

individual is now over housed or underhoused. These parameters are dealt with the local housing association.

That's in a nutshell, Mr. Chairman. I am sure that there are some more complications and other details that I'm not talking about at this time, but a lot of it depends on individual cases, communities, and so on. In a nutshell, that is the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** I do thank you, minister Kusugak; just to have it condensed and straightforward. You laid it out very clearly. Thank you. (interpretation) Is that all? (interpretation ends) Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Kusugak, I really appreciate the layout of the business plan, especially the status of progress updates that are provided for the priorities for 2022-23. It really makes it easier to follow along.

On page 9, one of the status updates, so the priority was to transfer maintenance responsibility for existing continuing care facilities to Community and Government Services and the status of the progress is that NHC anticipates the transfer of the Arviat elders' centre to the Department of CGS and Health as of April 1, 2023 and I'm wondering minister if you can confirm whether or not that is still on track. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is on track. We are hoping that we will be able to make that transition Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you minister for that response. On the next bullet, the status of the progress to support the Department of Family Services in identifying options for housing those without homes, and determine actions which may support these options.

The progress speaks to the purpose-built housing working group, consultations with that purpose-built housing working group as well as various representatives from the Department of Family Services to begin to identify requirements for emergency shelters and transitional housing units, engage community capacity to provide support services and I'm wondering if through the Chairman, the minister can tell us what information was gathered in those consultations that are aimed to inform a broader housing need and demand study with the focus on purpose-built housing.

I would like to hear a little bit more about what that housing need and demand study will be, because we know that housing issues, particularly in Nunavut have been studied and



studied and studied and I would just like to hear a little bit more about that from the minister, through the Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think one of the overstudied studies is housing needs in Nunavut. You know, I was talking to a lady who upon hearing about the hundreds of millions of dollars being allocated for Inuit housing in Nunavut a couple of years ago, or last year maybe; she phoned me up and told me that the last thing she needs is another study to tell her that she is still homeless, and that her seven-year-old son has never slept on his own couch, never mind his own bed, and that she just needs a home. She doesn't need another study to tell her that she's homeless.

So, I think at some point the houses need to start to be built, and you know its not always easy to build these houses but I think we need to begin to realize that on par with building homes, we also need to build transitional homes and homeless homes and shelters, because it's a lot easier to build, I think, a 20-room homeless shelter than it is to build 20 houses for the individuals.

We are working towards that and I think it's very important that we work towards finding and building more shelters and transitional housing units across Nunavut. We are on that road, and in terms of the study and the work that is being done, it's being shared by the Family Services and we're having input into that work, so I look forward to seeing the work continue and we are working on 300 transitional houses in our Nunavut 3000 plan. I look forward to the challenges those will bring. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response, minister. I'm happy to, again hear about the 300 transitional houses or units that are planned because I know that those are our sorely needed.

Minister I realize that you just stated that you're working with Family Services on this issue, however in the area of emergency shelters, there's a reason that they're called emergency shelters and that's because they are needed for emergency reasons and can't wait for a study to be done.

We know that there are Nunavummiut of all ages and of all family makeups who are currently living day to day in emergency because they don't have shelter, and I would like to hear from the minister what actions are being taken in the absence of these emergency shelters established on a long-term basis in communities.

How is Nunavut Housing Corporation working with Family Services to ensure that every single community has an emergency shelter in the mean time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes even we need emergency shelters in every community, I understand that and I get that. I think we're very fortunate to be able to sleep in a warm home in Nunavut, and it's something that we should never take for granted. We are working towards that goal and I assure my colleagues that the Nunavut Housing Corporation has I think never worked so hard over the last year or so that we've been working to try to find ways to get any kind of housing to be turned into a visible house that a door can be opened for an individual or individuals.

One of the things we are doing actually, Mr. Chairman for example is as my colleagues are aware, when the construction company goes into a community to build houses, often they stay in hotels and rent apartments and houses for their staff. One of the things we are doing on this go around is that we will bring in a modular unit, or 2 or 3 or 14, into Nunavut, and they will become in turn staff housing units or the crew unit, and once that crew is done with that unit, it will be turned into a public housing unit or maybe an emergency shelter or maybe a men's or women's unit, but it becomes an asset, it becomes a home that is usable.

So that is one of the things that we are working on is trying to find creative ways to enable us to put another unit into a community that is usable by the community and I assure my colleague that we will work with the municipalities in terms of best fit for this purpose and for this unit. I look forward to those kinds of conversations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. I can assure you that there are people working harder than the staff at Nunavut Housing Corporation over the last year in finding emergency shelters and those are the people, the very people who are looking everyday for somewhere to lay their head, somewhere warm, somewhere safe for them, somewhere safe for their children, somewhere where they can cook, where they can eat and work towards gaining long-term housing.

Minister, you mentioned the 3,000 housing units and I know that on, I can't find it right off the bat of course, the commitment to break ground I guess on approximately 360 housing units in 2023-24, I believe it's on page 12 of your business plan. Through this Chair, can the minister tell us how far advanced that plan is, given that the partnership with NCC Development Limited is in place, how many lots have been procured in how many communities, and of course how many buildings are ready to be retrofitted to create housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a lot of question, but I will try. As I had mentioned earlier in response when earlier question, the public procurement for 66 units just closed in half a dozen communities, we've just signed a contract with NCC build another 150 units across Nunavut, so we are on target and I assure my colleague

that the lands to put these units on are already secured. We know that much, I don't know how many numbers I need to give but we have those numbers so far, and it seems we are on schedule so far. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister for that response. Through the Chair, can the minister indicate how many of those units or houses are allocated to Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 18. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you minister for that response. I would like to move on. The status update regarding strengthening the capacity of the Nunavut Housing Corporation board of directors by offering continued governance training education opportunities ensuring all director positions are filled.

I see that the positions are now filled and I would like to hear from the minister what additional governance training opportunities are being offered this year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The housing corporation will be having a meeting later this month I believe, and at that time they will sit down and have a look at what kind of governance workshops and training that board is interested in pursuing and we will go from there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wonder if the minister, through you, could talk to us about what, if any, targets are set for training, for example, youth to become involved in the housing governance boards, or women. We know that often, building capacity is extremely important in engaging different facets of society to take part in leadership opportunities. I wonder if the minister could tell us about that at all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To be quite frank, we don't have anything like that right now, but it is a great idea and it's something that I'm sure we could bring to the board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to hear a little bit more from the minister about the collaboration with Community and Government Services to support efficient lot development and the support of private land development and housing construction opportunities. If the minister could talk to us through the Chair about that collaboration with Community and Government Services and other stakeholders and what challenges have been identified, what possible solutions were brainstormed to ensure that appropriate land for housing is available to support Nunavut 3000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I think it's the first time I have seen "brainstorm" in a business plan, but Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Exactly, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I have said this often. We are working very well with the Nunavut Housing Corporation and Community and Government Services and the municipalities. Mr. Chairman, every municipality has a lands committee of some sort and it's very important that before we go into a community and submit plans to build houses in those communities, we work with the municipal council.

We are constantly working with Community and Government Services' Lands Division to see what kind of parcels of lands the community has. We go through the community planning committee. They have their lands laid out in terms of residential, non-residential, and multi-residential units. We work through those in advance of going into a community to build houses.

We try to stay at the least one year ahead, but two to three years ahead in planning for residential units in these communities because it's not just the house you have to put on; you need to build the roads, accessways, and power and everything else, melt and snow pileup. There's a whole facet of land development that needs to go on before we go in and put in an apartment block and is it going to be a one-storey or multi-level. All those have to be worked out.

We get ahead of the game and work with Community and Government Services and plan the layout of the building, which way it is going to face, and that's done, again, with the housing corporation, Community and Government Services, and the local land committee of the municipality because they know best about how and which way the building should be located. That work continues and it always happens and we try to stay a couple of years ahead so that things are ready before we go in and put a house there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, I believe that it kind of speaks to the priority in 2022-23 to “Initiate a review of existing housing stock in all 25 communities to identify buildings to renovate or repurpose.” I’m curious about whether or not those are Nunavut Housing stock or community housing stock. The update stated that “The review will be completed in Q4 2022/23” and that it considers the “...potential increased densification by examining opportunities to demolish older public housing units in need of major repairs and reconstruct new units at higher density.” I wonder if we can get, number one, is that Nunavut Housing stock or is that just housing stock in all communities, whether it’s Nunavut Housing units or no, and how far along this has progressed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, we will be finishing this in quarter 4 of 2022-23, which we are in right now, Mr. Chairman. Once that is done it will take a bit of work to compile and see the work that is eligible, but yes, this is housing stock, and again, it all comes down to seeing some of the developed buildings.

I think you go into any community, including Iqaluit, where you see boarded up houses or burnt units and buildings that are half there. Every community has those units. We are taking a look and seeing, if we remove those units, could we fit a six-plex there or a 12-plex there, or an elder house, the ones with the ramps? What could we fit into those units or what could we move? That is the work that is going on right now with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I love that I had one second left on the clock. Thank you for that. Mr. Chairman, or minister, the commitment to “Provide support to EDT in its investigation of alternative building technologies.” The update states that the “*Collaboration with EDT is ongoing. NHC will pursue design build opportunities in its future agreements and contracts that demonstrate alternate building technologies including components such as improved building envelopes.*”

Mr. Chairman, as everybody is aware, the state of crisis or emergency that Iqaluit has been in and out of and ongoing in regard to our water and sewage infrastructure, combined with this past winter’s very cold weather, and combined the problems with fuel delivery by Uqsuq Corporation, has had a pretty massive impact on our infrastructure in terms of our housing and our buildings.

I know that there is a lot of work being done to address those infrastructure issues and that there is a lot of work ahead for building owners and home owners to repair the damage that has occurred. I see this commitment and collaboration with Economic Development and Transportation to look at alternate building technologies to include planning buildings that are more weather resistant and infrastructure damage resistant in

that they could use alternative sources of power, such as solar, and things like reusing grey water so that if a building is off any kind of infrastructure system, that the buildings could be self-sufficient.

I'm wondering whether or not Nunavut housing, in collaboration with Economic Development and Transportation are actively pursuing the ability to build homes and buildings that are more self-sufficient and less likely to impacted things that are out of our control. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if we're trying to build that bomb-proof of a house, Mr. Chairman. I think right now we are working with trying to be more energy efficient and environmentally friendly in terms of, if we're designing that, not that I'm aware of, but I'm sure that it is something that moving forward, when we look for ways to improve energy efficiency and new housing, that that's something that is in the back of people minds.

You know, Mr. Chairman, we just closed an RFP yesterday on a design build, so we are hopeful that in their design build, that there are some alternative or more energy efficient ways of building a home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Just before I go to my next name, with that in mind, Minister Kusugak, is there any additional scoring criteria related to energy efficiency in those bid evaluations? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Chairman, maybe I could have Mr. Devereaux respond to the technical aspect of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. Yes, so in the RFP there are a variety of scoring matrix and criteria that get looked at. One of them certainly is the proposed design and encompassed within that particular evaluation area would take into consideration innovation and environmentally friendly design aspects.

There is a component of that evaluation that would include that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you for that. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Towards the end of 2022 I was very excited to share the Nunavut Housing Corporation's request for expression of interest, which was issued November 23, 2022 and had a closing date of February 15, 2023.

I was wondering if the minister would be able to provide an update to the Assembly about this Nunavut housing supply challenge request for expression of interest.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We just closed that recently. There were 30 plus applicants and it was very encouraging. We just going to start to go through those now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, and that is very positive to hear that there has been quite a bit of interest from the public on this. I think this is an excellent initiative. We can't rely on NHC to do all of the construction and I think we are in a much better position to help others build residential units.

With the closing date just passing on February 15, I've got a number of questions on this particular topic, but the first question is: is there established evaluation criteria to determine the selection process, and secondly when will applicants find out whether or not their application has been selected? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question and the deadline was extended to March 1. The department will be going over the applications and going over the criteria. I anticipate that it's going to take about four to six weeks to go through and maybe a bit longer, but that's where we're heading, Mr. Chairman. There's a lot applicants and you want to go through them thoroughly and fairly. It will take a bit of time, but I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, that is a relatively understandable turn around time. So in the RFEOI document it indicated that applicants to receive up to 30 percent of eligible costs to be covered for their projects.

I was wondering if the Nunavut Housing Corporation and minister has set a particular amount per unit or a maximum amount per project for that affordable housing fund? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Chairman, not yet at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So again I was very excited when I saw the NHC release this request for expression of interest. As I've raised this issue in the past about the benefits of having an affordable housing fund and how the non-profit and private sector can construct much more efficiently than the public sector.

The Government of Yukon created their affordable housing fund in 2017. They've had a number of different amendments to the program. I think they had initially started at \$50,000 per unit and then they've increased it a few times and now they're offering \$100,000 per unit and a maximum of \$1,000,000 per project.

Is that something along the lines that the Nunavut Housing Corporation has in mind and what I'm trying to get at is, we don't want to start off too low like Yukon had done and then have to slowly increase the limits while past projects have to make due with the limited funding that is provided. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'm happy that you agree and when it comes time to determining that amount, I hope that the minister will go along the line of best practice and sort of be at par Yukon's contribution amounts.

So in Yukon the affordable housing fund, they also have stipulations that projects must be energy efficient, and it states that it must be 25 percent more energy efficient than the national standard. Units that are designated as affordable must have a legal document that stipulates that the current owner, and any future owners, will be obligated to maintain that affordability component of the unit, whether it's rental or homeownership.

I just wanted to supplement with those additional Yukon stipulation and requirements and whether or not we will have those same sorts of criteria? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very much so, I think the Yukon's plan is one that is very worth looking at in comparing with ours, I'm sure we will have to do some tweaking and adjusting for our needs and our requirements, but in terms of affordability, we're looking at a 15-year term. Mr. Lightstone is well read on that program and I would just like to assure Mr. Lightstone and others out there that it won't be modeled off Yukon, but that we will do what we can to ensure that it benefits where it's supposed to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.



**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe this will be my last question. I'm just curious how much funding has the minister set aside specifically for this expression of interest? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have a fixed amount right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no more names on my list. I would just like a couple clarifications from some of the questions that were asked already. When we looked at the need and demand study in the business plan on page 9, it speaks to during the later phases we'll see a development of a full need and demand study to incorporate a focus on purpose-built housing.

As the minister stated earlier, there's studies on studies on studies and the initial phase of this is due soon, yet again, we're talking about expanding upon another study. I would like to get some clarification from the minister on one, if you have a need and demand study that's done already, it may not be to the level of detail that the corporation is looking for, but again, like the minister used an example, those people out in the public don't care about another study, they just want a roof over their head.

A two-part, I would like to ask the minister; one, how much of a need is this additional detail, and two, what kind of timeline? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I couldn't agree more, we don't need any more studies but I think what we'll see coming out of this one is that we might find that we need to make some adjustments and there might be some information more of to improve on, and that would be more of a next stage.

In terms of timelines, again it will depend what we find in this study, and going forward to see if there's more work that needs to be done or more information that needs to be received and so on, and once we know that, that will determine how long we need to work for that information.

I know it really doesn't answer your question, but I don't think we're talking about another study on a study, but to say that we'll find what information we are trying to get from this current one, and moving forward do we need additional information and what is that additional information and how will we retain it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister, I appreciate that. Just again to follow up on the housing needs of major repairs and reconstruct new units at higher density, as the minister is very well aware and my constituents who we had that occur very recently where a number of units are being decommissioned to build a more dense accommodation, and one of the challenges, and again the minister is very well aware, I had numerous conversations with

him in his office on this, when it's the Nunavut Housing Corporation that is requesting people to move, not the tenants themselves.

We ran into a number of scenarios and I brought it up in this House here in the past where people may have been accommodated at their previous need and now the Nunavut Housing Corporation is asking them to move, or basically in certain circumstance demanding them to move so that they can build new units where the family unit numbers may not have changed, but the eligibility of including those family members into their eligibility for a unit.

Can the minister assure me that there will be some sort of policy established under this for future endeavours, so that there isn't the uproar or the not meeting the needs of our residents?

I understand that if somebody moves away and then comes back, that their adult children may not be considered dependents, but when somebody moved into a unit 20 years ago, and their children age in place, again, the minister has very well explained the scenario.

I would just like to get some confirmation from the minister that this will be looked at a lot more closely, to make sure that there is some policy around it so that the requirements are clear. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will commit to looking at that scenario Mr. Chairman, but the Chairman appreciates the situation of the housing shortage that we are in.

There are many people that are over housed, if I can use that term. You have a couple who have moved into a three-bedroom house, we will use the scenario Mr. Chairman that you used, and they have been in the three-bedroom unit, if it's a public house or staff housing and their children have moved on and they no longer need a three-bedroom unit, but they have been in the unit for 20 years.

So, when it comes time to move to another unit because they are going to demolish the building, the couple no longer require a three-bedroom house, they require a one bedroom or a two-bedroom house. So, that becomes an inconvenience to the individuals but actually its more convenient for those people who are sitting in a one- and two-bedroom house who are in dire need of that three-bedroom unit.

When you sit there and have to decide, okay, do I keep this individual in a three-bedroom house because they have been in that three-bedroom house for 20 years or do we do the unpopular thing and move them to a one- or two-bedroom unit because this family of six needs to move into that three-bedroom unit. It is a tough call.

I can only commit that we will look at it. We are talking about it actually, because it does come up every time you do a move, and its one also that is often discussed in public housing units. You know, we have people in public housing units that are in that

predicament; where there are two or three people in a four- and five-bedroom unit. So, it is a tough one to navigate around Mr. Chairman, but I assure you, we will take a look at it and see where and how we can draw policies around it so that everybody is treated fairly. I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you for that minister, and that is exactly my point. If there was a policy that would say if you are a two-person family unit living in a three bedroom, then the policy would say that you are not eligible for a replacement unit of that same size. Whereas, a family with a family... . Again, the minister knows where I am going and I do look forward to hopefully that policy being developed on that.

Another thing I would like to get some clarification on; in the business plan on page 12, in the last bullet that Ms. Brewster was talking to, the 360 housing units that are planned to be built. Out of those, 208 are public housing and staff units, and the balance 152 are affordable housing unit market housing units.

I know there were some questions in the Chamber here just last week, what affordable housing, what market housing is and I will say that I understand with the Nunavut 3,000 that its encompassing 3,000 units over the next 10 years.

I do have a concern when a crown corporation such as the Nunavut Housing Corporation, in their business plan is speaking about private sector builds; affordable housing and market housing. I guess my question is: is there an anticipation under the Nunavut 3,000 Program to subsidize building developers in building non-staff, non-public housing units? Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Mr. Devereaux get into those details through you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you Mr. Chairman for the question. I do agree, the strategy, the Nunavut 3,000 strategy, we target affordable housing units and market housing units. I should be very clear that those are not going to be directly delivered by Nunavut Housing Corporation. They are going to be built by private sector, by the community housing not-for-profit sector, by other entities, and we have to figure out how to incentivise them, how to support and encourage them to come to the table to increase that supply.

Yes, the intention is we would provide capital co-investment to anyone of those stakeholders, partners, who might be interested in putting new affordable housing units into Nunavut, as well as market housing.

We don't drive that, but we certainly want to support them and incentivize that. There will be cases where we will have potentially builders save. We could access some capital money. We heard Mr. Lightstone talk about the Yukon example. They have done the exact same thing where they have said to developers or not-for-profit housing, and to

everybody really, “we will come to the table with \$50,000 a door, or \$100,000 a door, if you will guarantee us below market rental rates over a set period of time.” So we see ourselves modelling something very similar to that as we rollout the affordable housing program this summer/fall. We are still working on that program and hope to have it solidified later this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would just like to follow with Mr. Savikataaq’s question earlier on the Nunavut Condo Program policy. As the minister is aware, and I may bring it up in question period, but while we have the opportunity, it is a policy that falls under headquarters. So in response Mr. Savikataaq’s question, the minister had updated the current status of when looking at settling some of these purchase agreements, yet, again, as the minister is very much aware, there are a number of residents that are dissatisfied with the length of time that it has taken and with the changes that have come into play since their original intention to purchase.

I know there are a number different delays. I don’t want to get into the nitty gritty of that, but I would like to get some confirmation from the minister on what type of accommodations are going to be recognized by residents that are already living in those units that may not be supported through any formal paperwork at this time, but at the same time, there has been a lot of commitment from those residents in those units.

I would like to hear from the minister what accommodations are anticipated to make sure that those residents can feel alleviated of some of the concerns that they have been raising. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree the frustrations. We have talked about it in this House and outside of this House, about the frustrations that have been felt, I believe by both the corporation and the potential homeowners.

It has been one that is taking time to rectify. I think at the end of the day we will work with each individual. The potential home buyers do not all have the same issues. They have differing ones and we’ve been working with our senior management team to work with the clients, if I can use that term, to ensure that going forward, things could be made smooth.

At the end of the day, the individuals buying these condo units are getting them \$150,000 a unit less than the going market. Unfortunately, it has not been a smooth ride for anybody and we hope that we can begin to resolve a lot of the issues that were there beforehand and that at the end of the day, they will be able to live in nice condo units at a very good price for Iqaluit, or anywhere in Nunavut for that matter, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, minister, for clarifying. Headquarters. Page O-IV-II. \$12,332,000. We will go onto the next page of O-IV-III. Debt Repayment in the amount of \$10,738,000. Any questions? It’s usually a pretty straight forward section. I’m not anticipating any. Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, minister. (interpretation) For communities who owe money, I would like to know that first of all; people who owe money to local housing authorities, and the local housing authorities who have debt with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Kaerner, so the debt repayment page of this is related to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation mortgage that the Nunavut Housing Corporation carries. I believe your question would be relevant under the District Offices where there is debt from the public sector. If the committee will allow me to close this page, I will put Mr. Kaerner's name at the top of the list for the next page. Is everyone agreed we move to the next page? Thank you.

Did the minister understand the question that Mr. Kaerner was asking? Please, Mr. Kaerner, respond.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Just give me a minute to find out those numbers, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question was: how many housing authorities owe debt, or do people owe to the local housing authorities? I'm not sure which question the member was asking, but the communities that owe money 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Four housing authorities have debts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you. So which communities are they? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Sorry Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Can you please repeat your question.

**Chairman:** The member is wondering which communities those four are. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak :**Sorry about that. I'm just trying to flip through to the right page. The four communities are: Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, Pangnirtung, and Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kaerner.

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When they are in debt, what does the housing corporation do to help the communities to get out of debt? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'll just remind members we are on page O-IV-IV. District Offices. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The local authorities that are in debt are being helped by the housing corporation to see how they can get out of debt. We are trying to make sure that the housing authorities who owe money pay money, and if necessary, some of the staff will be temporarily laid off while they are trying to pay off the debt, and it may affect the day-to-day operations of the housing authority. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

**Mr. Kaernek:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So when the local housing authority has too much debt, we don't like to see people being evicted. These four communities that owe money... How shall I ask the question. You said that you could help the communities, so will the other communities that don't owe any money be considered a priority more than the ones that are in debt? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're talking about two things. There is the local housing authority debt or local housing association debt and the other one is where the local people owe money to the housing authority or association. These are two different things.

Every community has people who owe money to the local housing authority, but what I'm talking about here is the local housing authority debt. I said that there were four communities in debt, it's two different things. It's where a tenant owes money to the housing association, and the housing association owes money to housing corporation. We try to make sure that they make payments to their debts and there are people and committees that do that.

The people who owe money to the local housing authority are helped by the housing authority by them telling them to make payments to try and make a little more money than the monthly so that they can pay off their debt eventually. I hope that makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

**Mr. Kaernek** (interpretation): That was my last question, but I have another question related to your response. (interpretation ends) On page 14 of the business plan, Mr. Chairman, on the debt payment part. It says here as of March 31, 2021 \$65.2 million was on a debt.

So as of today, of that \$65.2 million, how much has been repaid or as of today how is the money there? (interpretation) My last question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, its at \$43.899 million. Around 87 percent of tenants pay their debts. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I might just be going all over the place a bit here, but if I'm in the wrong place you'll let me know.

Under district offices, on there it says the district office is responsible to ensure the success of construction programs in the region. I'd like to ask the minister what he...because I believe this would fall under there. The residential multiplex design in various communities that the minister talks about, the tender went out and just closed not too long ago. On the bottom it says that the targeted amount is \$625 per square foot. If it's above that would these tenders be cancelled like they have been in the past few years? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those were proposals that were put out. We haven't taken a look at them yet, but that's our goal. I can't say at this time if that's the cut off number or not. It depends how close we are to that number I guess, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just going to ask the minister what is the Nunavut Housing Corporation's cut-off number because the minister stated many times that a thousand dollars a square foot is just unacceptable. What is the cut-off per square foot? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I will allow the question, but I do have some concerns with the information that, as businesses that are out there listening to this to see how high they can escalate their bids, but I'll let the minister juggle that response. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Definitely not a thousand dollars a square foot, I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back to their business plan, on page 12 when they talk about the different houses here, one of the bullets that the members have already brought up, the 198 public housing units, 10 GN staff housing, 106 affordable housing units and 46 market housing units, I believe the minister and his officials stated that market housing units are privately built. I would like to ask the minister how they come up with the number 46 when it appears there is no control from the housing corporation on the number of private houses that would be built. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe Mr. Devereaux was giving a response to those numbers. If he could continue through you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Please proceed, Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. I do totally agree that we're not in the driver's seat and we can't dictate the number of market housing units that get built. I think what we wanted to do through Nunavut 3000 was to set at least a target for all the stakeholders maybe to start looking towards. In terms of this year when we come up with a number of 46, how that figure was derived was partly just through us outreach to various builders in terms of what plans they were thinking about in terms of delivery for 2023, and it was our sense that the marketplace was looking at delivering in that neighbourhood of 40-50 units. That is just how we come up with that target for 2023. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's private housing market in the three regional centres but very little in outlying communities. To the best of the official's knowledge, was there any numbers attributed to private housing being built or sold in the smaller communities? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister, would you like Mr. Devereaux to continue with those responses? Just the same line of questioning, Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. To a certain degree, I think it was a fairly broad general target number, recognizing that we don't have that direct influence, so some of it is just engagement with the marketplace out there in terms of what they're looking to build. It's a small marketplace so it's not a big list of builders throughout the territory.

The other thing with us on the market housing side where we thought we could see potential growth for those kinds of units, for example I'll just use the NCC design build contracts. If NCC is going into the eight communities that are targeted this year, their plan, and they have identified this to us is if they are building in Baker Lake and if they're building in Arctic Bay, they're going to do outreach to see if there's any higher income earners in those communities that would be interested in market housing because if they're already going in there to build 20 public housing units for NHC, then the opportunity is for them to also build a few market housing units.

Throughout the course of the eight to ten years of their strategy, we do envision if that's where some new market activity will happen in some of the smaller communities throughout the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier Mr. Devereaux having exchanged with Mr. Lightstone and Mr. Devereaux stated that housing unit markets that there's potential to have Nunavut Housing Corporation subsidize the purchase of market housing units. Would then the homeowner budget, which is now I believe \$4 million something, would that go up substantially then? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it has the potential to go up substantially, Mr. Chairman. We will see how this year and the next year revolves around that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the minister has stated before that the homeownership program, overall program in general, is being reviewed and currently there is an income threshold. Is part of the process to probably increase this threshold so that more Nunavummiut can access some of the funds for them to get to purchase or to build a new house? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are going to take a look at how effective this homeownership program is and if it means that we need to make some adjustments in terms of eligibility or increase the amount accessible, then we would do that. I think it will be a combination of both of those, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just before I go on to my next topic here, just going back to the 46 market housing units, if the number, let's say...this is sort of being hypothetical. If that number there is not reached, for example, if there are only 20 market houses sold within Nunavut, I'm not saying they will be; I'm just saying if that was the case, in next year's business plan, would that number be adjusted accordingly? Mr. Devereaux says this is what they think is going to be sold, private houses being built and sold. If that number is really far off, will they adjust their numbers for next year? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's just getting way too hypothetical, Mr. Chairman. We don't know yet. I think it's better to see what the numbers are and respond at that time, but to sit here and think, "If we reach 26, then what do we do and if we reach 56, then what do we do?" I think that discussion is better placed

when we begin to know those numbers, Mr. Chairman. I'm not trying to flog the question at all, but it's just too hypothetical at this point, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you. I'll leave it at that.

On page 11 of the business plan it says, the third-last bullet, I'll just read the last paragraph, it says that "Nunavut staff housing, including the development of incentives and opportunities for staff housing residents to move into affordable rental/homeownership units." Right now I think pretty well the only incentive is the \$400 a month housing allowance that someone would get if they own their own house. What incentives does the Nunavut Housing Corporation have planned to encourage people in staff housing to move out of them? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I do have to go through Minister Kusugak first. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I ask if we can have Mr. Devereaux respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. I think, currently, there are existing programs beyond just the \$400 a month benefit that's provided to GN staff. Staff are also able to apply for NDAP or other various NHC programs to help them move from a rental situation into a homeownership situation.

As the minister said, we want to examine that suite of programs and we're actively doing that now. We're meeting in Arviat in two weeks' time to have a workshop around that, but by the fall time, we hope to roll out a new suite of programs to not only incentivize current GN employees to transition out of deeply subsidized GN staff housing into homeownership but all Nunavummiut for that.

I think that as we roll out the Affordable Housing Program, it will be another incentive, hopefully, that targets existing GN employees in staff housing to look at other options besides just that. As we get more supply into the marketplace, hopefully those options open up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We will move on to the next page. O-IV-5. Affordable Housing Program. Public Housing. \$177,502,000. Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just going from the minister's opening comments here, I would just like to get a bit of a clarification. He goes to do the increase, the public housing budget sees an increase of \$11 million, and it goes on to say, "Most of

the increase...” Sorry; it was \$17 million, but \$11 million and change of that is to provide “for the rise in utility rates from the Qulliq Energy Corporation’s rate restructuring” and utilities, which is diesel fuel, and then for staff housing expenditures, it will rise by \$1.2 million and that is to “cover increased operating costs due to higher utility rates.”

Mr. Chairman, I just need an explanation. When I did the math and I’m not saying that I’m a math expert, but for the public housing unit increase due to utilities, it was \$1,846 per unit and for staff housing, it was \$708 per unit, and my understanding is that both were for utility change. I could be mistaken, but if I could just get an explanation. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that’s for existing and new housing units to be included. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Understandable, but it still seems to be quite a bit lopsided. Just to get clarification on the maintenance part of it, does the local housing authority or association do the maintenance on government staff houses in all the communities? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe they do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Between my questioning, I don’t have the time to get how much per unit it would come out to, but it still seems like it will be swayed way higher, like at still double the cost per unit for utility rise. Can we just get an explanation? They will pay the same utility rate, which is my understanding, and the maintenance is done by the local housing authority on both units. Shouldn’t the increase be very similar? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I have Mr. Devereaux respond to that, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies; could I get the member to repeat the question?

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's per unit increase. In the minister's opening comments, the minister stated that the increase for public housing units is due to utilities and the increased rate of the Qulliq Energy Corporation was \$11 million for public housing and for staff housing, for the same reason, the increase was \$1.2 million. I did the math but not counting the units that are being built this year and it came out to a little bit over \$1,800 a unit increase for utilities for public housing, and a little bit over \$700 per unit increase for staff housing. Shouldn't the increase have been the same because the utilities rates are the same, I believe, for public housing and staff housing? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thanks to the member for repeating the question.

I understand the scenario. I guess one of the clarifying differences is the public housing portfolio. When you look at the year over year change in utilities, as the minister mentioned, some of those utilities went up, and we have a portfolio of approximately just under 6,000 units. We also added quite a number of units into the mix that didn't exist in prior years. So that is part of that difference in that dollar amount when you're comparing to staff housing. The flip side too, with staff housing, we don't always pay utilities directly.

We have 1,200 leases and in some of those leases, the utilities component aren't part of our payment. They are already baked into the fixed lease amounts over whatever the term of those leases are. It's a difficult one to do the quick math and say "how come they are not aligning?" Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is why I couldn't do the quick math while I was talking. Staying on the minister's opening comments, the first page on the very last there it says "A projected decrease in rent assessment of \$1.57 million...". If we can just get an explanation of why the Nunavut Housing Corporation is projecting that there is going to be less rent assessed. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just let me get the... . Mr. Chairman, during the pandemic, rent assessment was inflated due to tenants reporting higher income received from federal funding, and I believe that this has dropped because the assessments have dropped since then. In a nutshell it has to do with the CERB payments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that rents are assessed on a yearly basis. They've already adjusted for the CERB influx or extra money that had been coming in. Just a clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** That's right, Mr. Chairman. Before COVID, the budget was at about \$16.9 million and during COVID it was up to \$19.7 million, and now it goes back down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if the minister and his officials have this at hand. Just from what the minister said then, has the rent arrears gone up since COVID payments were made and rents were assessed at higher rates? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that information handy. Through you, I would be more than happy to share once we get it. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. It would be interesting to see that trend. (interpretation) Mr. Savikataaq, are you done? I have: Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2023-26 business plan indicates on page 14 that "*NHC has engaged a consulting firm to produce a report on Local Housing Organization governance models to see how the public housing allocation process and organizational structure can be improved.*" Which consulting firm is undertaking this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are just going over that document now and we hope to have it finalized in the next month. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be looking forward to looking at the organizational structure when it's completed.

My next question is: when will the report from this work be ready to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know that at this time. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What specific changes to the public housing allocation process are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is something we are just going over now. The allocation of houses is one that is very strongly discussed in the municipalities with local housing associations. It is one that is very contentious with people on the housing wait-list and those that feel they are underhoused, so we are taking a look at that and I look forward to sitting with some of the regular members in our subcommittee in the next short time to take a look at how, if any, adjustments there would be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What specific changes to local housing organization governance models and organizational structures are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there are a number of opportunities and possible changes that could be out there, but not limited to. Do we stay with local housing associations, or local housing organizations to be elected or appointed, and make-up of those boards, their responsibilities, and should we take a look at regionalizing the boards?

Some communities have only a couple hundred people in them and it's not always easy to get housing board members into the small communities. Would having regional boards be an asset, how and how not? So there are a number of options out there, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Local housing associations are required under the territorial *Societies Act* to submit annual financial statements and other items to the Registrar of Societies. As of today, which of Nunavut's local housing associations are currently not in good standing, and what specific efforts are being made to address the situation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They are all in good standing, except for two that are pending, where there is just some minor work to have them in good standing. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my understanding that local housing organizations provide the administration and maintenance services for the rental program. Several also have responsibilities for part or all of the home repair and homeownership programs.

For example, some constituents pay a lot of rent for the houses that they are renting. Say, for example, when they need maintenance done to their houses and they are not being heard, where can the constituents go if their local housing organizations are not meeting people that are renting the local housing organization's houses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my last question.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If local tenants of housing associations are having issues with their housing association boards, often they go to their Members of the Legislative Assembly or contact the district offices if they have issues there, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no more names on my list for this page. Do members agree that we have concluded this page?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Before we go to the next page, we will take a 10-minute break. Thank you.

*>>Committee recessed at 18:15 and resumed at 18:29*

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. We're on Affordable Housing Program (Staff Housing). Page O-IV-6. I have no names on my list at the moment. For staff housing. Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It won't be much. On the business on page 20, the second last bullet, it says "...identify communities in greatest need for construction of staff housing where leasing is extremely limited."

It was supposed to be completed by December 2022. Can the minister enlighten us on the profile of each community in terms of the communities that are most in need of construction of staff housing? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Sorry, just to confirm, Mr. Savikataaq. Are you looking for a priority ranking of all 25 communities, or the top 10? Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** I don't want to take time here. Let's say the top five.

**Chairman:** Thank you for clarifying that. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately, I don't have the top 25 on that list, but I will commit to providing it with the members, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** I tried my best minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** This number 12. One line here seems to generate a lot of questions for me. It's going back to the number of housing units being built and in there it says "10 staff housing units." I know this is capital, but it's in the business plan that they had planned there. On their Nunavut 3000, the plan is to build... . Sorry, where is that. Staff housing is 60 and there is quite a difference. If we could just get a clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm missing a page somewhere. Could Mr. Savikataaq just clarify what 60 he is talking about? Oh, I see it now. The public housing? Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq, if you would like to clarify and be more specific in your question, maybe. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry for being vague. It's from the Nunavut 3000 in terms of preliminary targets. I realize these are targets. For the 2023 build program, they have public housing, staff housing, affordable housing, market housing. For 2023, the target amount is 60 staff houses, but in the business plan they're saying 10 staff housing units. If we can just get a clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you for clarifying that, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the confusion comes from in the units it talks about the public housing units for Kugluktuk, 12 of those units are staff housing units. That clarifies it. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.



**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm confused now. Mr. Chairman. In the business plan, on the bullet it talks about building. "Begin construction of approximately 360." Then it goes public housing units, and then it says 10 GN staff housing units. They want to start construction of 10 GN staff housing units. On the Nunavut 3000 preliminary targets for 2023, if you add the totals up, this is staff housing; 10 for Kinngait, 10 for Pangnirtung, 10 Resolute, 10 Pond Inlet, 10 for Kugluktuk and 10 for Coral Harbour. That adds up to 60. Just clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** I've checked your math, Mr. Savikataaq. You're right on. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could get my mathematician, Mr. Devereaux to respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Devereaux.

**Mr. Devereaux:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thanks to the members. When we had done the Nunavut 3000 strategy and did those preliminary targets, that was earlier in the season. What happened then is we prepared that RFP for design build and we looked at the lot availability. We realized in three of the communities we could increase from 10 to 12. So if you look at the actual RFP we just closed, it was actually yesterday, we increased the target number of public housing units in Pond Inlet from 10 to 12. We also increased the target number of public housing units in Coral Harbour from 10 to 12, and then Kugluktuk, which happens to be staff housing units. We increased that from 10 to 12.

That meant we were jumping to 66 units, as compared to the earlier target we had back in September 2022. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Now I think I'm getting confused. Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was strictly talking, according to this business plan, there are 10 GN staff housing units and there are 198 public housing units that are going to be built. It just states that there are 10 GN staff units that they are going to start construction on, according to their business plan, but on the Nunavut 3000, there are 60 staff housing units to be built in 2023 in six different communities in Nunavut. Just a clarification if they are building 60 staff housing units or if they're building 10. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Or is it 12. Minister Kusugak, do you want me to go straight to Mr. Devereaux again? Minister Kusugak, please go ahead.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Mr. Chairman, could Mr. Savikataaq tell me what page he is on?

>> *Laughter*

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm on page 23 of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's Nunavut 3000. Give him the page I have there if he wants, but it's page 23. The heading is "Preliminary Targets for 2023 Build Program." It's the number of units that they are targeting to build. Under Staff Housing RFP, it talks about 60 staff housing units. Mind you, it says "public and staff", but a clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Are we all on the same page now? Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. The preliminary plans for, those are exactly as it was there, except the changes as indicated by Mr. Devereaux. The number in Pond Inlet went from 10 to 12, for Kugluktuk, 10 to 12, and Coral Harbour, 10 to 12.

In the RFP public procurement we just put out, the units that were going to be 10 originally are now 12 for Kugluktuk and that's for the RFP that just closed yesterday. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** If I may, Mr. Savikataaq. Just to confirm; Mr. Devereaux stated that the staff housing 10-plex or ten units that was anticipated to be built in Kugluktuk, is now a 12 unit staff housing. The other two communities that the minister just mentioned, I believe, Mr. Devereaux said they were public housing units that went from 10 to 12. So are those 10 units that were planned, that are now 12 and the other two communities are still public housing? So in total, the corporation is planning to build 12 staff housing units in Kugluktuk, this building season. Can I get the minister to confirm that or change my...? Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Exactly, Mr. Chairman; subject to the tenders that just closed being able to be awarded. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Now I'm no longer confused. I have no more names on my list under this page, so we're looking at Affordable Housing Program (Staff Housing). \$72,993,000. Everyone is agreed that we have completed that page?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Everyone, please go back to page M-3. Nunavut Housing Corporation. \$257,244,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Do members agree that we have now completed with the Nunavut Housing Corporation?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister, closing comments, please.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have 12...no, 10 closing comments.

Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for the opportunity to sit here with you today. Your comments are greatly appreciated. I look forward to continue to work with everybody around the room. Housing is one of the hardest issues to deal with, I believe, though there are many others, I'm sure.

I just want to take the opportunity to thank Mr. Devereaux to my right. He is working tirelessly to begin to solve some of the housing issues we do have and all the staff that are at the head office and the regional offices. I appreciate all the hard work that they are doing and Ms. Sol Vardy, to my left, is doing an incredible job and I appreciate the work that she is doing also and her staff. We will continue to work hard for Nunavummiut in terms of dealing with housing.

I'll leave it at that. Thank you, everybody, and *qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Applause*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Kusugak. You and your witnesses are relieved of duty.

Members, please stay in your seats. We will proceed directly to the opening comments for Family Services. Just give us 30 seconds.

**Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. We will proceed directly to opening comments with Minister Nakashuk for the Department of Family Services. Please go ahead, minister.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to be here to present and discuss the proposed 2023-24 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Chairman, the department provides a range of programs and services that promote the well-being and self-reliance of Nunavummiut. The department prepares individuals for meaningful work through employment readiness programming and supports through a variety of services provided across four client-focused divisions.

First, the Family Wellness Division provides a broad range of support services for children, families, and vulnerable adults who may require protection or other specialized support. The division also provides emergency intervention as well as prevention programs.

Second, the Income Assistance Division includes a variety of benefit programs that provide financial assistance to people 18 years of age and over and their dependants.

Third, the Career Development Division promotes employment training programs, administers funding to clients for these programs, and offers career counselling services.

Fourth, the Poverty Reduction Division coordinates collaboration across government departments and with Inuit organizations on strategic approaches to poverty reduction, food insecurity, and homelessness.

Mr. Chairman, for 2023-24, to support the ongoing programs and services provided, the Department of Family Services is proposing an operating budget of \$179.5 million, which represents an increase of 6 percent, or \$9.84 million, over last year's main estimates. These increases include:

- \$7 million under income assistance to support the increased rates for income assistance payments;
- \$492,000 in new staff positions, including increasing our half-time income assistance workers to full time; and
- \$2.35 million for the increase in overall salaries as per the new collective agreement.

These budget increases reflect the changes the department has undertaken to support vulnerable Nunavummiut who cannot meet their basic needs as they work towards personal well-being.

My department is increasing the rates for income assistance payments to meet the basic needs of our most vulnerable population as the cost of living increases. We need to make these cost adjustments to align with inflation to ensure that those people who rely on income assistance are supported.

Mr. Chairman, this proposed operating budget will also allow the department to support the government's efforts to address the *Katujjiluta* mandate commitments.

I would be happy to respond to the questions for the Standing Committee on Social Wellness members on the proposed 2023-24 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services when the time permits. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I'll ask the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness for her opening comments. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have reviewed the 2023-24 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Chairman, the proposed operations and maintenance budget for the Department of Family Services is almost \$180 million for 2023-24, which represents close to 6 percent increase over its 2022-23 budget. It appears that the biggest increase in funding will be allocated to income assistance payments. Nunavut's income assistance programs are directed towards assisting families, adult individuals, and seniors in meeting their basic needs and members look forward to further details on how these programs will be enhanced in 2023-24.

The Department of Family Services provides a wide range of critical services to Nunavummiut who may be vulnerable and who may require additional protections or supports to live safely and comfortably. The standing committee supports the department's contributions towards the operations of community-based family violence shelters and encourages communities and local groups to reach out to the department to explore opportunities for opening and operating shelters at the local level. Members have noted an increased need for shelter and support services for youth, especially those who have experienced trauma and sexual violence.

The standing committee continues to support such food security initiatives as school-based meal programs and the contributions of food centres and soup kitchens. It has been noted that the federal government begun work on a pan-Canadian school food policy and members would be interested to learn what input has been provided by the Government of Nunavut on this initiative.

Mr. Chairman, social workers play an important role in addressing many pressing and critical needs at the community level. The standing committee encourages the department to continue working with Nunavut Arctic College to recruit more Nunavummiut to attend and complete the Nunavut-based social work certification and degree programs.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Family Services also delivers a number of programs and resources to assist adults in accessing education and training opportunities and gain employment. The standing committee looks forward to any updates on the Adult Learning Training Supports program, which supports adults in working to develop their career options.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will also have questions and comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to report progress. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. There is a motion to report progress on the floor and it's not subject to debate. All those in favour. Opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 18 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Qavvik. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Speaker:** All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Ball.

**Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Mr. Ball:** *Orders of the Day* for March 8, 2023:

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 12
- Bill 14
- Bill 16
- Bill 17
- Bill 18
- Bill 19
- Bill 20
- Bill 21

## 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

## 21. Third Reading of Bills

## 22. Orders of the Day

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Before we close for the day, I just want to inform all of my colleagues that I just got a call from a school friend from Fort McPherson, so just letting you know that people are watching you outside of Nunavut.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 14 – 6(2), this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 8, at 10 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:53*

