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Official Report

**DAY 8**

**Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

**Pages 307 – 364**

**Iqaluit**

**Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA**

## 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)

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for Suicide Prevention*

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(Netsilik)

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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of  
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**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

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

*Minister responsible for the Status of  
Women; Minister responsible for the  
Workers' Safety and Compensation  
Commission*

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

*Minister of Justice; Minister  
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Hansard Production  
Innirvik Support Services

*Box 1200*

*Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0*

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

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

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut  
Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

**Members Present:**

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

>> *House commenced at 13:30*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

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

>> *Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Killiktee. To all Nunavummiut who are following the proceedings, please feel welcome.

(interpretation ends) Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 027 – 6(2): Gjoa Haven Office Fire – Impacts on Motor Vehicles Operations**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Can you hear me now? Okay. I pressed this button; I apologize. Let me start again.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues are aware, the Qariariit Building in Gjoa Haven, which housed the department's Motor Vehicles Division headquarters, burned to the ground on March 26, 2022. Fortunately there were no injuries in the fire, but all connections to Government of Nunavut systems, including critical access to the Motor Vehicles Information System, were lost.

Losing the headquarters functions of the Motor Vehicles Division just as services were coming back from COVID restrictions has been very difficult, but I am pleased to report that staff have responded to the challenges presented by this accident and that minimal service disruptions have been reported.

Motor Vehicles staff in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk offices are assisting in providing key division functions until the Gjoa Haven office is fully operational again, and many Motor Vehicle services, including vehicle registration renewals and general identification card renewals, are available through the Government of Nunavut website or email.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of our colleagues at Community and Government Services for their assistance in locating new office space for our Gjoa Haven staff. We expect to be back to normal operations in the new office before mid-June.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the staff in the Motor Vehicles Division. We appreciate your continued dedication to providing these critical services to Nunavummiut throughout this challenging period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Minister's Statement 028 – 6(2):  
Northern Premiers' Meeting in  
Yukon**

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok** (interpretation): Good day to Nunavummiut who are listening to the proceedings and my colleagues here in the House. Good day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to wish everyone here a happy Pride Month. *Quvianaq*.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the first in-person meeting of the northern premiers in over two years.

On May 9, Premier Cochrane and I were welcomed to Whitehorse by Premier Silver, the current Chair of the Northern Premiers' Forum. We discussed several important priorities, including arctic security, housing, and health care.

Mr. Speaker, as the northern premiers we are committed to working with the federal government and indigenous partners to strengthen Canada's position in the Arctic. We agreed that arctic security and sovereignty are enhanced by strengthening our communities, and discussed the need for coordinated

federal investments informed by northerners. We noted the need for increased federal investment in the Rangers program and new investments in critical infrastructure such as transportation, energy, and telecommunications.

Mr. Speaker, we agreed to continued collaboration with the federal government and our indigenous partners on solutions to our housing gap. We noted that long-term sustainable and flexible funds are needed for building, operation and maintenance costs. We also encourage the federal government to attach meaningful and robust investments to the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework that support housing, infrastructure, reconciliation, arctic security, and climate change.

Mr. Speaker, we discussed how the pandemic continues to strain all facets of the health care system and highlight the need for improvements to elder care. We agreed on the significance of a pan-territorial approach to health human resources and that a focus on the needs of northern, rural and remote areas should inform any pan-Canadian strategy.

Mr. Speaker, all three of us look forward to negotiating a First Ministers' agreement on sustainable health care funding and to continued and focused partnerships in strengthening the Arctic. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister for Education, Ms. Gross.

**Minister's Statement 029 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride and Supporting  
2SLGBTQ+ Students**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend our Nunavut schools as they celebrate Pride and support two-spirited, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning students.

>>Applause

June is officially recognized as Pride Month in Canada, with many organizations, governments, and schools flying the Pride flag as a symbol of inclusion and support for diversity. The aim of Pride celebrations is to help make schools a safe and positive space for all members of the school community regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

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

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Youth leadership in the 2SLGBTQ+ community is inspiring because it shapes a better, more diverse and inclusive territory. Our youth continue to be amazing role models and allies, reducing violence and discrimination at school and at home, in turn, creating a safer space for our Nunavummiut to be open and be themselves.

A great example is our Inuksuk High School's Positive Space Club in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay's Rainbow Army at Kiilnik High School. Both schools have had an amazing range of activities over the past several years, including Pride Week, a Pride prom, and a rainbow flag-raising to celebrate and support students who are 2SLGBTQ+.

These pride groups and events play an important role in fostering a safe and caring school environment and reduce bullying. Supporting pride in schools creates awareness and builds a community of allies to work against prejudice beyond our school walls.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Education is working on a 2SLGBTQ+ handbook and pride kits to help support, safeguard, and increase awareness and knowledge within our schools.

Please join me in supporting 2SLGBTQ+ students and allies as we celebrate Pride. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister for Health, Mr. Main.

**Minister's Statement 030 – 6(2):  
National Nursing Week**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, May 9 to 15 was National Nursing Week and I want to take the opportunity to recognize all Nunavut's nurses for the exceptional work they have done and continue to do for Nunavummiut.

Nurses and all our frontline staff have endured tremendous stress while working to keep all Nunavummiut safe through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Having heard directly from some of our staff, I can say that our nurses' jobs are physically, emotionally and mentally



challenging. They work tirelessly to meet the needs of the communities they serve; and often sacrificing time with their own families to meet the health needs of ours. These sacrifices have been especially evident during the pandemic.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, nurses and other health staff can sometimes face additional challenges stemming from verbal abuse in the workplace. My department works hard to ensure our staff have safe environments to work in, but I urge all Nunavummiut to treat our staff with respect and understanding. Every day our nurses are doing their best to help meet the health needs across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, although nursing can be a challenging career, it is also a very rewarding role, as shown through the appreciation and gratitude given by patients and their families. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my fellow members and all Nunavummiut join me to celebrate the incredible contribution that our Nunavut nurses make towards the collective health of our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister for Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Minister's Statement 031 – 6(2):  
Petroleum Products Division  
Commitment to Enhanced  
Services**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Nunavummiut. Mr. Speaker, petroleum

products heat our homes, fuel our equipment, and ensure that essential goods can be transported to our communities.

The Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for the purchase, safe storage, and distribution of petroleum products in Nunavut. Ensuring our communities have ongoing access to quality fuel products throughout the year is challenging work and requires a year-round commitment from a dedicated and creative team.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, each year there are occasions where the Petroleum Products Division needs to take extraordinary measures to ensure uninterrupted fuel services in Nunavut's communities, and this year has been no different. Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure members that my department and the Petroleum Products Division is committed to achieving the highest service standards possible in Nunavut's communities.

Mr. Speaker, members will recall that a new tank farm is approved for Arviat with completion expected in the fall of 2024-25. This upgrade is necessary to meet the need of the community now and in the future. The Petroleum Products Division has been carefully monitoring the fuel levels available in Arviat and identified the potential for a shortage prior to the fall 2022 resupply. To address this shortage and ensure ongoing service in the community, the division recently completed an air resupply of fuel from Rankin Inlet to Arviat. This resupply required careful planning of 50 flights and the project

was completed safely and effectively. The Petroleum Products Division will continue to monitor the inventory in Arviat to ensure uninterrupted service in the community.

Mr. Speaker, the Hamlet of Clyde River also recently identified issues with the operation of their newer mobile equipment, which is designed to run on a fuel type not available in the community. To address these issues, my department has provided technical support to the hamlet to enhance their maintenance program, provided the hamlet with an interim supply of the fuel type specified for their equipment, and this summer the Petroleum Products Division will manage upgrades to the tank farm configuration. Upon completion of these upgrades, for the first time, Clyde River will have the capacity to store and distribute diesel and Jet-A fuel.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the purchase, storage, and distribution of petroleum products in a territory as large as ours is complicated business. The team at the Petroleum Products Division is committed to providing high-quality services and will continue to work with industry partners and communities to ensure safe, ongoing access to high quality throughout the territory and throughout the year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Ms. Nakashuk.

### **Minister's Statement 032 – 6(2): WSCC's Safe Workplace Program for Employers**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr.

Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, today I want to share details about a Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission initiative called Safe Workplace. Safe Workplace is a health and safety program launched in 2022 to recognize employers for their safety performance and to help others to identify and improve the areas they need to address.

Whether a small business or a large organization, employers must meet all their safety and workers' compensation legal requirements to become a safe workplace. This includes having an active health and safety program in place, being up to date on assessment payments, having no outstanding directions issued by the commission as part of a workplace inspection, no convictions under the Safety Acts, no workplace fatalities in the past 12 months, and being below a class average for time loss for accepted workplace injuries or illnesses claims.

Safe Workplace employers are listed on our website at [wscc.nt.ca](http://wscc.nt.ca) and receive a Safe Workplace or Advanced Safe Workplace certificate and digital badge to display at their worksite or on their website and print materials.

I encourage every employer and business owner to participate fully in the Safe Workplace program and to help promote positive workplace health and

safety culture in Nunavut. Employers, workers, and the commission must work together to prevent workplace injuries and, when injuries happen, support a timely and safe return to suitable duties for workers recovering from injury. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister for Environment, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Minister's Statement 033 – 6(2):  
Community Cleanup**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As summer approaches, we are reminded of the small role each of us can play in taking care of our lands and waters.

Nunavut's annual community cleanup events are a chance to come together as a community to show civic pride and clean up litter that accumulates over the winter.

Mr. Speaker, as part of our pollution prevention programs, the Department of Environment supports the cleanup events that are scheduled throughout the spring and summer in all Nunavut communities.

Mr. Speaker, each year, the department holds a contest in Nunavut schools to design our community cleanup logo. This year's winner is Kaya Hipfner, a grade 8 student at Aqsarniit Middle School in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is asking for consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please continue, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleagues for allowing me to conclude my statement.

You will see her logo on this year's t-shirt. There were two runners-up, Leeann Pearce of Sanikiluaq and Katelyn Qaunaq of Arctic Bay. All three received outdoor gear prize packs, and Kaya received a bike.

Mr. Speaker, each community leads its own cleanup, with support from local corporate sponsors and the department. Together with Nunavut's business community, we are able to thank cleanup volunteers by offering prizes for ballot draws.

Mr. Speaker, the annual cleanups require significant effort from a great number of people across the territory, and we are very thankful for all those who give their time and energy each year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

**Item 3: Members' Statements**

**Member's Statement 043 – 6(2):  
Congratulations to Pond Inlet  
Graduates**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to quickly note that I was able to go home

for a very quick celebration to celebrate the graduates in our community, where I watched the graduating class from grade 6 go through their celebrations.

It was heartwarming to watch them, as there were many students graduating from that class, and there were two graduates as well from our high school. I want to share in congratulating the students as well throughout Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

**Member's Statement 044 – 6(2):  
Congratulations to Inuksuit School  
Graduates**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you. Good day, colleagues, the people of Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq, and to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pride to rise today to congratulate two young people who live in my home community of Qikiqtarjuaq.

Mr. Speaker, Louis Kokseak in Qikiqtarjuaq and Abigail Kooneeliusie are graduating this week from Inuksuit School and I'm very proud of you.

Mr. Speaker, all Members of this House recognize and support the importance of education and life-long learning.

These are the keys to our success, and they are the keys to giving our young people the tools with which to build their futures.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the teachers and staff at Inuksuit School, as well as the members of the community's district education authority.

Mr. Speaker, in the years to come, I look forward to congratulating many more of our young people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in celebrating the accomplishment of my young constituents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 045 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride Month**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by thanking Premier Akeeagok for his spontaneous invitation to me to help him raise the Pride flag today. It meant a lot to me, and also for distributing these beautiful Progressive Pride pins that I see so many of you wearing.

Pride is about love, acceptance, friendship, and respect. I remember when I was 17 years old a Member of Parliament, Sven Robinson, came out as Canada's first openly gay Member of Parliament, and that had a profound effect on me because I could identify with him. I didn't have people that I could see publicly that I could identify with.

Celebration of Pride Month is about equality, representation, and visibility,

and as a member of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, I'm taking off my mask to say that today and every day it is important that we are being more visible for the people who don't have the courage to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Hon. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

**Member's Statement 046 – 6(2):  
Aging with Dignity in Nunavut**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address one of the key priority areas of this government's Katujjiluta mandate: "Aging with dignity in Nunavut"

Mr. Speaker, under this priority, the government's mandate indicates that it will "expedite the construction of regional long-term care facilities". Mr. Speaker, there is already one facility under construction in Rankin Inlet for the Kivalliq region, and both Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay already have elder care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, it is not clear to me why our government is so centralized in its plans to construct additional eldercare facilities. In past Assemblies, decentralization was part of the mandate. This concept seems to have been forgotten, again.

Mr. Speaker, former governments supported the establishment of elder care homes in the communities of Gjoa Haven, Igloodik and Arviat. Those communities are fortunate to be able to

care for their elders at home. Expanding the facilities that are already in operation makes more sense than putting all of our resources into building new ones.

Mr. Speaker, in reference to our elders receiving care in the south, the government's Katujjiluta mandate says "We will bring them home." I note that the mandate's statement can be interpreted in two ways: one, it may refer to bringing elders back home to Nunavut or, two, it may refer to bringing elders back to their home communities. I believe that most, if not all, Nunavummiut want to stay in their home community rather than being sent away for care.

Mr. Speaker, if the government would consider establishing elder care homes in Nunavut communities that are outside of the regional centres, it would truly fulfill the statement, "We will bring them home."

Mr. Speaker, in these past couple of years, five community elders from Sanikiluaq have died while receiving care in the south.

Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of more pages and I am seeking unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please continue, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, members, for allowing me to conclude my statement.

Mr. Speaker, it is heart-breaking to know that they spent their last moments alone with no family around them. The eldest member of the community of Sanikiluaq is currently receiving care in the south. She also happens to be my wife's grandmother. She is 90 years old. We long for her to be home in the community, but with no facility and no care available locally, that is not possible. It is hard.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the establishment of elder care facilities in communities outside of the regional centres. The final bullet of the government's mandate under its "Aging with Dignity" priority is to "accelerate the development of housing units for Elders and Seniors."

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the government to incorporate such elder care options as assisted living within this objective. I further encourage the government not to focus so heavily on regional construction and to address elder care needs at the community-level, outside of the regional centres, as a priority.

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

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Mr. Quqqiaq.

#### **Member's Statement 047 – 6(2): Seal Derby Hunt**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge two Tuvaat Katimajit in Taloyoak and in the

constituency of Netsilik who will be hosting their second annual seal derby hunt on June 3 to 5, 2022.

The first prize is \$10,000; second prize, \$5,000; and third prize, \$4,000; fourth prize, \$3,000; fifth prize, \$2,000; sixth prize, \$1,000; seventh prize, \$500; eighth prize, \$500 worth of groceries; ninth prize, fishing nets; tenth prize, \$100 gift card; eleventh prize, \$100 gift card; twelfth prize, a window; thirteenth prize, a window; fourteenth prize, a window; fifteenth prize, 10 gallons of gas, and the last prize is a headset.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge all sponsors and their Hamlet of Taloyoak, Paleajook Co-Op, Taloyoak Housing Authority, Hunters and Trappers Organization, Netsilik DEA, Northern Store, and RCMP Quinton.

Nunavummiut, if you want to take part in this second annual seal derby by Tuvaat Katimajit in Taloyoak, you can make payments at the Paleajook Co-Op Store. The entry fee is \$50 per household. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to Tuvaat Katimajit. Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

#### **Member's Statement 048 – 6(2): Mining Industry Concerns**

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I say "good day" to the people of Kugluktuk and Nunavummiut, as well as my fellow MLAs, (interpretation ends) and happy Pride Day too.

I rise today to speak about mining in the Kitikmeot. Mr. Speaker, mining is an important part of the economy.

As the MLA for Kugluktuk, I support responsible mining and the training and employment opportunities that it brings to our communities. However, I also have a responsibility to voice concerns that are raised with me by my constituents and the Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, I have been told by Inuit working at the mines and exploration camps in our region that although they have been trained for such work as operating heavy equipment, they feel that they are not always being treated fairly by supervisors and management when it comes to putting their training to work. Mr. Speaker, favouritism is not acceptable.

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

**Mr. Anavilok:** It is important that the companies which extract resources from our lands live up to their commitments to provide meaningful opportunities for career development and advancement.

Mr. Speaker, safety at mine sites and exploration camps is also an important issue and concern.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, a tragic accident occurred earlier this year at the Back River project in which a worker died in an accident. It is my understanding that weather and unfamiliarity with the local terrain and conditions may have been contributing factors.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that mining companies respect and utilize the

knowledge of our communities' lifelong residents. Doing so will help enhance safety at mine sites and exploration camps.

Mr. Speaker, I will have some questions on these issues to the appropriate ministers during our spring sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Hon. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerk.

**Member's Statement 049 – 6(2):  
Employment Opportunities in  
Amittuq**

**Mr. Kaernerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Ullukkut*, MLAs, (interpretation) as well as the people of Amittuq and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak to what transpired during the Fifth Assembly, where I worked endlessly to try to provide for my constituents who I represented by asking hard questions, and I would sometimes get very warm and sweaty.

Nonetheless, it was on the behalf of my constituents as I am not here simply to validate myself, as I ran on the promise to voice the wishes of my constituents here in this seat, through the government capital and operations programs, as well as potential benefits and opportunities and I queried the government about these issues here in this House during the Fifth Assembly,

Now, in saying that, Mr. Speaker, I am aware that very few job opportunities exist in our smaller decentralized communities, and communities that do not have government foundations or

centres i.e. decentralized and non-decentralized communities had visible differences during the imposed measures of the pandemic. It became obvious when GN workers were able to work from home.

Our own Assembly, that winter, also had a session deferred as many employees were unable to work during the pandemic. Now, in saying that, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to provide more examples, as even past this event, my constituents and communities are still dealing with the lack of job opportunities, and I want to know if the positions can be distributed more equitably so I will look for those opportunities in this Assembly so that will be my goal.

As I stated earlier, the pandemic measures we faced ensured many workers were able to continue working at home, and a policy was enacted to allow for this possibility where public servants could continue to work remotely from their homes. This meant many people worked at home for many months while we tried to overcome this so-called pandemic.

In saying that, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to raise my queries in light of the potential benefits that can accrue to our people and employees, especially for positions where we have had difficulty in filling, and vacant positions so that our workforce is a more complete force that can meet the needs that we, the politicians can work towards.

There are many opportunities we can all create throughout Nunavut if we work hard, and Mr. Speaker, our territory of Nunavut is fairly large, and I hope that

all communities in our territory in Nunavut, all 25 communities can all tangibly benefit from our budgets. While saying that, I will continue to ask questions about these issues to the appropriate minister responsible for employment measures to determine if the policy allowing remote work is still in effect, which the Department of Health enacted previously for this matter.

I will be asking about that issue when the oral questions item is reached. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Member's Statement 050 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride Month**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand with our colleague, the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa. I would like to thank her for her display of strength and courage and always speaking for what is right.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, as well as our Premier for marking a historic moment in our Legislative Assembly's history and the first-ever raising of the Pride flag.

Mr. Speaker, I wear my pin with pride and I support our vibrant 2SLGBTQ+ community here in Iqaluit as well as in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, it was not too distant in Canadian history where non-heterosexual relationships were illegal and it was only as recent as 2005 that same-sex marriage was legalized.



Mr. Speaker, we are living in changing times, but there are still many in Nunavut who are still facing discrimination and prejudice. However, I am so proud and happy to see that our youth are living in a more progressive manner.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, we are living in changing times and I'm very happy to see and comforted in the thought of what the Nunavut of tomorrow will hold as our youth are definitely leading the way, and I am confident that our future will hold [fewer] Nunavummiut who are facing such hate, discrimination, and prejudice in their lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Member's Statement 051 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride Month**

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok** (interpretation):  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to recognize celebrations in my community for Pride Month.

Like many of my colleagues here, I am wearing, very proudly, this pin to show my support to Nunavut's two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and intersex community.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I had such an honour to join from Iqaluit-Sinaa the raising of the Pride flag right here in this legislature in the parking lot with all our colleagues here. (interpretation) I was

filled with a lot of pride during that event.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, pride has grown into an empowering international celebration recognized around the world. It is a vital celebration of support for the 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize students at the Iqaluit Inuksuk High School, Aqsarniit Middle School, as well as Joamie School for organizing Pride Week activities this week, including a very important Pride Walk scheduled for tomorrow.

I am extremely proud of these students for organizing to commemorate pride. Celebrating inclusion and diversity in our communities makes us a stronger territory. These young people are showing real leadership of how to build inclusive communities where every kind of love and family is valued.

Mr. Speaker, to all Nunavummiut, happy Pride. I hope you all take the time to celebrate with family and community and friends. Showing our solidarity truly matters. Standing up for our 2LGBTQI+ communities matters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

**Member's Statement 052 – 6(2):  
Joshua Qaunaq Achieves Red Seal**

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation):  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to

express my pride. First of all, let me say happy Pride Month.

We have just heard recently of students completing their high school. With that, we have graduates too at Arctic College that I would like to mention. For the past four years as a student, he has just completed his program on oil burner mechanic, a trade, and because he had completed the course, he will now be able to work in any trade in the area and I encourage everyone to continue their education. I hope that those who want to pursue their education think of others while completing.

Joshua Qaunaq just received his Red Seal and I am proud with him and I ask you to join me in congratulating this individual. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

**Member's Statement 053 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride Month**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut, colleagues, and Iqaluktuuttiarmiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as we celebrate Pride Month to acknowledge the wonderful work that has been going on in Cambridge Bay over the last 13 years with the Rainbow Army.

Mr. Speaker, the Rainbow Army was started by a long-time teacher, Beth Sampson. Ms. Sampson is currently on education leave to pursue her Master's in Education, focusing on further support for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to highlight the amazing work that's happening in Cambridge Bay and thank those involved in creating a safe, inclusive space for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

The gatherings of the Rainbow Army allow our youth in the community to hang out and educate others on the 2SLGBTQ+ and further support those who want to talk, learn more, and create space for those to come out safely and further support those who are "out."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to highlight inclusivity and I commend those that are working diligently to be there as allies and as support for our 2SLGBTQ+.

With time, more of our community members have been able to feel safe, loved, and can truly be themselves. Happy Pride, Nunavummiut. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

**Member's Statement 054 – 6(2):  
Celebrating Pride Month**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People in Whale Cove and Arviat, have a good day.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I agree and support the LGBTQ community. Mr. Speaker, having spoken with young people, they have helped me understand that some people become very intimidated and become embarrassed to tell people who they are. It's because

they are both male and female. Because of that, it's not right to criticize that.

I represent young people. I only have two things to say to you. First of all, let everyone know that you are loved and this love and your sexuality are okay. No matter how you are, you are loved. That is what I wanted to say to young people. The other one, even if you're going through hardships today, things will improve in the coming days and it will not always be hard. Even though it feels like you're going to be going through hardship all your life, it does not work that way. It gets better eventually and this hardship will pass.

Mr. Speaker, for young people, especially this month of recognition, Pride Month, I want the young people that I represent to remember that they are loved and things will improve, things get better, and please don't give up; people love you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. I have no more names. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

#### **Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**

##### **Return to Oral Question 045 – 6(2): Animals Purchased by Kivalliq Arctic Foods**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to oral question No. 45 – 6(2).

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on May 27, 2022. The Member for Arviat South requested information on animals purchased by Kivalliq Arctic Foods.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify the Kivalliq Arctic Foods does not employ harvesters. The business purchases meat from the harvesters directly and compensates them for the weight of their catch. Due to the extended COVID lockdowns, we did not purchase any caribou from Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, in 2020-21, Kivalliq Arctic Foods purchased 883 caribou, totalling 85,301 lbs. from 64 harvesters of the 64 harvesters broken down by community:

- 58 were from Rankin (802 caribou/77,412 lbs.)
- 3 from Chesterfield Inlet (46 caribou/3,901 lbs.)
- 2 from Whale Cove (31 caribou/2,633 lbs.)
- 1 from (interpretation ends) Baker Lake (4 caribou/355 lbs.)

(interpretation) In 2020-21, Kivalliq Arctic Foods purchased 33 muskox, totalling 7,757 lbs. from 15 harvesters of the 15 harvesters broken down by community:

- 14 were from Rankin (30 muskox/7,151.4 lbs.)
- 1 from Baker Lake (3 muskox/606 lbs.)

Mr. Speaker, there is no maximum set amount of caribou meat purchased per community. However, Kivalliq Arctic Foods uses their judgment and catch as close to what is suggested by the hunters

and trappers organizations. Harvesters are required to provide their NTI Beneficiary Number at the time of purchase. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize some constituents who I want everyone here to welcome, so please warmly welcome these individuals who consist of, my sister-in-law, Daisy Arnaquq, who is my brother Billy's wife, and also Ena Qarpik, who also resides in our community, welcome to the House.

>> *Applause*

Also, I call her Dr. Aloo'oo's wife, Jonas' wife Meena who is a resident of Iqaluit who provides much needed assistance here when I require assistance, and I wanted to take the time to acknowledge them while they are visiting in the gallery, so please welcome them as that is why I rose to recognize them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Thank you. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

### **Item 6: Oral Questions**

### **Question 073 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity in Nunavut**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement I addressed the government's *Katujjiluta* mandate priority of "Aging with dignity in Nunavut."

Can the minister clearly explain why the concept of establishing elder care facilities in Nunavut's smaller communities is not supported by this government, despite its mandate priority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for asking a question on that issue. Earlier when he made a statement during his member's statement, his words were quite powerful, especially with the importance the member places on this issue.

I know for a fact that many of us here in the House were partially moved to assist our elders by speaking for them, by asking for more qualitative services and we agree on many issues related to common concerns. However, there is usually a gap we must deal with such as how, where and when these matters will be dealt with by our Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, there are many issues we must deal with on an urgent basis within Nunavut, and elders' care is one of the many pressing issues we must resolve, as this also includes more initiatives for

our youth, health care, education, family services just to name a few where we must make improvements.

Now, it is due to these important matters that we had to come up with a mandate to deal with all of these shortcomings and interests members share, and we cannot handle all of them separately. This is why it is important to prioritize some of the details listed in our mandate, yes, there are certain issues clearly outlined, specifically two facilities that are to be constructed, one here in Iqaluit, and another to be built in Cambridge Bay.

Nonetheless, it includes the need to have concrete plans to meet the needs as this too is written as a requirement. We need to make plans mainly for facilities, and the main reasoning is because we need to look at a long-term strategy perhaps over the next 20 years, as to what facilities we can expect to see created and what types of facilities will we need over a long-term vision.

Mr. Speaker, we only get elected for four-year terms and due to the fact, there were no long-term plans in existence, many constituents requested that we provide longer term plans that would stand for many years and after the Fifth Assembly, we started making plans on what else we need in terms of elder facilities and envision future plans and facilities that could be added to the plans.

The two priorities that have been outlined will be the main priorities, but there will be other facilities that we may need to clarify as I cannot do that at this time. Where, when and how many facilities for our elders will we be

creating to serve our elders in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the government's statement, "We will bring them home," when it comes to bringing elders home to Nunavut, and I understand that when there is space in a facility in Nunavut, elders can move there to receive care.

The problem is that most Nunavut communities do not have an elder care facility, so our elders have to leave their homes to receive care, whether it is outside of their home community or outside of the territory.

Can the minister tell us what studies or evaluations have been done to determine what elder care options could be considered for Nunavut's smaller communities outside of the regional centres? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In the last government there was a lot of work that was done in terms of planning for facilities, in terms of evaluating the needs. Unfortunately none of that work has been made public as of yet. It is something that we are looking at in terms of the Department of Health, in terms of what we can share in the interest of transparency and also in the interest of advancing or continuing the very important conversation within Nunavut about elders and how we care for them. It's not just about the long-

term care facilities. It also extends into housing. It extends into income support.

I apologize to the member; I'll get to answer his question. In terms of the reports that were produced on the needs, there was a large amount of work which was done by Partnerships BC, which is an organization that was contracted by the government of the day. In terms of the work that they did, they conducted interviews, they completed a market sounding, and they presented a number of options to the cabinet of the day in terms of different facilities and the needs. There was some work done; it was largely done by Partnerships BC on the project on the topic of elder care in the last government. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate that the amount of funding for capital projects is limited and in the current economic climate, the challenges are many. I further recognize that funding for operational requirements must be carefully planned for long-term sustainability.

Mr. Speaker, however, I also believe that there are many benefits to investing our resources at the local level. I believe in smaller scale projects that take into consideration the wants and needs of the community, keeping families close and providing options for care and local employment.

Will the minister commit to working with his cabinet colleagues to explore options for establishing community-

based elder care and reporting back to this House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It seems like every time I face a question, Mr. Speaker, as a third question, I'm asked for a commitment. I'm not sure if it's just to me or if it's something I'm noticing lately.

**An Hon. Member:** Just to you.

>> *Laughter*

**Hon. John Main:** I would like to commit to that discussion that I'm not going to and the reason being that I feel and I believe that the objectives we have laid out in the mandate are the best way to address this issue and that's in terms of the Department of EIA leading the development of a comprehensive elders' care strategy which doesn't just look at the long-term care aspect. It also looks at housing, it also looks at support for families, and it looks at many different aspects of this issue.

If I was to accept or commit to this and go with my cabinet colleagues and have a discussion, I feel that there are a lot more people; there are a lot more organizations that need to be part of that discussion, and that is precisely what we are aiming to do by committing to develop this strategy. There will be opportunities for community organizations, for elders themselves, for elders' families to participate and to tell us what specifically they are looking for. So I don't want to commit to that along the lines of the member's question, but I do appreciate his interest and his

passion, and I remain open to the opinions and the views on this very important subject from all members of this Assembly. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 074 – 6(2): Housing Construction Tender Process**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and I can assure you that I have always been commitment-phobic, so I won't ask you for one today.

Mr. Speaker, there has been extensive discussion in this House during our current spring sitting concerning the issue of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's contracting and tendering process for major construction projects.

As the minister is undoubtedly aware, CBC News has recently published an in-depth investigative report concerning the corporation's unsuccessful tendering process last year for new housing units in Iqaluit, Pangnirtung and Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's important to give the minister the opportunity to clear the air about some of the issues raised in the news report. I do recognize that he was not the minister at the time when the tenders were issued, but he's in the hot seat now to answer questions about the situation.

Mr. Speaker, the central issue in the news report was that unreasonable delays on the part of the Nunavut Housing Corporation were the root cause

of the tenders being cancelled. For the record, is there any validity to this concern? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. Mr. Speaker, there are often many reasons for cancelling tenders and one has to realize that there are many factors; price being the major factor in cancelling these contracts.

Mr. Speaker, one has to realize that there are things called due and normal process, where it takes two to three weeks during a normal time, but when these contracts were cancelled, you have to realize and think back that it was during COVID when times were absolutely different.

We had people that could not come to work, we had people who had to work from home, we had people who were not able to work because of COVID, and these are not excuses. They are actually varied reasons why we were going through not normal times and these were not typical contracting times. They were trying, but cost was the primary factor. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

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

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I noted in my questions to the Premier earlier this week, I was proud to have contributed to the City of Iqaluit's efforts to obtain federal investments for new housing under the Rapid Housing Initiative.

As the minister will understand and appreciate, I am one of the many Members of this House who is deeply concerned that these types of investments will be meaningless if we can't follow through and actually build units.

I'm not an expert on the intricacies of bid bonds and other financial instruments, and thankfully the minister has this expertise at his disposal in the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Can the minister indicate what specific improvements to the procurement and tendering process are being implemented as a result of the lessons learned from the 2021 tender situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that with every tendering process there are lessons to be learned, but in this case, Mr. Speaker, it's just that I can't get into all the things you learn over the years from tendering processes, but some of things that were commented in the investigative journalism, if you can call it that, were just not based on fact.

For example, in the comments it said that in speaking with one of the members, one of the workers of the tender that quote their contract that in fact the company did not ask for their tender to be removed, Mr. Speaker. I've seen and I have a letter from the owner of the company asking that they move forward from these tenders by the contractor due to grossly underestimated

costs for the projects that this company had bid on. That came from the company.

With respect to the company, they withdrew those bids, Mr. Speaker. That was part of the story in that, but in terms of lessons learned; maybe more patience and look at ways to improve the whole tendering process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just on that issue, as the minister will recall, he personally signed correspondence to the Information and Privacy Commissioner on March 18 of this year in response to the recommendations that were made by the commissioner concerning the appeal that CBC News made to his office in respect to information that had been requested from the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

I believe you're touching on this a little bit. In his letter to the commissioner, the minister wrote that, "NHC rejects, in part, your recommendations in paragraph 90 relating to the NHC's exercise of statutory discretion."

For the record, can the minister provide a clear explanation for why he believed that the commissioner's recommendations should not have been followed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be more than happy to



clarify that situation at an appropriate time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Question 075 – 6(2): Housing Construction Tender Process**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and I thank my colleague for asking questions as well.

Mr. Speaker, I want to revisit the issue of the cancelled public housing tenders for Taloyoak.

During Monday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, my colleague from Arviat South asked questions to the Minister of Community and Government Services concerning the government's threshold for cancelling construction tenders for capital projects when bids come in too high.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, does the Nunavut Housing Corporation have its own criteria when housing tenders need to be cancelled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Nunavut Housing Corporation puts out a tender for construction, we work off of a budget and if the tenders are coming in a lot higher than what we have budgeted for, we don't have very many options other than to cancel, in this particular case,

cancel projects because we don't have the money to go through with the tender, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For clarification to my constituents, Mr. Speaker, as the minister will understand, my constituents are very disappointed that housing tenders have been cancelled for two years in a row. It's been seven that we've never have had housing built in Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, can the minister clarify the extent to which the bids received for the most recent tender exceeded the Nunavut Housing Corporation's budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the tenders come higher than the budgets, we have to make some very tough decisions, and it's not to say that if we cancel the construction or building of houses in a particular community; in this case, Taloyoak, it doesn't mean that we will not be building houses there anymore. Our department at the Nunavut Housing Corporation is currently working to see how we could address the housing shortage across Nunavut and how we could go back to these communities where the construction has been cancelled to see how we can continue with going forward with it in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, for clarification to my constituents; Mr. Speaker, it is not clear to me who has the final authority to cancel housing tenders.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, can the minister clarify who makes the final decision about whether or not a housing tender should be cancelled: is it the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the minister, the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the cabinet or the Financial Management Board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be more than happy to provide that detail of information. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

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

### **Question 076 – 6(2): Seniors' Support Handbook**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Seniors. In March of this year I had asked the minister questions on the Government of Nunavut's *Seniors' Information Handbook*, and I'm sure the minister has made time since then to read this important resource. My first question to the minister: does the minister have any initial positions on the

locations or lead departments on any senior programs or services the government supports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for that question. This was one of the objectives to provide services for the elders. We will do a review again, working with the Department of EIA, so that they will be properly written. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize that the government is planning to do a senior strategy. This is more of a resource of information for seniors that I'm asking about.

Mr. Speaker, also back in March, the minister committed to doing a review of this handbook. Can the minister update the House on the progress of that review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your question. To clarify here, as the Department of Culture and Heritage, the materials that have been published are continually being reviewed by staff and there are also changes in staffing that has impacted areas where publications have not been completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question: has the minister had the opportunity to evaluate access to this handbook since it was provided and have there been any additional organizations or locations identified to support and improve access to this important resource? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Quassa.

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The handbook is continually being drafted. We are short staffed, but we have delegated on the collection that may be necessary and the availability of what has already been published where the elders can have access. They are being continually reviewed on where the content may be made and for various reasons, it has not been made readily available, but they are being updated and to ensure no mistakes are made. Once they are made available, we have community liaison officers that will have them available for distribution to our elders once the handbook is completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 077 – 6(2): Search and Rescue**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my constituents in Coral Harbour and Naujaat, as well as my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Premier of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) As the Premier will recall, I asked a number of questions during the recent winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning the important issue of search and rescue.

In the Premier's statement on Monday, the Premier indicated that he and the other territorial premiers from the Yukon and the Northwest Territories recently discussed arctic security and sovereignty concerns with the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence.

Can the Premier update the House on what specific commitments were made by the federal government to enhance search and rescue capacity in Nunavut and the north? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for raising the question on search and rescue, which are vital for our communities and they have a lot of responsibilities, having been a part of search and rescue personally. The federal government has not responded to date on the discussions we raised and we hope and we are eager for Minister Anand's visit to Nunavut that she committed to and we have identified search and rescue to her and how we can provide more support. That's what I can confirm to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

for clarifying this. (interpretation ends) It is being reported that a major search and rescue exercise is taking place this week near the communities of Pond Inlet, Resolute Bay, and Sanirajak. I am pleased to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all members of the Armed Forces and community volunteers.

During the recent winter sitting, I raised the issue of having search and rescue aircraft based permanently at a central location in Nunavut.

Can the Premier confirm whether or not he raised this issue during his recent meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for calling you *iksivautaq*. Again I want to thank my colleague for that very important question. I, too, commend the incredible work that's taking place in those three communities. I think we know the importance of knowing the environment and the importance of the knowledge especially Nunavummiut have in these searches. We are very thankful that the exercises are taking place and the training is taking place in those three communities.

We very much look forward to working with my colleague here, the Minister of CGS, who looks at community preparedness. I am working very closely with Minister Joanasie here on this very important topic and I'll continue to advocate for more resources for our communities to be better prepared.

We all understand that every minute matters and those minutes save lives. With that in mind and I know the recent winter search that happened in his community, so we are there and we will always continue to advocate at every opportunity when I do speak with the Prime Minister as well as Minister of National Defence. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for advocating in this area, Premier. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, Canada and seven other Arctic Council member states signed an arctic search and rescue agreement in May 2011.

In light of the current situation in Europe and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, can the Premier clarify if any changes to this agreement are being looked at? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will follow up on the member's question. I don't have the specific details at the moment, but I commit to getting back to him at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 078 – 6(2): Clarification on Date of Awareness of Conflict of Interest**

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier some questions too. I have some questions to ask on the integrity report that was issued through this Assembly back in March 2022 regarding the Minister of Human Resources and conflict of interest.

Mr. Speaker, on March 7, when the Premier was being questioned by me and Mr. Hickes, on three occasions, he says that no policies were broken in terms of deputy minister appointments, and then the next day on March 8, there was a return to oral and in his return to oral it says, “I would like to confirm that I did not endorse the acting assignment in question.” That’s fine. “When I learned of the potential appearance of conflict of interest, I took steps to ensure that the acting assignment was retracted.” That was on December 21, 2021.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, what date did the Premier become aware that there was a conflict of interest with the Minister of Human Resources and one of the directors? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague for asking that question. Mr. Speaker, this government continues to be committed to operating in an open and

transparent manner. As such, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Integrity Commissioner’s incredible work in terms of looking into the very serious situation and her expediency in terms of coming to the report.

I would like to mention as well that we did share every material that relates to this concern to the Integrity Commissioner, and everything is there. I am very pleased that this House approved so that my statements on that matter are in that report as such. Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) thank you.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn’t receive an answer whatsoever to my question. I asked the Premier: what date the Premier become aware of that there was a potential conflict of interest between the Minister of HR and one of the directors? Was it the date that he made the acting assignment retracted? Was it before that? The Premier must recall when he was aware that there was a potential conflict. I ask the Premier again: what date was the Premier aware that there was a conflict between the Minister of HR and one of the directors? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to thank my colleague. He is right, I did take immediate action as soon as I was made aware, which I shared with the Integrity Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker, it was the dates right there in the report that we all had the pleasure of looking through. As well, I'm sure the member across read as well in great detail. So any information pertaining to the situation that was there was shared with the Integrity Commissioner. So the date is there, and as such, I can confirm in terms of the immediate action we have since taken.

I again would like to thank the Integrity Commissioner as work on this very important issue to address any concerns that were flagged throughout the process directly in the procedural manual, and such, I have directed my officials, as well as made it clear to my colleagues here in terms of the process to ensure that we continue to strengthen the processes that are there to eliminate any possibility of threats that we have experienced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for saying that he was made aware of it when he made the decisions on December 21, 2021. The reason of the date is vital here because the integrity in this House should be maintained and there should be no question of what is said here. Everything said here is recorded in the *Hansard* for everyone to read.

I'm going to read from the Integrity Commissioner's report. "Minister Lightstone advised that he had casual discussions with the Premier prior to the Leadership Forum at which time he indicated his areas of strengths and weaknesses, past relevant work experience and those portfolios which

would most align with his experience and skills... . He also indicated that he made the Premier aware of the employment of his (Minister Lightstone's) spouse." It says here, "prior to the Leadership Form."

In his defence, there are some discrepancies between the recollection of Minister Lightstone and the Premier on this issue. There is ambiguity there on where what was said. I will just leave that as a comment.

My other question is, this was an issue and the Premier did acknowledge that it was such a serious issue that he referred it to the Integrity Commissioner, and the Integrity Commissioner did the report, and I thank the Integrity Commissioner for the report too. I would like to ask the Premier why it took three months from the day that the retraction of appointment was made until the issue was given to the Integrity Commissioner. It was three months there. Why did it take three months before the Premier referred the matter to the Integrity Commissioner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank my member colleague for asking that question. Mr. Speaker, the procedural manual is clear that any acting assignment is the responsibility of the ministers, and as such, when I was made aware, I did act immediately and I would still act immediately if I was made aware sooner as well. That wouldn't have changed.

With the information that was provided to me at the time, I did act and I was made aware of the acting assignment being decided upon. Since then, as I stated before, we have, with the assistance of the Integrity Commissioner, bolstered the acting assignment and I have since sent directives my member colleagues here in cabinet, but also to our senior officials to ensure that there is the long-standing issue that surrounds the acting assignment and has been rectified since then. We have that with utmost importance in terms of strengthening the system with relation to what was noted in the Integrity Commissioner's report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**An Hon. Member:** A point of order.

**Speaker:** Member Hickes, what is your point of order and what rule has been broken? Mr. Hickes.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm duty bound to make this point of order. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is misleading the House. I too, had to respond to the Integrity Commissioner's investigation and had to submit an email that I had sent to the Premier on December 12 outlining my concern of the conflict of interest with the minister responsible for a department having a spouse at a director-level position and that I had a constituent with an HR matter that I couldn't send to the minister as the spouse was directly related to the constituent's concerns. I sent it to the Premier's Office, outlining

clearly that there was a conflict of interest and I'm not sure why that didn't come up just now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Sorry for the delay. I cannot make any ruling at this point because we haven't seen the document to view. At this time we cannot make any ruling on the point of order. Thank you.

Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

### Question 079 – 6(2): Government Employees Working Remotely

**Mr. Kaernerck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not ready to speak after the Kugluktuk MLA was up, but thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I am stating in my member's statement that I was going to direct my question to the human resources minister with regard to government employees remotely working.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the Minister of Health has noted that "COVID-19 virus is here to stay," and I quote that, and we have learned to live with that indeed, as the Legislative Assembly has come together for the spring sitting and we have travelled from our communities, and when there were travel restrictions happening and the government employees were remotely working, here we are sitting.

In saying that, even though the pandemic crisis is over and most Nunavummiut are vaccinated and are taking precautions like wearing masks, it seems that the government workers are still working remotely. In saying that, Mr. Speaker,

can the Minister of Human Resources provide an update on the government's current policy with respect to remote working? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the question was directed to Human Resources. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. What you're saying is correct. After the pandemic, many government workers had to work at home remotely. There are only a few of them that are still doing that, from my understanding, and we don't encourage having to work at home because they are now able to go back and work in the offices. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for explaining that. Yes, that's the way it is. I would like to ask this question now to the minister. The minister stated about the positions available from the government. I was asking how they can be expanded more into the communities in my member's statement.

Now, we're all aware here today that we run by computers. The government computers, community computers, and

Sanirajak computers can reach Iqaluit computers right away. That's just an example. After stating that, positions in Iqaluit can't be filled, so what kinds of plans has the Department of Human Resources made to see if they can spread those jobs into the communities? They can work by computer connections and the government is getting away from remote working, apparently.

The question I have is, I'm sure things ran smoothly when the workers worked at home, all the payments that need to be made, all the income support that needed to be paid, I guess everything all ran well when your workers were in their homes. I would like to ask the minister: can the minister provide an update to the House as to how many GN employees are currently working remotely from within the territory? Are there any numbers? How many of them are working from outside of the territory for the Nunavut government? How many are working remotely from home and how many are working from outside of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking more questions about that matter. I would like to address the first question as to how we can create more jobs in the communities as the Department of Human Resources. The government departments, for example, the departments of Health and Economic Development are involved in creating positions within the government. It's not just the human resource department that does that. We work together to do those.



We're always talking about what you're asking during our meetings.

As to how many employees are still working at home, I don't have that figure in front of me, but I can imagine what kinds of jobs they would have. It would be like health department staff doing Zoom calls by computer to communities. As to how many are still working at home, I don't have that figure right now, but I can produce that once I get it. As I just stated, with the pandemic that we went through, there were many people who were not allowed to go to work in the offices; they had to work at home.

Many government employees...because we've had more equipment available like masks to keep us safe, that's how things have been running since April. As we are starting to go back to what was normal and the restrictions are being removed, if an employee gets sick, they will have to fill out leave forms. They always have to fill out leave forms and that's being used today, but I can't provide the numbers that he is asking for right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kaernerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was rethinking my question because I didn't hear any numbers. There is really no supporting document. What I would like to say or ask the minister is what I was trying to ask. It was responded to a little bit. Let me say this from my mind.

The communities that are non-decentralized, that don't have any government jobs given to them, you all know that I represent two communities,

Mr. Speaker, part of Igloolik and all of Sanirajak. Igloolik is a decentralized community. The departments of Finance and Culture and Heritage are there. As I mentioned those, there are hardly any jobs available in the two communities that I represent, especially in Sanirajak.

As I stated that, looking at Sanirajak and Igloolik, will the minister commit to reviewing and evaluating which government jobs can be performed remotely in the communities, even though the pandemic is over, to allow more Nunavummiut to be employed and work from their home communities?

Can the minister tell the House what other planning the government can do about dividing up the positions more into the communities, including the positions that are available right now? Can the minister explain to us what the Department of HR has done? Have there been any reviews to see if they can be spread around the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking more questions on the matter. As I stated earlier, the Department of Human Resources works with other government departments to see how jobs can be spread to the communities. We don't want to keep adding more jobs to the larger communities when there is such a lack of jobs in the smaller communities.

We're always looking at that and we're also looking at how things can run better. We don't want the jobs to be

moved out of the smaller communities. There are many casual workers and that is always being reviewed as well. Quite a lot of them were turned into indeterminate positions and they created 120 new positions after that. We're always making different considerations like that. That's all I can say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**Question 080 – 6(2): Caribou Management in the Kitikmeot**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Environment and they concern the issue of caribou management in the Kitikmeot region.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be meeting here in Iqaluit later this month. One of the agenda items for the meeting is a proposal by the federal Department of Environment to change the status of the Dolphin and Union from “special concern” to “endangered” under the *Species at Risk Act*.

For the record, does the Government of Nunavut support this proposal, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's going to go before the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and I'm sure that we do have a position in terms of this for being listed as

endangered. Typically for caribou, we don't normally support when they're trying to be listed as endangered because our management plans are the ones that do work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, I asked him questions earlier this year during our winter sitting concerning the issue of wolf predation. At that time the minister indicated that he was considering an increase to the amount paid to harvesters under the Wolf Sample Program. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm prepared to be responding to the two HTOs that have requested this and it's very soon that I could be responding regarding that. I do have a meeting planned with the NWT and our stakeholders right after this session, and that was my aim in terms of providing a response regarding the wolf incentive program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) *Quana* in terms of the response. Can the minister confirm when the next population abundance survey for the Dolphin and Union caribou herd will be

undertaken by his department?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr.  
David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr.  
Speaker. The preliminary report of the  
summaries of the finding is for fall 2022  
and following that...oh, I'm sorry; I'm  
in the wrong... (interpretation) I  
apologize. (interpretation ends) I gave  
you the wrong caribou herd survey.

As it is very recent, as recent as  
December 2021, I don't have a date in  
terms of when the next survey is, but  
when there are areas of concern,  
typically when we do composite surveys,  
those might be taking place. At this point  
I don't have a date in terms of when the  
next survey is. Typically it takes a while  
for us to do the surveys because of the  
number of herds that we manage. Thank  
you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. I have no  
more names. Member for Amittuq, Mr.  
Kaernerck.

**Question 081 – 6(2): Marine  
Infrastructure for Sanirajak**

**Mr. Kaernerck:** Thank you, Mr.  
Speaker. I recognize Megan.  
(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I would  
like to direct my question to the Minister  
of Economic Development.

We have been requesting a breakwater  
for Sanirajak for quite a while now. I  
would like to indicate that the Hamlet of  
Sanirajak conducted research and also  
invited engineers to look at where we  
can build that breakwater. The work has

been initiated by the Hamlet of Sanirajak  
as to where that location would be.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the  
minister if he has received a copy of the  
report of the study that was conducted in  
Sanirajak. Can the minister indicate if he  
has received a copy of the report of  
December 2021? Thank you, Mr.  
Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation):  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We haven't  
received a copy of the report yet, but we  
are looking forward to seeing it. We  
provided \$66,000 to the Hamlet of  
Sanirajak because they will have to  
submit a report. Thank you, Mr.  
Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank  
you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I look forward to  
your response. Since the study was  
initiated in the summer of last year, once  
you have received a copy of the report,  
would you include that in the capital  
estimates so that we can start working on  
building the breakwater for 2024-25?  
Would you support the report based on  
the findings that were identified? I  
would like to see you support that  
project. Would the minister indicate if he  
would support the building of the  
breakwater in Sanirajak? Thank you, Mr.  
Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have to review our priorities and we also asked for federal funds to initiate those types of projects. I am very pleased that this was initiated by the community of Sanirajak and it will be of great support to your proposal. We can also include it in our request for funds from the federal government.

I look forward to getting a copy of the report, but I can't say right now that it would be a go-ahead. We have to go through the federal government via the Department of Fisheries and Oceans or Transport Canada, depending on the size of the project that's being initiated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kaernerk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year the previous Minister of Economic Development made a report to the committee and he indicated that there was \$500,000 that was available for marine infrastructure. Again, for the community of Igloolik, if there are monies available for small craft harbours or breakwaters or possibly piers, I would like to know from the minister if there are monies available for those types of projects. I believe it was \$500,000 and correct me if I'm wrong. I wanted those two communities to be on the priority list. Would you support them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the

member for his question. There is \$500,000 and there is an additional \$1 million. The \$96,000 that you're referring to was included. The deadline will be June 7, 2022 for submitting requests or proposals. It's still open, so please urge your communities to submit their proposals so that they can access the funds that are being made available for marine infrastructure. I urge the communities to submit their proposals and we look forward to seeing many proposals coming to our department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Question 082 – 6(2): Awareness and the Timing of Conflict of Interest**

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to question the Premier one more time as I never got an answer to my question about why the Premier waited almost three months before the matter, the investigation of the Integrity Commissioner...it was not given to the Integrity Commissioner. The Premier said on December 21, he made corrections. On March 8 he informed the House here that the matter was going to be turned over to the Integrity Commissioner.

I'll try one more time, Mr. Speaker. Why did the Premier wait almost three months before the matter was referred to the Integrity Commissioner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my

colleague for asking the question. I submitted everything to the Integrity Commissioner and gave her a full briefing. I wouldn't have made any changes to date, but when I was asked a question in the House, I wanted to submit it right away to the commissioner. When I was asked that question in the House, from there, I have had dialogue with the commissioner and gave her all the documents that were required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the record, then, if I understood the Premier, it was not a serious issue at the time when he made the alterations for the acting deputy minister. It only became a serious issue when there were questions in the House. Did I understand the Premier correctly that it was not an issue until it was raised in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were very open with the Integrity Commissioner and there were still some adjustments that we had to make at that time. I made a decision at that time. It was important right from the beginning, as soon as we were asked questions. We had to go through the Integrity Commissioner and I'm very pleased that corrections were made after the review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to be stuck here, but I'm just having a hard time understanding, Mr. Speaker. The Premier said it was serious issue and that's why it went before the Integrity Commissioner, but it was not brought to the Integrity Commissioner until it was being questioned in the House. I'm not sure why it took that long. Is it a coincidence that it became a serious issue only because it was questioned in the House?

**An Hon. Member:** A point of order.

**Speaker:** There is a point of order. Mr. Main. What is your point of order?

#### Point of Order

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The member is being overly repetitive. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is just trying to get answers to his questions, so you will continue, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Speaker is correct; when a person doesn't receive answers, it makes you want the answers more. People deserve to get answers, even if it's not the one you want to hear from an answer, as long as it's a truthful answer.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Premier again: why did the Premier not take this matter before the Integrity Commissioner until it was raised in the House?

**An Hon. Member:** That is not the Integrity Commissioner's role.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague. This is a very important issue. I put a stop to this when it surfaced and I thought I had made a decision immediately and I would not change if that occurred again today. When this was asked, we reviewed it again and that was when I turned to the Integrity Commissioner and his reports have been moving forward since.

At the time when this was on my table, I made a decision and when it was raised in this House and the importance of it, I reviewed it again and handed it over to the Integrity Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. I have no more names.

Thank you for being patient. I have no more names. I would now consider additional questions from the member as being repetitive. Oral Questions. I have no more names. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills.

My apologies to the members. I guess I was reading too fast. Going back to Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

## **Item 14: Tabling of Documents**

### **Tabled Document 022 – 6(2): Correspondence with Premier Regarding Conflict of Interest**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my point of order earlier this afternoon, I would like to table an email exchange that I had with the Premier dated December 12, 2021, starting at 1:22 in the afternoon. The content of the email isn't of matter to this issue, so the copy is heavily redacted. If the Speaker does wish that we need to sit down with him and go over the actual content of the email, I am willing to do that.

I did submit this information to the Integrity Commissioner for her report, upon advice from the privacy commissioner on what I could and couldn't share. I'll just read the introduction of the email, Mr. Speaker.

“Good afternoon, Premier. As Minister Lightstone's wife is involved in this issue, it would be a clear conflict for him to be involved. I trust your office will look into the concerns outlined below and address appropriately. Please let me know when an employee has been contacted so I can follow up with them.”

The response I got from the Premier, “Ullukkut, George. Thank you for sharing these personal and confidential information involving [blank]. Before I sent this for review, can you confirm whether a disclosure form has been completed? Once we get the disclosure form completed, a review on this file can commence. Nakurmiik. P.J.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. Item 18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 1 and 2 with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

Thank you. I am placing an embargo on our tabled documents for now on Mr. Hickes. Thank you.

Item 18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 1 and 2 with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:46 and Committee resumed at 16:12*

**Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters**

**Chairman** (Mr. Savikataaq): Thank you. I thank everyone to...sorry. I thank everyone here. I would like to continue our committee meeting on the Department of Health. I would like to ask the... . In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 1 and Bill 2. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the 2022-23 main estimates and ask questions to the Minister of Health and, if we conclude

that department, we will ask questions to the Minister of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are we in agreement to deal with Bill 1?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – Health – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman:** I would like to ask the minister: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before us?

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, yes. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** I don't think we need an introduction because it has already been done. Just hang on. Alright, sorry about that. For the record, you do have to reintroduce your guests there. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have with me today, Director of Corporate Services Greg Babstock and Director of Policy and Planning Linnea Ingebrigtsen, and Mr. Chairman, I also have a few follow-up items for the committee, if you will allow, but I'll go back to you first. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Okay. We're still on page H-4 for the Department of Health. I'm going to use my discretion as Chairman to have just the last person on this list, which would be Ms. Brewster. She starts once you have done your additions there, and then we will deal with H-5, Public Health. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me this opportunity. (interpretation ends) I would like to take the opportunity to respond to a few questions I received from my colleagues yesterday on a few different topics.

First, on direct appointments, I would like to make a correction on the number of direct appoints for 2021-22. In 2021 there were 38 possible direct appointments identified. During that 2021-22, 17 were completed. So Health continues to review the CSA listing, casual staffing listings for potential direct appointments.

With regard to internal transfer assignments I was asked about the number of Inuit staff on internal transfer assignments. As of May 31, 2022, there are five Nunavut Inuit health staff on internal transfer assignments.

Regarding orientation for Health's virtual nurse practitioners; all virtual nurse practitioners on roster have previously worked in Nunavut. The training is different as they have already oriented to the Nunavut health system and completed cultural competency and privacy training modules during their previous in person practice.

The virtual nurse practitioner lead provides one-on-one orientation for virtual program logistics, protocols and tools. They also host group meetings to monitor the program and troubleshoot emerging issues. The nurse practitioner lead also provides training to the staff at health centres that support the virtual nurse practitioner program on the ground.

(interpretation) First of all, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) I was also asked about registration of virtual nurses. All nurses, regardless of where they are located while providing virtual services must be registered in Nunavut. This means that if a nurse is located in Alberta and provides virtual services to clients in Nunavut, they must be registered with the Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. If there is a practice complaint, it would be addressed to that organization.

That wraps up my follow-ups from yesterday. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I thank the minister for his updates and his additions, and we will continue. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to begin, and I just have a couple more questions, I'm curious why the deputy minister isn't appearing before us today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.



**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The deputy minister is currently out of territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to go back to your response yesterday about the COVID program sun-setting within the ADM operations division. I believe I've asked you already about evaluation of the impacts of COVID. I'm curious about whether there will be an evaluation of the risk management cycle, our preparedness, our crisis management, as well response and recovery related to COVID as it has meaningful impacts on population health as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If I understand the question correctly, it's regarding kind of lessons learned from COVID or things to... I mean, in terms of risk management and public health, maybe I'm not quite following the question. Maybe if I could ask the member to clarify a bit. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Can you clarify your question a bit more? Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster**: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I am curious about is when we look at COVID and the COVID response nationally and internationally, there are lessons to be

learned about the processes in place, the importance of data collection and being able demonstrate risks to population based on population health data a health jurisdiction might already have. There are risks related to preparedness in terms of human resources, as well as real resources, like infrastructure.

I know that last year, and we heard, I think it was just today that we heard again that a number of health centres are expected to go back into low staffing levels this summer. We're going to paramedics again in certain communities in order to respond to health emergencies. When we consider the impact of a pandemic or any other major health-related emergency, I think it is really important for us to not just rally to respond, but also to look at our responses and to look at the potential risks related to areas of need in relation to responding to a crisis like that.

I'm also, and I'm going to add now, I am also really interested in knowing whether or not the Department of Health is partnering with any researchers or researchers from within the Department of Health to look at exploring the impact of lockdowns on things like domestic violence, alcohol consumption, and the impact on youth, mental health. I think these are really important areas to look into; researching the impacts of, for example, these really important food security initiatives that took place.

It took a pandemic to feed Nunavut Inuit and though that funding wasn't territorial government funding, it was funding that was made available to Nunavut Inuit and others; all Nunavummiut, who are struggling with food insecurity and having an idea of

what the positive outcomes of those food security initiatives are extremely important, when it comes to working with our partners, be they federal, or Nunavut Inuit organizations in addressing food security.

There is a potential to create data related to the long-term impacts on peoples' health, and I think that establishing some baseline information and data on the impacts of those food security programs so that we can gauge how that impacts the health of the population so that we can look back ten years from now and say "hey we had a period of time where preschoolers, for example, is 70 percent of preschoolers are food insecure, so last year, how many preschoolers were food insecure much less, I would assume, based on those food insecurity programs." I think it's a really important data point in time to demonstrate why it is so important to address food insecurity and to gain better partnerships and better knowledge on that.

I apologize for the long explanation, but I'm interested in the departmental response as well as the impact on the health of Nunavut Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hopefully with the long clarification, the minister will be able to understand it now.

>> *Laughter*

Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So in terms of the question on research, I'll address that first. I think one of the

things that we learned in terms of the community supports that were provided, I think was the value of partnerships in terms of not just within the Nunavut government, but partnering with municipal organizations, with Inuit organizations. I think it really showed us that we can achieve in a short period of time when there is the will and when there is the focus.

When it comes to researching or looking back and seeing the benefits that flowed, in terms of food security, Health is leading any research studies, but there is one research project that is being spearheaded by Qaujigiartiit health research, or Qaujigiartiit. I can't remember the complete name. So our staff will be participating in that project. It is looking at the impact of COVID on communities and trying to understand the many different effects that were felt. So that is my answer on that question.

Sorry if it's not long enough.

>> *Laughter*

In terms of evaluating the government's actions, I think it is valuable for us to understand what worked well, what didn't work well. So the COVID Secretariat is looking at an evaluation of the actions that were taken and kind of a lessons learned type of lens. As the Department of Health we are also undertaking that type of internal exercise. The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer is preparing a report on the public health emergency. From the public health lens, we don't really have a firm timeline yet as to when we will be able to table that report. It is also something that is upcoming.

As well, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada has produced a report regarding vaccine management and distribution efforts focusing on indigenous communities. Sorry, they are working on it at the moment. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for that brief response. I think anybody who has knowledge the importance of research, follow back studies would agree that establishing that baseline information is really important.

Staying on the issue of the COVID response, I know that the impact on our isolation requirements... So dealing with isolation was a massive part of our COVID response. What I wonder as well, in the work that is being done to evaluate our COVID response by the public health officer, whether or not there will be just some kind of work being done to look at the impacts that the isolation programs had on individuals and related to what I said about domestic violence, mental health, alcohol consumption, as well as really importantly, the impact on peoples' feelings about the healthcare system because I know that there were a number of people who expressed a great deal of concern about having to isolate and how that impacted their mental health.

We know that when people are adversely impact due to that stress of isolation, I just wonder there will be a look at how to mitigate the impacts of the stress that those isolation centres caused. Thank

you, Mr. Chairman, and that is my last question.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. My understanding is that the CPHO report may not get into the details or I guess the knock-on effects of it. It will be primarily looking at it from a public health lens, but I anticipate that there will be some general discussion in that report as to the related issue.

Absolutely, isolation affected people in so many different ways. It was very evident, once I became minister and we were dealing with Omicron, that it's highly individualized. For some people, being isolated in a house is a case of it brings up issues around adequate housing, not having enough space, being overcrowded, and then for others it brought up issues around not having any people around, or not being allowed to go and visit other people, or not having access to the services that they're used to.

So I know that having worked with Dr. Patterson closely over the past number of months, that he did not take decisions around public health restrictions lightly and he did give consideration to the knock-on, or the connected issues around mental health, connected issues around faith in the healthcare system.

Just all that just to say that the decisions around restrictions, once I became minister and sat in this seat, are very complex and there is a lot behind those decisions that from the outside isn't apparent. I really do have to take the

opportunity to thank all of our public health staff and front-line staff who worked so tirelessly during the past months and years.

>>Applause

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Members, on H-4. Directorate. \$65,953,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** On to H-5. Public Health. I'll just remind members to try to be precise and concise so that the minister won't get confused, and if the minister can also try to be concise. We want to get as much information exchanged as we can, but we are here to deal with the budget, and try to keep your topics on the budget subject matter. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I just have a few questions on this page. I would like to start off with on the business plan, it indicates that the department will develop and implement a schedule for improvements to public reporting on topics relevant to public health. Maybe if the minister could give some specific examples of what public topics will be reported on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. The department is committed improving public health reporting. We recognize

the value of sharing information with Nunavummiut. It is something we learned during COVID when we had intense focus on things like case counts and vaccination rates.

Currently we have initiated preparing public health reports, a status report on the three most common sexually transmitted diseases in Nunavut, and so those are gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis, and so that's an area that we are working on. There is also a report regarding cancer that's being worked on. Those are being targeted. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Kind of on the same lines but a little bit off, in the priorities in '22-23 on page 140, the first bullet says that "Health will continue to monitor and act on evidence-based and best practice guidance from internal and FPT experts to inform its COVID-19 testing and vaccine strategy."

I'm sure the minister was listening with interest when the Office of the Auditor General appeared before our committee recently, although that was on corrections. One of the audits that they had mentioned they will be looking at is the vaccine rollout. I'm just curious as to the minister's position on what...not so much with the value. I think it will be an important exercise to see how we did. With our population and geography challenges, personally I think we did very well with our vaccine rollout, but I was just wondering if the minister had any thoughts on that OAG upcoming audit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. I look forward to having our staff work with the Office of the Auditor General. It was a huge challenge in terms of the timelines and the pressure that the department was under to deliver vaccines to Nunavummiut. I hope that through our work with the Office of the Auditor General, we will be able to highlight the areas where we succeeded and also the very real barriers that we face to greater and quicker vaccine rollout, things like infrastructure challenges, things like health human resource challenges, and also just the logistics that we are very aware of as Nunavummiut.

In terms of a southern audience or a national audience, that report might help to underline just how expensive it is to deliver health care services in Nunavut and one other issue that hopefully will be highlighted as a barrier is the issues we have around housing our staff. It's not just a case of finding a nurse or a professional; it's also finding somewhere for them to sleep at night. It's a big challenge that we continue to try to address as best as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I would like to get the minister's position on whether he feels that vaccine hesitancy should be a part of that audit as well too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) To my understanding, that will be included as part of the report. I have to say, I think that as Nunavummiut, we do have something to be proud of in this aspect that there were no large anti-vaccine protests or Freedom Convoy type events in Nunavut, and that's something we can be proud of.

It was quite frustrating to deal with some issues around misinformation, vaccine microchip type theories, and it just shows to me how important it is for us as a department to make sure that we're present on social media so that we can provide facts because there are a lot of non-facts out there on social media, and communication really is a key exercise when we're talking about issues of this nature. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response from the minister. I agree with him wholeheartedly. Social media can be a great asset, but it can also be a huge liability.

Staying on the same page in the business plan, at the bottom of that section in 2022-23, the last bullet talks about completing the "review of the *Food Safety Regulations* and *Drinking Water Regulations* under the *Public Health Act*." Maybe not specifically to that, but the topic has come up in the House previously on access to health inspection

reports, especially to dining facilities and businesses of that nature.

I'm pretty sure a former minister spoke a few years ago that there was some work being done on digitizing or electronic records being kept or being created at some point. As they were then, they were just hand-written. Maybe I would just like to get an update on the progress of having electronic health inspection records being done electronically and being able to be accessed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As of yet, we don't have any firm plans in terms of whether we would be going in that direction. In terms of making those inspection reports public, it is something that's under consideration. We are aware that it has been raised in the Assembly in the past as a need and so it's something that is part of that review we have identified in the business plan, but I can't provide a clear indication as to whether we would be going in that direction. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to touch on the TB screening. As the minister knows very well, there are a few communities that had community-wide screening, one of them being in his riding. I would like to get an update on the current status of the government's collaboration with entities such as ITK and NTI to access federal

funding for tuberculosis-related initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. It really is a public health challenge for the whole territory that we can't take our eyes off of. Right now, in terms of our work with our partners, Health sits on the Inuit Public Health Task Group, which includes Inuit organizations, federal, provincial and territorial governments. We also participate on the territorial TB Steering Committee, which is chaired by the chief public health officer. We also sit on the Nunavut Regional Tuberculosis Committee and that includes representatives from regional Inuit organizations and a bunch of different organizations that I won't list off.

Right now with Nunavut Tunngavik, our focus is on finalizing the regional action plan around tuberculosis and unfortunately that has been delayed quite significantly. A lot of those delays had to do with COVID, but the work is ongoing. We have the regional action plan along with the memorandum of understanding that is being worked on. They're close to being finalized and when they are, I will bring them to cabinet for approval. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairperson** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list: Mr. Malliki.

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

My first question is for 2024-25, (interpretation ends) “Enhance public health-related environmental health supports and develop new resources and programming for the territory.” (interpretation) What is in there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It is a little bit further down the line in terms of the timeline, but it would be involving looking at our environmental health officers and what services they are providing. Right now we have six environmental health officers within Health and so that item priority would involve looking at the services that they are providing, looking at the work that they are doing, and just looking for ways we can make improvements there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for his response. Does it also include samples of animals that have been harvested from the land? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends)

There would be some animal-related duties as part of that. Just very briefly, environmental health officers investigate and provide education in the following: they look at sanitation of facilities, reports of food or waterborne illnesses, indoor air quality, animal incident reports, for example, rabies, and then a number of other items; water quality, sewer and sanitation, food preparation, treatment and distribution of drinking water, and also tobacco control. They have quite a wide range of different things that the environmental health officers look at. They inspect all kinds of different facilities, everything from utility, water and sewage facilities, to daycares and health centres. They have a wide mandate. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister. I would also like to ask a question regarding walrus samples. Is that included in there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, walrus samples are sent outside of the territory and they go through the Nunavut Research Institute. They are the ones that take care of the walrus samples. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister

for clarifying that. My next question is, (interpretation ends) the department's Public Health Branch took on a number of activities and responsibilities as part of Health's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. What resources have been budgeted in 2022-23 for COVID-19 related activities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There are some resources that have been budgeted for, but it is not under this page of the budget. It was in the previous under Directorate. As we indicated yesterday, if there is a need for additional resources, we will bring them online and if there's a need for additional budget, we will bring forward a supplementary appropriation.

In terms of the different scenarios or the readiness, I would like to let Mr. Babstock add some information, if you will allow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Babstock.

**Mr. Babstock**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. As part of any budget management exercise, we're carefully keeping track of anything that we're doing COVID-related. We are able to pull that information relatively quickly and segregate it out from other aspects of our budget.

As of now, we're managing things internally and if we do recognize the

need to further supplement our budget as a result of various COVID activities that are emerging through the year, we will then approach it with a supplementary appropriation that will come to the House for consideration via legislation.

As of right now, we're able to manage things internally as it has definitely wound down compared to what we have experienced over the past two years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for your responses. (interpretation ends) The Population Health Division of the department's Public Health Branch will see a small increase of \$278,000 in 2022-23. What new activities or programs will be provided for additional funds? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just on the approach to COVID from the previous question, I wanted to add that in terms of the approach or status looking nationally at the Public Health Agency of Canada and what they're communicating, they're encouraging caution and a state of readiness in terms of not being overly dismissive of the potential for additional waves of COVID. I just wanted to add that in there.

In terms of the Population Health line, the increase there represents the



continued use of agency nurse contracts. That's what the increase is tied to. The distribution of funding across the public health units is distributed between Iqaluit Health Services, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department's 2022-26 draft business plan indicates that the department will "Develop resources in anticipation of the coming into force of the new *Tobacco and Smoking Act*." When the Act comes into force, section 24(2) to (4) will prohibit smoking in public housing units as well as government units. What steps have been taken to prepare landlords and tenants for the enforcement of section 24 of the legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We do have plans to work on... . As I indicated in a statement recently, we are rolling out a mass media campaign around the smoke-free spaces aspect of the new legislation.

With regard to landlords specifically, we're working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. We don't have any specifics to share on this currently, but if the member is interested in it, I can certainly see what information is available and provide that at a later date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's what I expected. (interpretation ends) The department has delivered a cancer screening program focusing on colorectal cancer. What are the results of this initiative? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of an update on the colorectal screening program, it's currently in the early implementation stage. The work in this area began in the spring of 2021, so it began high level planning processes and considering the programming requirements.

This is very detailed, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry. I'm just trying to find the quickest way to explain this. We are about to procure the analyzer that will reside at the Qikiqtani General Hospital laboratory, which will be part of this screening process. It's currently managed by a steering committee, and the steering meets monthly and they are just about into their first year of implementing this program. The results of the program aren't readily apparent just yet. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) What cancer treatment and cancer

counselling services are currently provided in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) In terms of the cancer treatment, the most... . Sorry. This is about screening.

Okay. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) So in terms of cancer treatment, we do have the ability to provide some limited treatment in territory, but we are dependent on out-of-territory resources for most cancer treatment. So depending on the region that the individual is from, they would either be provided with treatment in Ottawa, Winnipeg, or Edmonton and possibly Yellowknife.

We work with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, and there are a number of different activities that we have under way with that organization. We have been working with them over the last year. We also partner with the Ottawa Heart Institute, the Champlain Regional Cancer Program in Larga Baffin in Ottawa to support smoking cessation for Nunavummiut cancer patients receiving treatment in the south and that helps them to quit and is connected to the issue of cancer.

We also have additions to the pharmacy at the Qikiqtani General Hospital that ensure that we can mix the drugs needed for cancer treatment, which involves, as I understand it, installation of a fume hood to allow that work to be done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that providing that information. To add further, I'm going to ask this question. Cancer treatment in Nunavut is not really focused in Nunavut. When will we realize that this is an area that is fully treated in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are focused on establishing the first formal screening program for cancer, which is the colorectal cancer screening project.

The most common types of screening programs to have in place are colorectal, cervical, breast, and lung cancer. So that is where we are focused right now is the screening aspect. The treatment aspects of it, we don't have any formal plans currently to advance the treatment in the territory. There is specialized training that is required for doctors and nurses when it comes to cancer treatment, and my understanding is it has to do with adverse reactions to the treatments that can happen and how the various drugs need to be administered.

All of that to say that it is quite a complex undertaking in terms of the treatment. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for explaining that. (interpretation ends) One of the priorities listed in the 2022-26 business plan indicates that the department will “develop and implement a schedule for improvement to go public reporting on topics relevant to the public health.” What specific public topics will be reported on? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As indicated, we are working on a report on cancer and another that we are looking to report on is sexually transmitted diseases in Nunavut. Those are the two that we are working on. Right now we do consistently review our public reporting standards and explore ways to maximize the utility of our public health reports and engage with communities, provide staff training, and assess privacy and community level impacts with regard to public health reports. As we discussed yesterday, the health information that we hold on to is quite sensitive and we are very conscious of the impacts to individuals in communities when we do release information. That is something that is always on top of mind for us. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you for that very clear response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Department of Health’s business plan

indicates that it will conduct an evaluation of the Nunavut Wellness Agreement which is block funding that is provided by the federal department of Indigenous Service Canada. How will this evaluation be used to determine future funding allocations from the federal government? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Nunavut Wellness Agreement was a 10-year agreement, at the five year mark, evaluations triggered, and that is what we are entering into now.

In terms of what the results of the evaluation will be and how that will inform future funding from our federal partners, I can’t say. I am hopeful that it will show the value of things like food programs. It will show the incredible need that we have here in Nunavut, particularly with our young and growing population.

My understanding is that from what we hear from our partners, that this funding does have a real impact on the ground in Nunavut communities and so the evaluation will... . Sorry. The evaluation will help us to target or continue administering this funding over the next five years, and is scheduled to sunset in 2027. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In

the business plan on page 141, 2022-23, third bullet, “Enhance community level contact tracing capacity by expanding training and creating positions.”  
(interpretation) Will this be available for all Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It’s a bit too early to say where positions would be created. We are entering into increasing the use of virtual services and so there is a possibility that these positions would not necessarily be physically in the community that they’re serving, but it hasn’t been determined yet as to the staffing component to that.

We have learned a lot through COVID-19 and when it comes to contact tracing, other issues around public health that we have; tuberculosis or other communicable diseases, it’s something that is continually evolving and we want to learn the lessons from the pandemic and use them to strengthen our public health services. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. This will be my last question. (interpretation ends) One of the priorities listed in the 2022-26 business plan indicates that the department will “Continue to support school meal programs with community-based partners.” How does Health work with Education to deliver this initiative?

(interpretation) Thank you. That was my last question.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Basically we are the agreement holder when it comes to these food programs funding through the Nunavut Wellness Agreement and so they flow through us. Sorry. I have my information right here beside me; expert. Thank you very much.

We have multi-year contribution agreements with each hamlet under community wellness programs and so there are community wellness plans, and it is a requirement each community wellness plan must allocate funding for a school food program in their community. So the amount of money is determined by the community, and in terms of the delivery of the food to the students, that is obviously in partnership with the DEAs and the school staff through the Department of Education.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I’ll go to the next person on the list: Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps I’ll ask a follow-up question. (interpretation ends) The first question that I want to ask is, the Department of Health provides contribution funding to community-based health committees of council. How does the department work with these committees to address health issues and concerns at the community

level? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We recognize the value of working with municipal governments. I think that's been apparent throughout the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They are the level of government that's closest to the residents in their communities.

In terms of the health committees, our staff at the local level provide support and guidance to them in terms of issues of local concern. In terms of the department, we don't exert a lot of control over those committees. They are funded by us, but we don't have any annual reporting requirements that we impose on them. My understanding is that the focus of the committee largely depends on the wishes of the elected council members. The support that we provide to them is \$10,000 per year. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Is the \$10,000 to be used for promotions or honoraria? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you. The hamlets have the freedom to decide how they want to use that money. It can be used for honoraria or other

things that they choose. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for helping me to understand that.

Next question I would like to ask is: (interpretation ends) In November of 2021 Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer announced a tuberculosis outbreak in Pangnirtung, which is our neighbour. What is the current status of tuberculosis cases across the territory and what plans are in place for tuberculosis screening across all of the Nunavut communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) On the status of tuberculosis across the territory, I can say that the department's work continues, but at the community-by-community level I'm limited as to what I can say here in terms of where we're directing our efforts. I can say that there are certain communities in Nunavut that have a higher caseload of tuberculosis than others. The resources around tuberculosis response follow those numbers. It's not a case of one size fits all.

I think the situation in Pangnirtung is an example of the department responding. We've directed additional resources to Pangnirtung in response to the numbers of active and latent cases in the community and so that is an example of

where the activity or the resources are being driven by the data, or the reality on the ground. That's something that I can say.

Another thing regarding tuberculosis outbreaks, they are addressed in years. It takes years to address them. It's not a case of where the department can come in in a matter of months and deal with the outbreak, as it would be with other communicable diseases.

The particulars around tuberculosis make it such that it takes a long period of sustained effort to address an outbreak and that's precisely why it's so challenging for us as a department when you look at our infrastructure limitations and our human resource limitations, there are real systemic barriers to us eliminating this thing from the territory.

It's precisely why it's so important for us to work with our partners in the federal government and Inuit organizations to have a well thought out plan as to how we're going to achieve this. The goal post of 2030 for the elimination of tuberculosis is going to be challenging to meet that, partly due to COVID-19, which was a huge public health issue, continues to be a huge issue.

I apologize, I'm going on there, but the big driver of our future activity is going to be the regional action plan that we are close to finalizing with our partners at Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and that will drive further activities in terms of setting targets and defining areas of focus. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. You helped me to understand it. This is very important and it needs to have the proper funding and support. I just wanted to add that in the House.

They've also found other things during tuberculosis screenings. When there was a tuberculosis screening in Qikiqtarjuaq, they found that in the community almost all of us had it. I believe that not even 5 percent were negative; it's probably at 100 percent today. We realized at that time, with tuberculosis, other people were found to be developing other diseases or that they had problems from childhood that were finally discovered during the tuberculosis screening. Some of us thought that we didn't have it, but it was latent TB. Those things are so important that I just wanted to add that to what the minister said.

We should not criticize this service; the communities should not criticize it. It needs to be properly funded and supported by the Government of Nunavut. That's just a general comment.

I want to turn to another matter now. In your business plan on page 140, it states that, in English, (interpretation ends) "To develop resources in anticipation of the coming into force of a new *Tobacco and Smoking Act*. (interpretation) Does this include... ? (interpretation ends) Can you outline more in details (interpretation) because it's so important, looking at it, looking at the children, but I am very concerned about the children as well because they are starting with smoking so young. I would like to hear

more details about this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you for that question. The Act was approved and enacted about approximately one year ago. The Act is directed to the communities in regards to tobacco strategy and to focus on the young people who have not started smoking yet.

Also about second-hand smoke and in the Act, we would look at how we can change the issue of tobacco in Nunavut. We see smokers smoking everywhere. It is an everyday thing we see and every day and we would like to see fewer smokers out there. That is one of our focuses and through the Act; we would like to provide support services to people who would like to quit smoking. (interpretation ends) It's a bad thing to be a quitter, but I think when it comes to tobacco, it's a good thing to be a quitter.

In terms of the resources that we are bringing into this, it's part of it is around the enforcement of the new Act. That is something that we heard from Nunavummiut when we were consulting on developing the new legislation and Nunavummiut wanted to see enforcement around the rules. And so that is something that we are working on and bringing forward as well as media campaign that we've recently launched or just launched officially yesterday. That was World No Tobacco Day.

So that communications initiative is going to include information cards,

posters, videos and radio materials. And we are trying to educate Nunavummiut about the new legislation in terms of the buffer zones and smoke-free places that have been established through there.

Our community health representatives are also of course a part of those efforts to inform Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for your response. My last question and so that we are in the same level, my question is in regard to the health committees at the community level or health councils that (interpretation ends) currently receive funding from the government. What types of programs and services do they deliver? (interpretation) That will be my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The committees have, as I'd mentioned earlier, they have quite a lot of discretion in terms the focus for the activities that they want to undertake.

Some committees are more active than others. Some choose to focus on, for example, mental health issues in the community. Others are more interested in, as I understand it, looking at the health resources in the community in terms of the number of staff or trends in terms of public health. We don't

currently require those committees to report to us annually.

We do have the ability through the funding to go and request reporting from those committees, but given the amount, it's quite small, we haven't done that recently in terms of asking for a formal activity from each committee across Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. I'll go to the next person on my list, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Mr. Minister and your officials.

It was brought up earlier, but on page 140 it says that you would like to complete the review on food safety policies and potable drinking water. (interpretation ends) On page 140 "Complete review of the food safety regulations and drinking water regulations under the *Public Health Act*."

(interpretation) You indicated that you have environmental health officers in your department and there's also mould in the houses and older units, which has a direct impact on the people living in those units.

With the mould issue in Nunavut, and with some remediation happening in the communities, would you create a position that would oversee the remediation of the houses with mould? Are you looking at adding to the total number of employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to mouldy houses, from what I understand we do not have a dedicated staff member overseeing those programs, but the Nunavut Housing Corporation are the ones responsible for remediation as they own the houses as well as the local housing organizations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why I brought this issue up is that under Health Protection there are funds set aside to inspect houses with mould, which affects your skin and your health. That's the reason why I asked. I wanted to know if you're going to have a dedicated staff member overseeing those projects. They would also be responsible for the units that are empty because of their conditions. Is it possible to create positions from your department that can oversee those types of programs and also inspecting houses? I think under health protection it would make a big difference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It could be considered, but there is a "but." I can't say that we would create positions but the comments made by the member are real. If mould in housing affects you physically, mentally and also it affects your health. When there was a COVID-



19 outbreak, we realized there were too many individuals in one house who were more affected than others. There is also tuberculosis. There is the mental health condition; lack of housing in Nunavut which affects everything and possibly increasing the number of diseases. If there is an improvement in housing it would also improve the health of the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the reason why I brought it up. The renters of public housing the nurses the people who have mould in their houses usually go to the health centre see the nurse or a visiting physician to see what they can do. If we create positions it would improve the overall health of the people of Nunavut.

It could be a lot of money to create those positions but it would also improve the health of all individuals. That's just for your consideration. And, while we are still here just below this paragraph on the population health for all Nunavummiut.

I noted here also food our health food issue. I looked at the response given on the walrus samples. What would be created in terms of jobs and in this fiscal or the following year? We have a lab as the Minister of Environment mentioned that samples for walrus and caribou are taken there. I think this is reverse responsibility. We have harvesters who make *igunaq* or aged meat and that process involved preparing it right away upon catching the walrus. Perhaps even

caribou could be moved here and samples for testing be moved to Igloolik, maybe for summer only to carry it out as a pilot project. I think that would also benefit job creating and responsibilities. I'm asking you if you would initiate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know where he is coming from on his question. However, this is not our responsibility to test samples. The Nunavut Research Institute has responsibility for this and the office he refers to, the Department of Environment runs that office. As Health, we do provide support as it relates to health. With the question raised earlier by the MLA for Aivilik, I think the response was good enough. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why I said that is because I think it would be more suitable if the Health department can work the Environment department in collaboration to this initiative, when it comes to employment. That is why I have mentioned this, if it can be dealt with by Igloolik lab research. That's just a comment.

Moving on to my next question: Will there be any creations under the food safety regulations and drinking water regulations in regards to the *Public Health Act*? Will there be any new positions created under this *Public Health Act* when it comes to our food

and safety and our drinking water regulations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Right now it's unlikely that there's going to be a staffing component to the regulations. Having the regulations in place is to manage the communicable diseases health hazards, food safety, and safe water and health promotion. It's a regulatory exercise in terms of looking at where we can make improvements to better serve Nunavummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I do believe that it would definitely create jobs in those smaller communities when it comes to our food safety regulations and the safe drinking water regulations.

In saying that, I just have a question on the enforcement of the *Tobacco and Smoking Act*. On page 140 of the business plan, priorities for 2022, is to "Develop resources in anticipation of the coming into force of ..." that new Act. I'll ask again: will there any new creation for these positions when it comes to enforcing smoking on government properties? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, when it comes to enforcement we are proposing four full-time tobacco and cannabis enforcement officers, and that is enforcing the rules, not forcing people to use tobacco and cannabis, obviously.

We are proposing four person years; two for the Qikiqtani region, one for Kivalliq, and one for Kitikmeot. We are hoping to reallocate some of our existing funding to cover these new positions. So those enforcement officers are authorized to enforce any provision, or will be authorized to enforce the Act or its regulations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for providing that there will be new positions created under this Act.

On another matter in our Fifth Assembly I had mentioned the midwifery program, but I don't see anything here under Population Health. So is the department in the planning phase when it comes to at least creating this position, because I'm sure it is very expensive to fly them here, and they leave their family up there in their hometown. So is there a planning phase when it comes to a midwifery program and how will it be laid out? Do we have to work with the local health committee in each home community? What kind of recommendation would the minister like to see in creating this midwifery position? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Midwifery is covered under the next page under Health Care Service Delivery, but very briefly, we have a limited number of midwives currently in a limited number of communities. We do have identified as a priority under the next page is conducting a review of the *Midwifery Act*. We recognize that there are a number of issues with the existing Act and we are looking for ways where we can make improvements to the legislation, which will, as the member well knows, which affect the service delivery on the ground. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That is the allotted time for Mr. Kaerner. I have no more names on my list for Public Health for H-5. Okay. Public Health. H-5. \$25,323,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Alright. Go onto the next page. Where is that here? Public Care Service Delivery. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 lines of questioning. My first question is: the Mental Health and Addictions Division of the Health Care Services Delivery Branch will see an increase of almost \$7 million in 2022-23. What new mental health and addictions programs and services will be provided and how will they be delivered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That increase and just breaking it down, I have always wanted to break it down in Committee of the Whole. I feel very cool and hip.

>> *Laughter*

In terms of the \$7 million increase, that is broken down into *Mental Health Act* implementation, which we are proposing \$1.45 million for; Out of territory Mental Health and Addictions Placements, which is budgeted for \$4 million; Enhanced Security Contracts for \$678,000, and Agency Nursing Resources for \$826,000.

So in terms of the member's question: what new programs and services will this represent? The *Mental Health and Addictions Implementation Act*, implementation; that will move us towards some increased services in terms of community assisted treatment orders, which are listed under the new Act. There is a monitoring system around mental health that is included as part of that allocation, as well as the development of a mental health and addictions strategy. Those are a few of the things that are included.

The out-of-territory services has been an item that year-over-year has been increasing. It's both encouraging and concerning at the same time. It's encouraging that we have more Nunavummiut who are seeking treatment and getting assistance for their issues that they're facing, whether it be mental health and/or addictions. In terms of the financial side of things, it puts additional pressure on us as a department because we don't want to have clients

come in looking for specialized treatment and then have to say them “sorry, we can’t provide you treatment until next fiscal year.” We don’t use that. That would not be a scenario that plays out. We put the client’s needs first and we will provide them the treatment. This is a case of our budget trying to keep up with the reality on the ground for those services. So the \$4 million is split across the different regions in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mental health services are in high demand across Nunavut. How is the department working with Nunavut Arctic College to recruit and train Nunavummiut into the mental health field? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms our work with Nunavut Arctic College, right now work is the related work I mentioned yesterday in terms of working towards a bachelor program around social work. So we are assisting with that. I realize it’s not mental health specifically. We do have a valuable relationship with them when it comes to the nursing program. In terms of the specifics around mental health training, the paraprofessional program that the department has is designed in a way that the orientation can be provided and training can be provided in-house, so that is where the ladder positions that we have do involve on-the-job or in-

house training from Health in terms of trying to get more Nunavummiut into those positions.

Currently we don’t have any programs or partnerships with Arctic College targeted specifically around counselling, for example. There are a number of organizations, like Iisaqsivik who are doing incredible work in developing those resources or those individuals, and we do work with them in terms of service delivery. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2018 the Government of Nunavut announced long-term plans for addressing mental wellness in Nunavut with the re-release of its “addictions and trauma treatment in Nunavut.” Part of that plan includes the development of an Inuit workforce to help deliver treatment and healing services. What progress has been achieved to date in recruiting, training, and hiring Inuit to provide services and support in the areas of addiction and trauma treatment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the report or the system as a whole, to date the on-the-land treatment programs across the three regions; those are currently being established. So that has been an area of focus for the department.

In terms of the Nunavut recovery centre, we are currently working on the detailed design of that facility, as well as a plan with our partners at Nunavut Tunngavik as to how the building or the facility will operate. We want to hit the sweet spot when it comes to developing the staff for that facility, and what I mean by “sweet spot” is we don’t want to train the individuals too far in advance of the facility being completed. We would ideally want to have the training arranged in a way so that when the facility opens, that it’s timed with the workforce coming on stream.

Nunavut Tunngavik has committed financial resource towards the training or the workforce for that facility, so I really appreciate the support. They have committed \$11.8 million out of the Makigiaqta funding to go towards training in the first five years of that system. I hope that answers the member’s question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Minister Main, for answering the questions on mental health and mental wellness as those were the issues of concerns in my constituent community. Now, regarding boarding homes, constituents frequently raise concerns regarding services provided by boarding homes and the services they provide. How does the department monitor and evaluate these services and policies and related complaints? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the boarding homes, as I understand it, there are two main ways that we track issues or address them. One is through the contract administration process where we are continually communicating and meeting with the boarding home operators to flag issues of concern and to try and deal with them. The issues can either be flagged by as a department; they can be flagged by the boarding home operator. Those meetings are important as well as having our staff regularly visit the facilities themselves to flag or ask about issues.

The other way that boarding home related issues are flagged is through the Office of Patient Relations. In terms of data mining, as I understand it, the Office of Patient Relations, because they have a system where issues are tracked, it’s not just on a complaint or issue by issue basis. They are looking at the trends. If there are, for example, consistent issues around the food that has been provided at a boarding home, the Office of Patient Relations can notice that trend and then flag it within the department for attention.

That’s why it’s encouraging that the Office of Patient Relations is getting maybe more volume of issues flagged to them because that allows us as a department to respond in a systematic manner to improve things. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki. (interpretation ends) Just one more and we have to recognize the clock there soon, so if you can have a short question and if the minister can

have a brief answer to the question, just for the sake of the clock. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since you talked about the Office of Patient Relations just before, thank you, Minister Main. The Office of Patient Relations plays an important role in addressing complaints and concerns regarding medical services provided to Nunavummiut. When will the minister be tabling a report on the operations of this office? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Interpreters, I'm sorry I asked him to be quick. Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We're working on the 2020 report. As of yet, we don't have a date as to when that would be tabled. I hope that's short enough. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki:** I would like to report progress, please. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We have a motion on the floor to report progress and that motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. You lose again.

>>*Laughter*

I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from the witness table.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Please be seated. (interpretation ends) Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Your committee has been considering Bill 1 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:** We have a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Ms. Gross. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**An Hon. Member:** Question.

**Speaker:** All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 20. Third Reading of Bills. Item 21. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 23: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Full Caucus meets at 6:15 in the Nanuq Boardroom, and for tomorrow in the Nanuq Boardroom, the Regular Members' Caucus meets at nine o'clock, followed by the Standing Committee on Legislation at 10:30.

*Orders of the Day* for June 2:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 1
  - Bill 2
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 2, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:00*

