



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

2nd Session

6th Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 21

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Pages 1286 – 1353

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)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible
for Suicide Prevention*

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
Inlet)

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
Whole*

George Hikes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

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

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

Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of
Community and Government Services*

Officers

Clerk

John Quirke

Clerk Assistant
Stephen Innuksuk

Law Clerk
Michael Chandler

Sergeant-at-Arms
Michel Albert

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

Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1286
Ministers' Statements	1286
Members' Statements	1290
Returns to Oral Questions	1292
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.....	1293
Oral Questions.....	1294
Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters.....	1314
Tabling of Documents	1314
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	1315
Report of the Committee of the Whole	1352
Orders of the Day	1352

A.

Daily References

Wednesday, November 2, 2022.....1286

B.

Ministers' Statements

095 – 6(2): Arctic Circle Greenland Forum 2022 (Akeeagok, P)1286

096 – 6(2): Cruise Ships Return to Nunavut (Akeeagok, D).....1287

097 – 6(2): Microsoft Translator (Joanasie)1287

098 – 6(2): Health and Safety (Nakashuk)1288

099 – 6(2): Addiction Awareness Month (Main)1288

100 – 6(2): Congratulations on KIA's New Cultural Centres (Quassa).....1289

101 – 6(2): Working with CNDEA to Build DEA Capacity (Gross)1290

C.

Members' Statements

129 – 6(2): Supporting Our Aging Nunavummiut (Qavvik)1290

130 – 6(2): Thank You to QEC Power Crew (Sammurtok)1291

131 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Food Bank (Anavilok)1291

132 – 6(2): Take Your Child to Work Day for Grandson (Akeeagok, D).....1292

D.

Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 176 – 6(2): Medical Travel Contracts (Main)1292

Return to Oral Question 170 – 6(2): Investigation of Death of Community Member (Main) ...1292

E.

Oral Questions

208 – 6(2): Marine Traffic (Nutarak)1294

209 – 6(2): Alternative and Renewable Energy Projects (Brewster)	1296
210 – 6(2): General Rate Application Process (Hickes).....	1297
211 – 6(2): Pediatric Services in Nunavut (Lightstone)	1298
212 – 6(2): Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet Airport Terminal Buildings (Sammurtok).....	1301
213 – 6(2): Naujaat Air Terminal Building (Malliki).....	1302
214 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Airport Terminal Building (Anavilok)	1303
215 – 6(2): Supporting Our Aging Nunavummiut (Qavvik)	1305
216 – 6(2): Remote Work Policy (Savikataaq)	1306
217 – 6(2): Dental Services (Kaermerk).....	1308
218 – 6(2): Investigation of Death of Community Member (Killiktee)	1309
219 – 6(2): Habitable Housing Units in Iqaluit (Hickes)	1310

F.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters

Committee Report 006 – 6(2): Bill 4, Liquor Tax Act (Savikataaq).....	1314
Committee Report 007 – 6(2): Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2021-2022 (Savikataaq).....	1314

G.

Tabling of Documents

055 – 6(2): Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit 2017-18 Annual Report (Quassa).....	1314
056 – 6(2): April 2021 to March 2022 Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner (Speaker)	1315
057 – 6(2): Report of Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the Period April 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022 (Speaker)	1315

H.

Bills

Bill 10 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2023-2024 – Health – Consideration in Committee	1315
--	------

Bill 10 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2023-2024 – Nunavut Housing Corporation –

Consideration in Committee1336

Iqaluit, Nunavut**Wednesday, November 2, 2022****Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeegok, Hon. P.J. Akeegok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickers, Hon. David Joanasi, Mr. Joelle 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. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30***Item 1: Opening Prayer**

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Before we begin, can you say the opening prayer, please, Mr. Anavilok.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day, Inuit. Welcome to those who are watching the televised proceedings and listening to the radio broadcast.

(interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements**Minister's Statement 095 – 6(2): Arctic Circle Greenland Forum 2022**

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I say "good afternoon" to my fellow MLAs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues about the Arctic Circle Forum, which I was honoured to attend in person in Nuuk, Greenland.

Mr. Speaker, Yukon Premier Sandy Silver, Northwest Territories Premier Caroline Cochrane, and I were given the opportunity to speak on strengthening security and sovereignty in Canada's North.

During this conference we raised awareness of the need for investments in critical infrastructure to ensure sustainable energy sources, reliable transportation and telecommunications can serve a dual purpose of fulfilling defence and community needs.

Mr. Speaker, we were able to profile our territories' vision for a secure arctic and our ambition for community investments that promote better health care, adequate housing and education, as well as economic opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, we also discussed how critical minerals from northern Canada and the Arctic will play an important role in building a more sustainable future. The world is looking north for the resources that will reduce global reliance on supply chains that do not support the high environmental as well as social standards countries and consumer's demand.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to work with Canada's northern premiers and international partners and allies to create a healthy, sustainable and prosperous global north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Minister's Statement 096 – 6(2):
Cruise Ships Return to Nunavut**

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am happy to report that cruise ships returned to Nunavut waters this sailing season after restrictions were lifted by the federal government in February 2022.

Perhaps due to pent-up demand, the forecasted numbers of both ships and passengers, based on licensing requests, were expected to be substantially more than the last sailing season pre-COVID, which was in 2019.

Department staff were in continued communication with hamlets to determine their preparedness and willingness to accept cruise ships into their communities. To further assist, my department, through partnership with Travel Nunavut, delivered "Cruise Ready!" workshops in both Pond Inlet and Resolute Bay.

Additionally, efforts are underway to deliver Nalunaiqsijit: the Inuit Cruise Training Initiative, through partnerships with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators and the Nunavut Fisheries and Marine Training Consortium. This program will see 12 Inuit complete pre-sailing courses later this year, with a paid internship upon a cruise vessel in the 2023 season, followed by more courses upon completion of the sailing experience.

This internship program has resulted in great success in the past, with several Inuit working on board vessels this season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 097 – 6(2):
Microsoft Translator**

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to Nunavummiut and members.

Mr. Speaker, in collaboration with Culture and Heritage (CH) and Microsoft (MS), my department has been working since June 2020 to preserve Inuktitut through technology. As of today, we have implemented Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun as supported languages in the Microsoft Translator tool. This technology has the potential to close the communication divide for anyone who has an Internet connection and a computer, phone, or tablet.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut invited Microsoft to Iqaluit for a workshop on October 24 and 25, 2022 to discuss the next steps in our partnership to preserve Inuktitut. We are pleased to announce that we are collaborating on the development of a sustainable process to update language models, including speech-to-text and text-to-speech capabilities. Since Microsoft Translator is an artificial intelligence tool, it will continue learning Inuktitut and allow for better quality translation with each update. This partnership is a major

development for our communities and the Government of Nunavut is proud to be contributing to the preservation of Inuktitut.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Microsoft for their continued support and collaboration on the preservation of the Inuktitut language and all Nunavummiut who participated in making this initiative successful. We look forward to continuing our progress to preserve, promote, and revitalize the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 098 – 6(2):
Health and Safety**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my fellow MLAs. I also say "good day" to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the importance of ensuring workplace health and safety for the well-being of all Government of Nunavut employees.

The Workplace Safety and Health Unit within the Department of Human Resources has a central advisory function to assist Government of Nunavut departments and public bodies in meeting their occupational health and safety obligations and supporting safe

and healthy workplaces across our public service.

The Workplace Safety and Health team has surveyed existing practices and policies across the government, including gathering feedback from departments and public bodies on their experiences working within the occupational health and safety regulations. Our team is currently analyzing the survey results, with recommendations to follow. Those recommendations will inform future work of the unit in enhancing health and safety capacities across the government.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Human Resources remains committed to continuously improving our services and ensuring that all departments and public bodies receive appropriate guidance and support to ensure the health and safety of all employees remains a priority. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 099 – 6(2):
Addiction Awareness Month**

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut who viewing the proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, November is Addiction Awareness Month across Canada. This month aims to reduce the stigma around problematic drug or alcohol use by talking about treatment and recovery.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtitsijii*, substance abuse is a complex issue that requires many different points of view and collaboration to create positive change. Building and maintaining supportive communities can help improve the lives of those who may be struggling with addiction by making it easier to ask for and receive help.

We encourage all Nunavummiut to support individuals who struggle with addiction by practicing kindness toward each other. We never know what kind of struggles people have in their lives and it is important that we offer our care and support and not our judgment. If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction, call or visit your health centre or talk to a trusted friend, family member, elder, or wellness counsellor. There are treatment options available and recovery is possible.

For those who require more assistance in their mental health journey, treatment, and recovery, the Department of Health has numerous programs and services to assist. The Government of Nunavut website and health centres can help connect people to these services. There are also support lines, such as Kamatsiaqtut Help Line, Crisis Service Canada, Kids Help Phone, and Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council, which can provide support.

Uqaqtitsijii, I encourage all Nunavummiut to remember that you are not alone and there is support in your community. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 100 – 6(2):
Congratulations on KIA's New
Cultural Centres**

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to Nunavummiut, the people of Igloolik, and my fellow members.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Kivalliq Inuit Association on the completion and opening of the Kivalliq Inuit Association Cultural Visitors Centre in Chesterfield Inlet. I am also excited to see that the Kivalliq Inuit Association has begun building cultural centres in Naujaat and Whale Cove.

Mr. Speaker, these initiatives advance our shared goals of preserving and promoting our culture, language, and heritage. Through our heritage facilities contributions, my department has provided \$285,000 in funding to support the building of these centres.

Mr. Speaker, extending this support reflects our government's efforts to fulfill the Katujjiqatigiinnivut priority area of our government's mandate. I look forward to the continued partnership with the Kivalliq Inuit Association on these initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Minister's Statement 101 – 6(2):
Working with CNDEA to Build
DEA Capacity**

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day to Nunavummiut and everyone here in the House with us today.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education is working in collaboration with the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities by providing them with resources to build capacity in hiring staffing so that they can have the necessary tools to train members of the district education authorities and the Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut to assist them to fulfill their mandate under the *Education Act*.

Mr. Speaker, our department provided \$3.1 million to the coalition for the 2022-23 financial year. They have developed a business plan that outlines the steps they are taking to fulfill their mandate under the *Education Act*.

For example, the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities will hire the necessary staff to train the district education authorities in areas such as how to develop school improvement plans for their schools and support them in the administration of our education system.

Mr. Speaker, staff from our department and the coalition are in frequent communication and hold regular meetings to discuss funding, training initiatives, and other matters concerning the delivery of education in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to continue these interactions with the

Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities to incorporate their vision, leadership, and local knowledge in our education systems for the best outcomes for our students. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Item 3: Members' Statements

**Member's Statement 129 – 6(2):
Supporting Our Aging
Nunavummiut**

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues *amma* Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the needs of our aging Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, the government's mandate document, *Katujjiluta*, addresses "Aging with dignity in Nunavut." Two of the strategic objectives under this heading are "Improvement in daily life for Nunavummiut who are aging" and "Better mental health, physical health, and well-being for those who are aging."

Mr. Speaker, in my community there are elders who have mobility issues. Some do not have transportation. They walk everywhere in the frigid temperatures and face the other environmental elements that we endure daily in our lives. There are also safety aspects to be taken into consideration. A walking elder may come across an aggressive polar bear or loose dogs.

Mr. Speaker, there should be some form of transportation, perhaps even a bus,

that could allow elders the comfort of being transported from one place to another.

Mr. Speaker, the well-being of our elders is important in both the physical and mental sense.

Mr. Speaker, our government needs to invest in activities that allow elders to interact more fully with each other and with other members of the community. Such activities as picnics, boat trips, trips on the land, and exercise programs could be a great benefit.

I do recognize that the Department of Culture and Heritage does provide support for community-based programs involving elders and promoting activities that they can participate in.

During our Full Caucus retreat in Cambridge Bay, we spoke of establishing elder facilities, infrastructure which could be very important for our territory. So far, it is not clear how far our government has progressed in addressing these important objectives of the *Katujjiluta* mandate.

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

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Member's Statement 130 – 6(2):
Thank You to QEC Power Crew**

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Good day to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer to my thanks and appreciation to the Rankin Inlet crew of the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it shows true dedication when crews go out in the middle of the blizzard in the dark of night to fix broken power services in the community.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Rankin Inlet is very grateful to have power restored so quickly and efficiently. I extend my big thank you to the Qulliq Energy Corporation crew for their hard work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 131 – 6(2):
Kugluktuk Food Bank**

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish a good day to my fellow Inuit in Kugluktuk and throughout Nunavut, as well as my colleagues here.

The first item I wish to speak to relates to our fellow Inuit who are applying to create a food bank in Kugluktuk, and for their attempt to create this food bank I am appreciative of their efforts, as well as the women's group in Kugluktuk working to establish this new body, and I am grateful for their efforts as they will provide this assistance to their fellow residents and the Government of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) I just wanted to recognize the people that put their names forward to start up a food bank in Kugluktuk. I appreciate their efforts to join also the women's group that is formally trying to get incorporated. I want to congratulate and encourage them to keep going because the future looks good for them with the help of the government. *Quanaqqutit*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Member's Statement 132 – 6(2): Take Your Child to Work Day for Grandson

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every school year, the students in grade 9 have a designated day set aside for parent-child workday experience, where the students are tasked to follow their designated parent.

I am rather ecstatic to announce that today, my granddaughter Aula Kalluk is here today to observe our daily tasks in the House as Members, and to observe if this job provides happiness here. I really take great pride in her, as their mother has three other siblings, as she is the oldest and sometimes acts as the father figure to her siblings.

I am very proud of her dedication, and I also express my gratitude for constantly aiding her mother. She helps her mother a great deal. I want to honour her. I also want to introduce her as she is no stranger, so welcome her and she is acting as a minister for the day, Minister

Kalluk, I ask that you welcome her to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 176 – 6(2): Medical Travel Contracts

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on October 27, 2022. The Member from Uqqummiut asked when the medical contracts will be renewed for Canadian North. I had said that it expires December 31 of this year.

Uqaqtitsijii, the date of the renewal for the Canadian North contract is December 31, 2023. I would like to correct that for the public record. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions.
Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Return to Oral Question 170 – 6(2): Investigation of Death of Community Member

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise again today with a supplement to an answer I gave during question period on October 26, 2022. The member for Uqqummiut requested information on the status of an investigation being conducted by the Department of Health.

Patients who have been admitted to hospital for care are discharged based on medical assessment and cleared for travel. If a patient's medical assessment determines that they have a need for an intervention, or care beyond what can be offered on a commercial flight, a medevac is considered. Otherwise, they will be scheduled on a regular commercial flight. Patients are cleared for travel by a physician or a nurse practitioner. When a patient who has been prescribed oxygen travels commercially on a medical travel ticket, the Department of Health contacts Canadian North to provide oxygen and a requisition is sent at least 48 hours in advance to the airlines informing them of the traveler's need.

On September 27, 2022, Markoosie Aulaqiaq passed away on a Canadian North flight from Iqaluit to Qikiqtarjuaq while on medical travel. Mr. Audlakiak was seeking medical care in Iqaluit prior to returning to his home community. Mr. Aulaqiaq was medically cleared to travel back to his home community at the time of death, but required a supply of oxygen.

Health officials had received an incident report from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A statement from the client's escort and a summary from the Qikiqtarjuaq health centre staff. Canadian North has investigated this incident and a final report was made available to health officials on October 28, 2022.

Health officials are reviewing the report and will use this information to inform our own investigation. It deeply saddens me that this incident occurred. I will provide further information after the

review. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned earlier, if you can stand, Aula Kalluk is my granddaughter and is in the House. She has been with Canadian North for 25 years. Cindy Twerdin is a great employee at Canadian North. I appreciate when we're having difficulties she answers right away and follows up. We appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am also happy to receive three visitors. First of all, she was recognized as my constituent as well, working at Canadian North, has helped a lot of Iqalummiut and other Nunavummiut; Cindy Twerdin. Welcome to the House to listen to the proceedings. Welcome. Also, Aula Kalluk, from Apex, I want to recognize her for her helpfulness. She has a desire to learn and that is good to see. She is Minister Kalluk for the day. Perhaps in the future, she may sit in the House.

Also Ariana Atienza, a grade 9 student. Grade 9 students are also here for the

day working on-the-job through the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. They are working. Welcome. The students have learned a lot about the operations of what happens during the course of our work day. We are happy to have them here in the House and perhaps in the future you too might be working hard for Nunavummiut in the House. Welcome them, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly and welcome to the future ministers. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon everyone. I also welcome the future ministers. I'm really happy to recognize a couple of my friends here today. Swany Amarapala. Sorry, Swany. Nerves have me. A friend who became a colleague and one that certainly helped me in my professional career, very responsive to the people that she serves and a great testament to the commitment that Canadian North does have to provide, excellent service wherever and whenever possible to medical and duty travellers; Mrs. Cindy Twerdin. Welcome to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 208 – 6(2): Marine Traffic

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Pond Inlet and people of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to Minister Kalluk, acting in the role as the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation for today, and they concern the issue of marine traffic. During Tuesday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister tabled his department's 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 annual reports under the *Tourism Act*.

(interpretation ends) One of the sections of the report deals with the cruise ships sector. Mr. Speaker, as I noted during our spring sitting, this sector brings economic benefits to Nunavut, however it is essential that actions be taken to ensure that marine traffic, including cruise ships do not damage our environment, harm our marine mammals, wildlife or interfere with our hunters.

Can the minister confirm the authority he has to regulate the activities of cruise ships in Nunavut's waters?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For Nunavut waters, we don't have authority over them as the Government of Nunavut. That authority lies with the federal government. When it comes to Transport Canada regulations, it rests with Transport

Canada in terms of what and where they can go. We do have a very close working relationship with them in terms of scheduling and for which areas that we don't want cruise ships to go to. We do have regulatory parts where we restrict cruise ships where they cannot go, but that is enforced by Transport Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, minister and I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) A number of my constituents including hunters have asked that cruise ships and other large marine vessels be prohibited from entering certain inlets and other areas. Will the minister commit to having his department work with Pond Inlet Hunters and Trappers to address these concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will commit to that and we look forward to working with any of the HTO's that have any concerns related to cruise ships, definitely. We have a very good working relationship with the cruise ship operators and also with Transport Canada, and I want to keep that engaged, and I want the communities to be part of that. Together we need to make sure that we balance the environmental concerns and the economic opportunities that this sector has to offer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the minister and I look forward to having a meeting in Pond Inlet shortly. (interpretation ends) Earlier this year, it was reported that Baffinland has had publicly raised concerns about cruise ships exceeding speed guidelines and I thank the company for doing so. Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that there are jurisdictional complexities in this area. Will the minister commit to raising the issue of regulating marine traffic speed limits with the appropriate federal authorities and will he commit to reporting back to the House on this issue at our upcoming winter sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, when we hear about concerns of cruise ships and other marine vessels, we work closely with Transport Canada and for example, Baffinland has a license and there is a speed limit imposed on their ships. This also applies to the cruise ships that go around the Pond Inlet area. We make sure that information is open and we will impose those regulations. I would like to thank the member for bringing this issue up in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 209 – 6(2): Alternative and Renewable Energy Projects

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, during last Thursday's sitting of the House, I asked a number of questions to the Minister of Environment concerning land use planning and related issues, including the potential for a hydroelectric project near Iqaluit.

I want to follow up today with the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware one of Qikiqtaaluk Corporation's subsidiaries has been undertaking work concerning potential renewable energy developments including hydro power. Last week, the Minister of Environment stated that he would like to see such a project come forward. Can the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation confirm what involvement the QEC has in respect to the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation's initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question regarding hydro project possibilities that the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation is working on. In the past the Qulliq Energy Corporation did do studies regarding hydro power for Iqalumiut. We do support the idea of hydro power.

If the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation is going to go ahead with trying to get it going, we will be providing any info that we had collected in the past from the old study to the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation. That is where we are at right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that response, minister. I would just like to go a little further on what you just said. As the minister is aware, or should be aware, the previous Legislative Assembly authorized the write-off of approximately \$10 million in relation to studies that the Qulliq Energy Corporation had undertaken into hydroelectric power for Iqaluit. At that time, it was estimated that a hydro project on the scale envisioned could cost as much as half a billion dollars.

In May 2017, just over half of a decade ago, the Qulliq Energy Corporation released a summary report on the proposed Iqaluit hydroelectric project. The minister alluded to some of that information just now, and I would like to know: will the minister commit to producing an updated version of this report prior to the end of the current fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not able to commit to that. We are not doing hydro, so I can't do an updated report on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During Monday's sitting of the House, the minister made reference to a small modular nuclear reactor. As the minister is aware, the federal government's Department of Natural Resources released its Canadian roadmap for small nuclear modular reactors consultation report in November 2018.

The report indicated that consultations were held in Iqaluit and that the Qulliq Energy Corporation was invited to participate. For the record, what is the minister's position concerning the use of small modular nuclear reactors in respect to Iqaluit's energy supplies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question on the subject of small modular reactors. That has been gaining traction right across the country and other parts of the world as well. At this stage, my position, and also for the Qulliq Energy Corporation's position, is that we're only in the information gathering stage. We're nowhere near looking any other positions with this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 210 – 6(2): General Rate Application Process

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to follow up with the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the territorial rates in the URRC report.

Mr. Speaker, back in May I had asked the minister some questions on the proposed rate structure and the rates that would pay for power across the territory. Specifically, I used the example of Baker Lake data, and I'll use the example of Iqaluit now. When we go through the process of the general rate application, I do apologize, I used the acronym earlier, and the process is the minister responsible submits an application to the URRC.

The minister seeks advice from the URRC, the Utility Rates Review Council, regarding the proposed rate changes, then the Utility Rates Review Council requests input from the public consultations, and then they complete the report and submit it to the ministers, and then minister seeks advice from the Executive Council and provides instructions to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

My first question, Mr. Speaker: when the minister sought advice from the Executive Council, was it an information item or was there a request for decision involved in that rate change territorial rate? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct with all the processes that he mentioned. It was a request for a decision at that stage to the

Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was actually surprised to hear that. Right in the frequently asked questions it says “the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy makes the final decision on any changes to rates and just seeks advice from the Utility Rates Review Council and Government of Nunavut’s Executive Council.” It’s an interesting transition of authority.

Mr. Speaker, when I go back to the utility rates review submission from Qulliq Energy, it speaks to some quite significant rate increases associated going to a territorial rate. Now, I do recognize through... I did take the liberty of going to the Utility Rates Review Council’s website and got, just from the executive summary, it says that Qulliq Energy, and this is on Executive Summary, 1.0, page 1, 3(b), first bullet point that “Qulliq Energy move to at least one third of the way toward full revenue coverage with respect to demand and customer charges, similar to how Qulliq Energy Corporation limited the increases on non-government customers to 5.1 percent. The Utility Rates Review Council recommends that Qulliq Energy Corporation increase demand in customer charges in a manner that limits the overall bill impacts to 5.1 percent for non-government customer rate classes.”

I do note from the submission there are some significant increases that were proposed and the minister did, with his

cabinet colleagues’ support, did make the 5.1 increase to today’s rates.

My question there is: when you are determining the different rate classes and you diverted quite significantly from the recommendation that was proposed from Qulliq Energy Corporation, how were those rates decided upon? Some rates increased higher than what was proposed because of keeping within that 5.1 percent. I would just like to get from the minister of how they formulated the rate that diverted from the submission that Qulliq Energy Corporation made to the Utility Rates Review Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is quite a detailed question at this moment. I’m going to have to take it as notice and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The question has been taken as notice. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 211 – 6(2): Pediatric Services in Nunavut

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health regarding pediatric services.

Mr. Speaker, during the Fifth Legislative Assembly the minister of the day had indicated that the Department of Health was looking to increase the level of pediatric services being delivered within the territory.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask today's Minister of Health if he would be able to provide an update to this House about an overview of the pediatric services that are currently being provided in the territory. 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 that question. (interpretation ends) Currently, we have four pediatricians on staff within the territory. They are all working out of Qikiqtani General Hospital. Three of those pediatricians are full-time employees and then we have one position that is filled through locum, so there are actually two alternating physicians. Those pediatricians serve Iqaluit as well as Qikiqtaaluk communities. They diagnose childhood illnesses and help to treat them; everything from major, serious illnesses to smaller issues children may have.

In terms of the other regions of Nunavut, we're heavily reliant in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot on out-of-territory pediatric services. I can say that there is a continuing upward trend in terms of our medical travel volumes, so the demand is there year after year and we do see it increasing. That's right across the board, including pediatrics. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response. I'm very glad to hear that there are four pediatricians

in the territory providing services to sick children in Nunavut. I appreciate the minister providing some insight into the upward trend in medical travel, including pediatrics, as that was going to be my next question.

I would like to maybe ask the minister if he would be up to elaborate a bit more about the pediatric services which are provided to Nunavummiut outside of the territory. Would the minister be able to shed some light on how many children are actually sent out of territory for care, and what sort of procedures are children being sent out for? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of the member's question, unfortunately I don't have the level of detail the member is seeking. I can say that overall for this fiscal year, we are forecasting 32,000 medical travel trips out of territory. That includes pediatric needs as well as other patients. We don't have it divided up.

In terms of the out-of-territory services, we do really appreciate our receiving jurisdictions in terms of Ottawa, Winnipeg, Yellowknife, and Edmonton. They provide very high-quality care. Due to a surge in respiratory illnesses right now, we are having some capacity issues for clients or patients travelling out of Kivalliq. The receiving jurisdiction in Manitoba is having difficulty keeping track, keeping up with the demands, as well as there are significant pressures in Ontario in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to highlight some of the innovative work that the pediatrician group is doing. They have established a virtual neonatal pediatric intensive care unit with the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), which allows specialists at CHEO to see acutely sick patients at Qikiqtani General Hospital virtually. That's an innovative solution that has been brought forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I appreciate the minister's response. I understand that the minister may not have detailed information, such as the number of children who are sent out of territory to receive pediatric services. However, I fully intend on keeping abreast upon this topic in the coming years, and I more than welcome the minister to come back at a later date with a response to an oral question with that information.

Mr. Speaker, I'm in full support of local pediatric care. Mr. Speaker, I understand it can be very stressful for children, their parents and their families when children are sent out of territory for care.

Mr. Speaker, I also note that in other jurisdictions, many pediatric units are struggling to provide services and keep adequate number of staff on the wards to care for children and youth, including the children at the children's pediatric hospital in Ottawa, CHEO, which the minister had just referred to.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for my final question: will the minister commit

to exploring new and creative options to providing pediatric health services within the territory and with an aim to reduce the number of children who are sent out of territory for pediatric care? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Yes, I can commit to that. It's something that the department is very interested in exploring in terms of not just pediatrics but the entire suite of services that are available at the community level. The virtual care avenue is one that is really exciting. It's rapidly developing over the last few years and something we're looking to invest in further as appropriate.

In terms of the overall upward trend I mentioned in terms of medical travel and demand, I'm pleased to report that we also have an upward trend in the number of physicians working in the territory, as in 2021-22 it was 127, which is the highest number ever, and also an upward trend in the number of physician service days. In 2021-22 that was 11,173 physician days, and also the highest ever. The department is fully committed to making improvements and making expansions to deliver more services in-territory. Thank you for the question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 212 – 6(2): Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet Airport Terminal Buildings

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

As the minister is aware, the community of Chesterfield Inlet is in urgent need of a new airport terminal building.

During yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I tabled photographs which clearly show the poor condition of the building.

Although the Legislative Assembly has previously approved millions of dollars in funding towards this project, the government has cancelled a number of tenders because of high bids.

Can the minister confirm when a new tender for the Chesterfield Inlet airport terminal building project will be issued? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I don't have when we will be retendering for the third time for this particular project, but it's one that we will continue to work. Also, I'm looking forward to appearing before the Committee of the Whole to discuss in more detail of these five projects that we have tendered twice and have not been able to award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During our recent spring sitting, I tabled correspondence from the Mayor of Chesterfield Inlet. In his letter, the mayor requested that the government issues a stand-alone tender for the new Chesterfield Inlet airport terminal building project, rather than bundling it with tenders for other projects. Will the minister agree to the mayor's request? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we get to that stage where we are tendering, that's when the decision is going to be made. If we're in the Kivalliq, if we have those three projects doing the exact thing, it makes sense to try to tender them together. That is something that we tried; we tried it with all five, and then we tried with the three, and now we are left of what do we do. That portion and the discussions that we are having with Transport Canada are still there. So once we get to that stage than I'll be able to know which way the tenders are going to go for these five projects, five air terminal projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a Member of Legislative Assembly for Rankin Inlet North and Chesterfield Inlet, I strongly support the Rankin Inlet airport terminal building expansion. This project will also benefit residents of other Kivalliq communities given that it is a hub airport for medical travel. Can the minister provide an

update on the status of this project?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker that work is progressing with the Rankin Inlet airport expansion and that work is proceeding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 213 – 6(2): Naujaat Air Terminal Building

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Speaker's seat is getting hot regarding airports.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the community of Naujaat is in urgent need of a new airport terminal building. Although the Legislative Assembly has previously approved millions of dollars in funding towards this project, the government has cancelled a number of tenders because of high bids. Can the minister confirm when a new tender for the Naujaat airport terminal building project will be issued? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that. I don't mind the question so my colleague can learn that we are quite busy in the House.

The three communities, Naujaat, Chesterfield Inlet, and Whale Cove, are bundled together and the tender is not currently open. We will reopen it. I will be here during the Committee of the Whole to look at more of the details and the options related to these projects. Currently the funds are split 75-25 with the federal government, and when the project becomes more expensive, what kind of options do we have? I agree with you that we need to build these buildings and we will proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for the response. (interpretation ends) Federal funding for the Naujaat airport terminal project is being partially provided through the National Trade Corridors Fund. During Thursday's sitting of the Senate of Canada, the federal Minister of Transport publicly stated that his department has invited proponents to provide supplementary submissions to cover cost increases due to inflation and other factors.

Can the minister confirm that his department has made a supplementary submission to the federal Department of Transport and can he indicate what response has been received?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can confirm that our department has been engaged with

Transport Canada to try to get that supplementary funding in to ensure that we maintain that 75 percent Canada and 25 percent Government of Nunavut for this. To this date I have not received any response and it's something that the Minister of Transport and I have been trying to schedule a meeting together and we had to reschedule and reschedule, so I'm anticipating that we will meet on this.

Both Transport Canada and ourselves are quite aware that we do need supplementary funding if we're going to advance these projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Although the Rankin Inlet airport terminal building expansion project has also faced cost pressures due to inflation and other factors, it appears to be going ahead.

Can the minister explain the difference between the airport terminal building projects in smaller communities like Nauyasat and regional centres like Rankin? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is an excellent question. With the National Trade Corridors Fund, there had been two calls that we brought in for proposals. The first one was for the five terminals and under that

envelope there is an amount of dollars that were dedicated towards those five terminal buildings that would be those.

Under Rankin Inlet there is a second proposal and in that funding envelope, it's still under the National Trade Corridors Fund but different criteria and different terms of conditions. With Rankin Inlet we are able to confidently go through this and see that we should be able to seek additional funds through Transport Canada under that certain envelope.

For the five, the envelope that had money, that part does not have money in it, so we have to look for other parts of the envelopes within Transport Canada. That's the difference between what those two projects are at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 214 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Airport Terminal Building

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I just want to try to get him on the hot seat, elude him, so I'm going to start by saying that my questions are for the new lobby cheerleader and Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

(interpretation) As the minister is aware, the community of Kugluktuk is in urgent need of a new airport terminal building.

(interpretation ends) Although the Legislative Assembly has previously approved millions of dollars in funding towards this project, the government has

cancelled a number of airport-related tenders because of high bids.

Can the minister confirm when a new tender for the Kugluktuk airport terminal building project will be issued?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From where I stand, I'm looking for two approvals. One is through this House, and I'll be prepared when we're having a Committee of the Whole appearance for Economic Development and Transportation Capital Appropriations. Through that, I will be asking to continue this appropriation approval for those five projects. Also, we're talking to Transport Canada to see if we can get the supplementary funding required in order for us to build these five airport terminals, which includes Kugluktuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for answering my question. (interpretation ends) Earlier this year, the government issued a request for tenders for the construction of new airport buildings in Chesterfield Inlet, Naujaat, and Whale Cove. The tender indicated that Inuit labour requirements for these projects would be 35 percent.

Can the minister confirm what the minimum Inuit labour content would be for the Kugluktuk airport terminal

building project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a very good question regarding this. (interpretation ends) When the tenders are going out, that's when they determine what percent of Inuit will be required. It all depends on the number of projects that are being built in that region, which then our officials make the determination, in terms of a calculation of what percentage it will be. Once that tender is coming out, that's when we'll determine what the percentage for Inuit requirements will be for the contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I recognize that it will take some time for the new airport terminal building to be constructed. Can the minister indicate what immediate upgrades and repairs are needed to keep the facility operational?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those notes on what the condition of the current building are on my notes, but I don't have it readily available with me. I'll commit to coming back to the member on what the state of the current building is, and if there are

any renovations required, then I'll also report on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 215 – 6(2): Supporting Our Aging Nunavummiut

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Nunavummiut.

I would like to direct my questions to the Premier, who is the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

In my member's statement I noted that the government's *Katujjiluta* mandate addresses "Aging with Dignity in Nunavut."

Can the minister provide an update on the government's progress in finalizing its Comprehensive Elders Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my fellow MLA for his question, and further voice my appreciation for welcoming us to Sanikiluaq this past summer, and for arranging a meeting with the Inuit elders in the community as I met with their group and it was quite exceptional to meet the elders in Sanikiluaq, and we shared a pot of tea, eggs and I still haven't forgotten that.

Mr. Speaker, what I can provide him with today is that currently, we have almost finalized the selection of the

(interpretation ends) contractor (interpretation) who will undertake the planning, specifically for the memorandum of understanding for the (interpretation ends) Comprehensive Elder Strategy (interpretation) that we wish to have drafted.

This is almost complete, but at this time, it still is not completed, and due to this fact, I cannot state exactly when it will be released, but I can state that it is in the final stages, and we can task them to conduct a thorough search for elders and communities that will need to be informed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response, Premier. We look forward to seeing that finalization.

Mr. Speaker, a number of elders have mobility issues and could benefit from some dedicated transportation options so they can safely and comfortably get around in their communities.

Can the minister describe what considerations have been given to providing buses or vehicles to transport elders around our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member for the question. As I stated, we are in the final stages of securing a contractor who would undertake the very important work of the comprehensive strategy on

elders and seniors as a top priority of our mandate. As such, we are obviously preparing to ensure that the consultation is robust and that it is rooted in the communities that we have stated in this House as well.

We haven't look specifically at the bus issue, but obviously the mobility issue would be factored in throughout our review process. We do entail the comprehensive strategy looking at the current existing gaps that we do see, but also consulting with elders' groups in the communities, like the Inummariit in Sanikiluaq, but those are captured in the scope we are hoping to finalize with the contractor to then do the very important work of looking at what we have and what we need to have moving forward to address really, the outstanding issues that we have here heard in this House, but also when I travelled to the communities, those that have been shared with me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my statement, I do appreciate the support that is made available through the Department of Culture and Heritage for community-based activities for elders. However, I feel that we need a territory-wide strategy to ensure that our elders can participate fully in society and to support their mental health and physical well-being.

Will the minister commit to tabling the government's Comprehensive Elders Strategy at our next sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member. I couldn't agree more that our elders require the supports at all levels and it will require a whole-of-government approach. There are many different support programs, whether it is the Culture and Heritage, whether it is the Qulliq Energy Corporation, or whether it is the Health department. It does really encompass upon really a whole-of-government approach.

The very important work of selecting the contractor to do this very important work is just undergoing. The consultation would be a part of that, but I can commit that the elders strategy would be brought back to the House at an appropriate time when we have been given the opportunity to visit the communities, to visit the elders, to visit the key stakeholders that are really crucial to be heard and to provide us with the options and the opportunities that would come thereafter. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 216 – 6(2): Remote Work Policy

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "have a very good day" to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask questions to the Human Resources minister. When COVID hit there was a lot of work out

of home or remote working, and this was talked about in the winter sitting. I believe it was at that time the minister said they were working on a remote work policy. I would just like to get an update from the minister as to whether there is a remote work policy in place as of today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the member for that question. When it was brought up the last time, it wasn't quite completed yet. We are currently working the remote working policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that update that the policy is still being worked on. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that in the policy, somewhere in the policy it would be stated that remote work can only be done for Nunavut residents within Nunavut. Can the minister assure the House that the remote work policy will only be implemented for Nunavummiut that live in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that question. We have had discussions on how best to approach the remote work policy, and we have also talked about having this policy

apply only for Nunavummiut. We're looking at different options. For example, at the Department of Health, if you were a doctor, there are in some cases they have to work through Telehealth. We hope to make sure that the remote work policy applies to all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the explanation from the minister for the explanation. I understand about Health needs, but the remote work policy I believe would cover the whole of the workforce within Nunavut. I could understand that there might be some circumstances where it might be needed, but I would hope that in general remote work policy workers, sorry remote workers would all be Nunavummiut and living in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, if this were happening in other jurisdictions; take for example a jurisdiction close to where I live; Manitoba, if the Manitoba Government found out that they had a whole bunch of workers that were in the public service in Manitoba that lived in Nunavut, there would be an uproar in Manitoba. So I believe that this policy has to be so that it benefits Nunavummiut. I understand when you can't fill a critical position because there is no housing or there is no office space that this may be the answer. This is one of the tools in the toolbox that can be used, but it is a slippery slope that we can go down. So I'll ask the minister again. Let me rephrase. When the policy is completed, will the minister share it with it with House as soon as the remote work policy completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for that question. I am not stating my support. We have to look at the salary and the northern allowance, because that would be affected. Those monies would apply and I am sure it would apply to Nunavummiut, but there would have to be some changes made. We're currently working on it and with the Nunavut only we are looking at it with that in our favour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 217 – 6(2): Dental Services

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask the Minister of Health regarding dental services applied in Nunavut, and using Nunavummiut, or other jurisdictions. I am very happy that they do come to our communities.

My first question, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health, I'm sure, provides a company that provides the best services. Do you contract a dentist firm, first of all? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Department of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for asking that question. Proper teeth are part and parcel of having a healthy body.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, health maintains three dental service contracts across the territory: one for each region, which provides general practice dental services for all Nunavut communities, except Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, which have privately owned dental clinics. So these contracted services are funded by Indigenous Services Canada. Health, on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada handles the contracts with dentists and dental hygienists. In all three regions, the contract is currently held by a company called Nunavut Innovative Health Solutions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Igloolik, of course is part of my constituency. When I was going from Hall Beach to Igloolik, I was told by an individual that they had to fly out to be provided dental services. Again, when I went to Igloolik, I was told the same case where this individual got a set of dentures that didn't fit, and he was feeling properly and losing weight.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister give us a response in response in regard to individual who are not provide adequate services. When they go, are they provide dental services, either here to Iqaluit, or to Rankin Inlet, or out of the jurisdiction so that they can be provided proper services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. I'm

sorry to hear that your constituents, in those cases, have dental issues. I think that on one hand, it's unfortunate to hear that people are experiencing dental pain; on the other hand, it's good to hear that they're voicing those concerns. I would hope that those concerns would translate into referrals.

The member's question regarding accessing services outside of their home community, depending on the community, there are some specialist services that are provided at the community level. The number of days per community is determined by Indigenous Services Canada. The short answer is, yes, that it is possible for patients to be referred outside of the community, if the service is not available. It really can vary, depending on the individual's need, and the referral would normally come from a dentist or somebody who is specializing in oral health. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your final supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the information on that important subject. I would like to touch base on the evaluation part, as the minister has stated that Nunavut Innovative is the contract from the Department of Health. How does the department evaluate the quality of services provided by the dental contractors? Is there any evaluation that is, at least, looked upon? How does the evaluation work when it comes to providing contracts for these dentists? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the evaluation, so the biggest way that we evaluate a contractor, whether it's a dentist or otherwise, is it through a contract administration, basically, based on what is included in the terms of the contract? Are they meeting the required services days? Do they have the staff to provide those services?

In terms of the quality, that's a very good question. It's something I'm willing to look into further, Mr. Speaker. We do monitor the quality and complaints around services, including oral health, through the office of Patient Relations. When there are trends that are identified, if there is an increasing trend of complaints in a particular area, that can lead to changes or improvements, or investigation done on behalf of the department.

I'd be happy to gather more information from my officials regarding those contracts and the quality assurance and respond to the member at a later date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Uqurmiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Question 218 – 6(2): Investigation of Death of Community Member

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity. I would like to go back to the Minister of Health. This was an oral question that you explained. I would like to get back to that. It's not long.

I'm talking about one of my constituents. First of all, I would like to

say thank you that the need for the investigation is going ahead. I thank you on behalf of the people of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River. Many people have been affected by this where people who were on the same flight, and those people who were at the airport terminal working, and the drivers, and the escort of that person, and the family members were all affected when we were going through a very great hardship.

Even though that happened, it's good that the investigation is going ahead. That it wasn't just closed. That person that passed away left a lot of relatives, and I wanted to rise for this purpose. In the letter that you brought out, there is an RCMP investigation, or perhaps the coroner is investigating. The investigation that your department will be doing, you probably don't know how long it will take. I want to make sure that you're going to make sure that this is dealt with soon and won't just have the investigation drag on. That is my question, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't really talk about our investigation on the matter right now. Although I have deep regrets and to reiterate the comments I made the other day, we have compiled information, and reports and MLAs concerns, and our own investigation is ongoing. As to when it will be completed I can't say right now. However, I will not want the family to wait a long time as well, so we are trying to deal with this as soon as we can and try and get it completed as soon as we

can. That is our investigation. That is what I can say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for informing us about that. However, I just want to say it is not a real question, I will just finish what I have to say.

After the investigation, I want to make sure that the family does not hear on the news about the results of the investigation. I would like the family to be met with and informed personally. I want to make sure they don't get the news on Facebook or a computer. I would like the family to be told personally by someone from your office in order to take care with the family. That is why I rose. I want to make sure that they don't hear it from the general public. That is all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for talking about that, about families. We have met with the family and have been spoken to. We will remember what the member said when this is being worked on in the coming days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 219 – 6(2): Habitable Housing Units in Iqaluit

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the

Minister of Nunavut Housing Corporation on the topic of overcrowding across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, we are all aware that there are a number of factors that lead to overcrowding across Nunavut. The one thing that can be used to mitigate is to bring existing inventory up to livable standards.

Mr. Speaker, through questions that I have been asking since March and then followed up in May and then followed up in this session, we have come to learn that here in Iqaluit alone, there were 61 staff units that were in unlivable conditions. Back in May I had asked the minister for the public housing numbers and at the time the minister stated, “I don’t have a detailed number of how many units are in disrepair in the City of Iqaluit and how long it will take to have them replaced and repaired and habitable again. I would be glad to provide it to my colleague and Members of this House when I get those detailed numbers.”

I’m asking today, Mr. Speaker, if the minister has those numbers. Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Well, I haven’t had a question in a couple of days, so it’s nice to stand up again.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I do and I appreciate the patience of my colleague in receiving the information. Mr. Speaker, it’s true; we have a severe overcrowding and housing shortage across our territory. Even if we were to house everybody and

give everybody a house, it doesn’t alleviate the problem that some families would still be in two- and three-bedroom houses with 12 people in it. We’re a long way from having adequate houses for everybody, but the priority we have right now is at least getting homes and beds for everybody necessary.

In terms of the staff housing issue in Iqaluit, we have 731 units in Iqaluit and of those, we have 132 vacant. That number fluctuates, Mr. Speaker. Of those 132, 82 of them are immediately ready for occupancy as of October 7 and 50 need major repairs, but as of today, that number might be changing too because it’s not the same houses. Every time people are moving out of houses, we’re finding that there has to be some minor repairs and the odd one, major repairs, so then that goes on the wait-list while the ones that are being repaired get repaired. With this, it’s a floating number and at any given time, we will always have roughly those numbers around 50 needing major repair and 50 needing minor repair. That number fluctuates constantly.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that answers his question.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It did answer previous questions that I had with regard to staff housing, but my questions were on public housing. Mr. Speaker, I would hate to burn up another question, so maybe if the minister has those numbers, he can provide them in the next response.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers that the minister just provided, I'm able to update that from the 61 to now 65 units that are under disrepair or in non-inhabitable condition.

Mr. Speaker, back in May the minister had committed...well, maybe not committee. It might be a stronger word than the minister stated. The minister stated, "We're trying to turn those around within anywhere from 15 to 90 days," meaning the repair progress of the staff units that are under disrepair.

Mr. Speaker, we're now near the 150 days. I wonder if the minister can... . Maybe more units have been added, but I see even more units that are unavailable for habitation than what was available at the end of May, with the commitment from the minister that there would be an attempt to turn those units around anywhere from two weeks to three months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we speak, Iqaluit has 563 people looking for access to public housing units. It's the highest in our territory. In fact it's a little bit more than the whole of Kitikmeot communities needing public housing. We have all the communities as much as we can in terms of priorities for housing. In our housing strategy we have for Iqaluit planned in terms of 2023 builds, we are looking at building 18 affordable housing units and 46 market units, at a total of 84 for next year, and beyond that we have more plans so that we could improve the way

that housing has been allocated in the city of Iqaluit.

It just makes me shudder to think what would be happening if we didn't have homeless shelters and the volunteer community in Iqaluit that is working hard to provide beds for those that are in need. We will continue to work better and to work with the local housing association to ensure that those houses that are in need of repair are able to be repaired at an appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if the minister understood my question. I was asking for an update on, back in May, the 61 units now 65 units, on what the turnaround time would be to put those units back into inventory. Unfortunately I'll have to follow up at a later date to get that information.

Mr. Speaker, another issue that has an impact on overcrowding, obviously across Nunavut, but even more exaggerated or more obvious here in Iqaluit, when we look at over and under accommodated families, some forced moves due to units being unavailable for continual habitation, and another issue of retirements from the Government of Nunavut of people that are in staff housing who become homeless when they retire, but specifically I would like to direct my question regarding forced moves.

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of people here in Iqaluit that were accommodated through staff housing over a number of

years ago when their children were young, and we all know the current housing situation in the territory is very challenging, to say the least, across the territory but even more so here in Iqaluit and when somebody is forced to move and still has adult children living with them, they are not counted in the Staff Housing Policy as dependants, yet they still live with their parents because they've got nowhere to go. There is no housing for them to go to. Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of people that are in two- and three-bedroom units that are being forced to move to one-bedroom units because their children are adults and they don't have a physical or mental disability, yet they have nowhere to go.

Mr. Speaker, I can't believe it's the intention of this government through its Staff Housing Policy to create homelessness, and I would like the commitment from the minister that he will work with his colleague, the Minister of Human Resources, to make sure that these families are accommodated appropriately at the very bare minimum of the current unit size that they're in right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think my colleague understands that it is absolutely not the intention of the government to create homelessness, Mr. Speaker.

There are unforeseen circumstances that arose from creating staff housing for government employees. When they retire, those staff housing units need to

be used by working staff. There are currently government employees that don't have housing at all, so they need to go into staff housing also and there are people who are working who are in no kind of housing, government or non-government employees; right now just in Iqaluit alone, almost 600 people.

I understand the frustration that goes to the municipalities up to the local housing associations and organizations and trying to deal with staff housing when you have people who are in government staff housing who are now going to end up homeless. Is it right to put them in the line to take the house from a local housing association house if it becomes vacant over top of the 700 other people that are in line for that house? It's not one that anybody would want to juggle. I don't think it would be fair to put that kind of pressure on the local housing association board members who have to decide whether you get a house or he gets a house. It's a difficult situation. It's a no-win situation and it's one that we are trying to work through right now with Family Services and other departments, is trying to figure out... .

We do have a population within the Government of Nunavut workforce who are in staff housing who are going to need to get out. With the current, in some cases, allotment of staff housing that are currently vacant, is there something we can't do to fix that? There might be a way to remedy that situation and we are currently looking at that and trying to speed it up as quick as possible so we don't end up with retired, homeless government employees.

Our goal is to stop homelessness, so it's a really tough situation to be in when

you're on any side of the homeless situation, Mr. Speaker. We appreciate that. We understand the frustration and we will do what we can to try to alleviate it. I believe that the plan we have right now with Nunavut 3000 at least begins to start to try to deal with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. For Bill 4, Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

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

Committee Report 006 – 6(2): Bill 4, Liquor Tax Act

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 4, *Liquor Tax Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill, as amended and reprinted, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Bill 4 will be placed on the order paper for Friday, November 4.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Committee Report 007 – 6(2): Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2021-2022

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 9, *Write-off of Assets Act, 2021-2022*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 9 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to have Bill 9 immediately referred to the Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are none. Bill 9 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 055 – 6(2): Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit 2017-18 Annual Report

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit 2017-18 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. I have two documents to table today.

Tabled Document 056 – 6(2): April 2021 to March 2022 Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner

Tabled Document 057 – 6(2): Report of Members' Absences from Sittings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the Period April 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022

The first document is the 2021-22 *Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut*.

The second document is the Report of Members' Absences from Sittings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the Period April 1, 2022 to September 30, 2022.

Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 8, 9, and 10 with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 11 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:26 and Committee resumed at 15:51*

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

Chairman (Mr. Savikataaq): Good afternoon. We're here to commence our Committee of the Whole meeting reviewing Bill 10 and I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 8, 9, and 10. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We wish to continue with the review of the 2023-24 capital main estimates of the Department of Health, followed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement to first deal with Bill 10?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 10 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2023-2024 – Health – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I would like to ask Minister Main: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Main.

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

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let Minister Main's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: For the record, Minister Main, please introduce your officials.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) With me today, I have Floreen Demavivas, Capital Planner. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Main. Today we're dealing with the Department of Health. It is only one page, Directorate, and before we get to the questions, Minister Main has asked to clarify a few things that were said. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just on two topics, I would like to provide brief clarification.

The first topic is with regard to wastewater and water infrastructure impacts from the Nunavut Recovery Centre construction. Community and Government Services has been in dialogue with the City of Iqaluit regarding the implications of the wastewater and wastewater infrastructure impacts from the Nunavut Recovery Centre project. The indication given by the city is that cost implications related to wastewater and water for these projects will be placed on the project or lot developer.

The second topic I wanted to clarify is also on the Nunavut Recovery Centre project regarding the \$5 million contribution from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. The memorandum of understanding around the project did not prescribe the \$5 million contribution to be used for any specific purpose. The

tripartite signed document was worded in a way so as to allow Nunavut Tunngavik to use the \$5 million as they saw fit in support of addictions and trauma treatment approaches within the territory, meaning that it could be used within any of the three pillars of the addictions and trauma treatment system, not necessarily earmarked for capital specifically.

Thanks for letting me clarify these matters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. As I stated earlier, we're here for the Department of Health. Directorate. Total Capital Expenditures. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I only have a few questions here. I would like to go to correspondence to the committee chair on page 2, increasing nursing and home care capacity.

While we're looking at bringing pieces of infrastructure into play, the training and the courses that are going to be needed to make sure that Nunavummiut have first opportunity for employment, I know that the minister agrees with me on this, is a priority and very important stage of any new infrastructure that we bring in.

In the information that the minister provided, he stated that the personal care skills course is being planned here in Iqaluit, starting last week. My first question to the minister: is that course being offered? Is it currently being run? If the minister has the number of students available, I think it would show

how much interest there is in work in this field. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I know this had to do with the O&M budget, but this is directly related to if this will operate. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the details and whether that course is currently ongoing and the number of students, I don't have that level of detail currently available. I can definitely seek it out. I think one of the exciting aspects of the work with Nunavut Arctic College in this regard is that the college is exploring options to allow for virtual attendance from students, which I believe would be very beneficial because not all Nunavummiut who wish to take this type of course have the ability to leave their community. This is something we see as having a lot of potential benefits. We're very excited to work with the college to develop it further. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the flexibility. It was information from the minister himself to the committee, so I deemed it as fair game. I'm glad that the Chairman agreed with me.

Mr. Chairman, along those same lines but specific to the Nunavut Recovery Centre, in the correspondence from the minister on the first page it makes a statement that the program needs will likely require a similar staff model, regardless of how the facility is

operated, for example, public agency, not for profit, etcetera.

My first question under that topic is: what operating method is this facility going to be operated under? Will it be a public government or is it through a not for profit or some other type of agency? Has that decision been made yet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) At this point that decision has not yet been made. The two options that we are looking at are listed in the correspondence, either public agency, or a not for profit model. That decision and those discussions around that topic are active, and involve partners at Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. It's a complex matter, which needs a lot of careful consideration. We know that these services are badly needed, so when we're looking at the operating model, we want to balance both the short-term needs, which is we need these services in territory, available as soon as possible, but we also have needs around the quality assurance of the services. Needs related to viability that need to be taken into account when choosing an operating model. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: I would like to thank the minister sincerely for his response. I do know it's a very complicated issue. I'm glad to hear that there is active dialogue on the operational method for this facility. I think it's a very important step

that was recently missed with another department with a major piece of infrastructure here in Iqaluit that still doesn't have an operational plan, even after the building has been completed and the keys have been handed over. I don't want to ever see that happen again. So I appreciate the minister's action on that.

My final question on that topic, Mr. Chairman, is: when it talks about the similar staffing model in the substantiation sheet, it doesn't give an estimate of staffing. The reason I'm asking that is we were talking a lot about staff housing needs for this facility yesterday and just to give us an idea of what some of those anticipated needs might be, it would be useful for the committee to know the estimated staffing numbers, and if the minister has such a breakdown, the number of personal care worker positions, or fairly entry level positions, to professionals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

>> *Laughter*

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the staffing numbers, specific numbers that will be needed for the facility, I don't have those available currently in terms of the detailed numbers that I believe the member is interested in.

When we look at the substantiation sheet which details the different areas of the facility, we can get a sense of the types of positions that will be required. Where there is a residential accommodation

area, that would require administrative staff and perhaps maintenance. Counselling and programming would involve counselling staff. There will be a need for medical professional. Childcare; the facility will include a day care, so there will be some staffing needs around that; administration as well as support services.

In terms of the additional detail around the numbers of anticipated staff, I do understand that there has been some detailed consideration put into that by the development team, and I apologize if it's not included in the substantiation sheet, but I can certainly seek that out and provide it to the committee as soon as possible. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will look forward to the committee receiving that information. I think it's very critical during the design phase, when you're talking about all of these different services that are going to be provided to make sure there is adequate space, made sure that it occurs during the design stage of any project. The staffing levels and what types of services are to be provided are critical to the design. For now, I'll look forward to getting the information from the minister and his office and I'll follow up at a later date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I'm done.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment. I don't know if Minister Main wants to comment or not? No. Okay. We're here to deal with Directorate.

Total Capital Budget Expenditures. \$32,000,454. Any questions? Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question about why this was deferred to 2027, which would be the operational year. That's five years. When we're looking at the Qikiqtarjuaq health centre, it's not going to be built for a very long time. Why is it that there is a priority given to this project? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The people of Qikiqtarjuaq have been waiting a long time and this is the earliest time possible that we will be able to build that unit due to financial restraints. There are different capital projects that are being initiated by the government and we're looking at approximately \$40.8 million for this project. This estimated number is quite outdated now. It's probably going to be more than the \$40 million. It's class D and this number is outdated. (interpretation ends) It's not current. (interpretation) We anticipate that the number will be a lot more than what is written here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister for that information. We've been waiting a long time for that health centre. I'm glad that it's in the books, but the difference of this construction, with construction beginning so far away

in 2027, it is way far in the future. The estimated costs will probably rise.

Again, I have another question on another subject. With patients getting referrals outside of their community, there are a large number of Nunavummiut who are referred for assessment and reassessed, time and time again, to southern hospitals. (interpretation ends) What considerations have been given to purchasing additional testing equipment for use within the territory so that fewer Nunavut residents will have to travel south? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the member for the question. It gives an opportunity to talk about some of the work we're doing around virtual care. It's really exciting and it's something that's helping to address needs at the community-level. I should mention that in some cases our ability to deliver specialists clinics in community in-person is hampered by issues like space issues at the health centres, particularly in communities like Qikiqtarjuaq.

We have newly updated virtual care equipment and software right across the territory. We've introduced new virtual care clinics, including virtual cardiology clinics, virtual obstetrics, and a gynecology clinic, and a virtual fracture clinic. These are currently being rolled out across the territory one community at a time. I have some statistics to share: there were 2,238 clinical sessions

scheduled. This is between April 1 and September 30 of this year. There 43 different clinical specialities included in that, and 257 clinical providers. It really is an exciting area of development and it's something that we couldn't have done without assistance from our federal partners who have provided funding to us in terms of bolstering our virtual care capabilities across Nunavut. Thank you very much to them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for that information which is very good to hear. Listening to your comments and providing diagnostic services from April to September, as you indicated, my question is about providing good interpreters to be included in that project so that there is good communication between the client and the service provider for those who don't understand English or speak it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. That is a question that is under O&M. If the minister would like to answer it, the minister can. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, very briefly, in terms of virtual care and the language requirements, we do have clerk interpreters employed at the health centre level who are able to assist when clients have interpretation needs. That is quite specialized skill set when it comes to things like medical terminology and we really do appreciate that service they provide across the

territory. (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also (interpretation ends) under the long-term care facility, (interpretation) in Baker Lake, there was an elder facility. In English, I believe it is called the (interpretation ends) Martha Talirug Elders' Home. (interpretation ends) It Baker Lake it had a 8 long-term beds and was operated by a third party organization until 2017. When the Department of Health took the ownership of the facility, it was closed down for repairs. Due to that fact, year of 2019 in October, it was announced that facility would be reopening, and then I see that on June 2021, the Member for Baker Lake tabled a letter signed by 311 Baker Lake residents requesting that the elders centre be reopened. To this fact, I want to ask if this given the respect of Baker Lake residents (interpretation) and they even signed a petition asking to reopen the elder facility. Can the minister inform us about that please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, in terms of the Martha Talirug Centre, I think the member summarized some of the history around it. So currently Health does have plans to reopen the facility. It will be not be an elder home, however. We are bursting at the seams in Baker Lake having visited the health centre there. We have staff working in rooms that are one room that is maybe it's the size of this desk. It's

unfortunate to see, and so we are planning to renovate the facility and put it into use for our health staff in the community. Particularly we are looking at homecare and possibility some mental health services to be provided out of there. I realize the member's question was around elder care and the need for that at the community-level. I really appreciate the committee Chair's comments yesterday encouraging the department to look at smaller facilities for future planning. It's something that's quite exciting in terms of the budget implications for the future.

We all know that we have squarely in our mandate committed to opening two new facilities in the regional hubs of Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit. It's with an eye to that, to achieving those facilities or seeing them built, that Health has entered into preliminary and exploratory, non-binding discussions with the Nunasi Corporation regarding the construction of the Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay long-term care facilities. As I mentioned, it's currently in the early stages, but I think it's exciting in terms of what opportunities could be opened up through the collaboration with the Inuit organizations and corporations such as Nunasi.

I realize that's a little bit off the topic of Baker Lake, but I wanted to share that with Member Killiktee. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. It's something that really needs good attention to address.

Going on with the line of questioning, as we know, mental health is a growing area of concern across Nunavut. My last question is: how many Nunavut communities currently have buildings or space dedicated to mental health and addictions programming?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I know that was alluded to yesterday, but if the minister just wants to give us a little more information on that. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you for raising that. Mental health is a really important area to discuss.

I don't have numbers in front of me to provide to the committee. As I mentioned previously, in some communities, services are provided in the health centre; in some communities there are stand-alone facilities; in some communities we're currently searching for office space, so there are positions but there's not an office to put them into.

If it would be acceptable to the committee, I can provide a written summary or a snapshot of our mental health facility status on a community-by-community basis if that would be helpful. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Main. Yes, it would be helpful and we will be eagerly waiting for that correspondence from the minister. Next person on my list: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and

Mr. Demavivas. Welcome to the Assembly.

I would like to begin my first line of questioning on the Nunavut Recovery Centre. As was previously stated, the initial budget included a line item for staff housing. I understand the rationale for the need to remove that due to cost pressures. However, I just want to state that I found that very unfortunate. I think it would have been ideal to have a new staff housing complex built in close proximity to this recovery centre to allow easy access of staff between work and their homes. I wish you luck in your discussions with the Nunavut Housing Corporation in securing sufficient staff housing units necessary to recruit and retain employees prior to the completion and opening of this recovery centre, and I do hope that the units will be in somewhat close proximity and won't necessarily be spread out throughout the city.

I wanted to thank the minister for that brief update on the non-binding discussions with Nunasi for the two regional long-term care facilities. I'm glad to hear that the minister is working with one of the organizations that are jointly owned by all of our regional Inuit associations. I see that as a positive collaboration and I hope that it will lead to agreement which will see quality facilities being built which are equal or lesser than the cost per metre that the GN is currently paying for these facilities. I wanted to thank the minister for that update and I look forward to learning more about those negotiations as they proceed.

I want to move on to the Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility. This is one of

the projects which I was referring to yesterday with Community and Government Services, one of the major capital projects which will include half a million dollar power bills to operate the facility. I wanted to thank the minister for his response and the letter to the committee and his commitment to exploring additional energy efficient and renewable energy solutions to reduce the use of fossil fuels to operate our health care facilities. I wanted to thank the minister for that commitment and I look forward to following up on that next year.

Returning to the subject of staff housing, the Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility is going to require 48 new employees. As that facility nears completion, I was wondering if the minister and the Department of Health have been able to solidify necessary staff housing units that will be required to recruit and retain those 48 employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I know it's edging on O&M, but it's directly related to the operation of the new facility, so I'll allow it. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the number of staff housing units that would be required for the Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility, I don't have a specific number.

Availability of staff housing, as the member knows, varies. It's typically correlated with the classification of the job, historically anyway. I can't speak for the Minister of Human Resources, of course, but the staff housing is correlated with higher educational requirements

and the higher the educational requirements, the more likely there is to be staff housing associated with the position.

We are planning to start hiring for the facility in April 2023 and ramping up those hiring efforts into the end of the 2023 calendar year, with an intention to, once the building is completed, be in operations in the winter of 2024 and staff housing will be subject to availability through the Nunavut Housing Corporation and human resources. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for allowing that somewhat O&M-related question. I would like to thank the minister for providing that response. As these major capital projects near completion and eventually come online, it will inevitably bring with it a number of newly created government positions. I think that the Department of Health had gone in the right direction initially with the Nunavut Recovery Centre and the idea of incorporating a line item within the budget for the construction of staff housing units. I think that it is imperative to the success of the capital projects in communities where staff housing is in a crunch, which is practically every community, but I would like to ask the minister, in the negotiations with Nunasi on the long-term care facilities in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay, if staff housing construction would be included in the scope of those budgets. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The discussions with Nunasi are focused on the long-term care facilities themselves and specifically we're interested in this partnership to see whether it could be neutrally beneficial in terms of reducing the drain on Vote 2 capital appropriations in the coming year.

I'm not aware of whether staff housing has been part of the discussions, but I can certainly enquire. It is an area that is a concern for the Department of Health and one specific example I can provide is that new health centres used to be built with housing units attached to them. The facility in Naujaat is a good example, which has staff housing units attached to the facility. More recent builds have gone away from that design or approach, but it is one that Health is looking at reconsidering because we are running up against staff housing issues which are impacting our ability to provide essential services at the community level.

Without the delegated authority to enter into leases, we're sent to the same pool of housing as every other department. I just wanted to add that in terms of having health centres with staff housing units attached, it's something we could be going back to in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate you recognizing me again. I wasn't quite prepared for all of my questions when you first called upon me.

Mr. Chairman, when we look at new health centre projects, I know there are not any upcoming new ones on this, but when we look at the design for like Qikiqtarjuaq type projects, when we look at modifications for the addition of safe rooms for mental health patients, isolation rooms for communicable diseases such as TB or COVID, and palliative care beds, how does the Department of Health determine which modifications, if any, will be included in the design of new health centres? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a great question. Well, I think the first thing to mention is that we are continually developing the best practices or the model in terms of health centres.

If we're looking at Qikiqtarjuaq and what that facility is going to include, we would look at the most recent builds, which are in Sanikiluaq and Kinngait, in terms of what's working, what's not working, were there any mistakes made, or was there anything we left out, but there is also an aspect of the community size which is considered. To a certain extent, it depends on the community's size. For example, if the health centre expansion in Arviat should go ahead, it would include a birthing centre and that's due to the size of the community. It wouldn't necessarily be a component

that would be standard in every new health centre, just as an example.

Perhaps Mr. Demavivas would have more to add on this, if you will allow, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In Sanikiluaq and in Kinngait, in the health centre, there is already mental health space that's added. This is going to be our standards for future health centres and there is also space for TB. The standards for all new health centres must have all these spaces. Also, there is a dental clinic inside the building. Most of our health centres right now don't have a dental clinic inside the health centres and for future designs, we will consider this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm happy to hear that safe rooms and negative pressure rooms are to be included in future designs.

With current health centres, security has been an ongoing concern, and I'm not going to get into the outrageous amounts of money that we're forced to spend on security, but what kinds of infrastructure modifications have been implemented to improve security and prevent vandalism at Nunavut's health centres? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Mr. Demavivas respond if it's alright with you. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the new health centres, we're installing exterior cameras, so there are lots of cameras installed. It's part of the design. We also include the intrusion alarm systems. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe if the minister or Mr. Demavivas would be able to provide an example of some communities that have had modifications made to help enhance security or prevent vandalism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sanikiluaq's new health centre and Kinngait's health centre have these systems right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The two new health centres have had security measures built into the design and construction of the facilities. Where I'm trying to go is: are there any existing health centres other than the two new ones that have had renovations

made to help enhance security or help prevent vandalism? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As this is on the same topic, I'll just refer it to Mr. Demavivas. Oh, sorry. Minister Main.

Go ahead, Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We were playing camera tag there.

The short answer is no, not to my knowledge. There haven't been any infrastructure modifications. It's dealing with security issues. It has mostly been dealt with through O&M, operations modifications with security contractors that the member referred.

In Baker Lake, for example, which I mentioned is a facility that's not meeting the community's needs, we have security personnel in the facility stationed at the door, and then we don't have any proper space for the security guard other than a desk at the door. The security guard has had to do some of their work out of the staff's coffee room. You get a sense of the types of infrastructure issues that now the staff don't have a proper coffee room that they can gather in. That's impacting their workplace experience.

The capital issues and constraints that we're facing are very real, and that's just a small example. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just going to take a step aside from

some of the construction and go to the ongoing lifecycle budget. I'm more interested in last year's budget; the work that was expected to be completed. There were a couple of topics that is of personal interest to me on page 205 under the project details. It's got the expansion of central sterilization room to enable two surgery suites to be able to use simultaneously. What is the status of that work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That work is ongoing. We're expecting to have that work completed by the summer of 2023. I'm sorry; there are more specifics that Mr. Demavivas can add, or he may correct, which I also will allow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Currently, CGS is still working with their Procurement Division. We are targeting within end of this month to issue their request for tender. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to keep on the Qikiqtani General Hospital topic before I go back into the equipment topic again, I'm just going to ask on the third point in there, the parking lot site development. I know this project seems to keep falling by the wayside, but there are some safety

concerns of that parking railing, where it's getting more and more compromised due to erosion. I would just like to get an update on the status of that. I haven't noticed any work being done. Maybe I'm missing something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just to keep the flow going as the conversation was from Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We delegated \$140,000 for CGS to engage a consultant to have a study with the parking lot. We will do a cost evaluation of the cost and how many parking lots can be added. As of now, it's not reasonable to expand the parking lot because also there are city lines between the areas outside of that new clinic. Right now we need to make a decision whether we'll proceed with the expansion of the parking lot or not, considering the costs and the number of the parking lots that need to be added. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll make an assumption, and then I'll from the minister or Mr. Demavivas that the safety component of that railing will also be included in that study work with Community and Government Service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Yes, the safety issues are part of that project.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hate assuming anything, so I was glad that that was a good one to make that leap on.

I would like to go back into, when you're talking about equipment and renovations needed to be...I used the example yesterday of the lab in the Rankin Inlet Health Centre that needed to be expanded to accommodate some of the diagnostic equipment. What consideration has been given to purchasing additional testing equipment for use within the territory so that fewer Nunavut residents will have to travel south? I'll just preface this a little bit, I'll use my mammography as an example. I know that a few years ago there was a mammography machine brought here into Iqaluit and the Qikiqtani General Hospital, yet I still hear concerns about accessing services with that piece of equipment specifically.

What I'm getting at is when new equipment to bring into a health centre or a region to help offset medical travel and keep care closer to home, what considerations are taken into account? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Well, I think mammography is a great example of a service that wasn't previously available in-territory. I think that in terms of

what's looked at, we look at the volume of patients that are being seen, whether the expense around the piece of equipment can be justified, in terms of the volume of clients that are being sent out.

We also have to consider the human side of the equation. I've talked a lot about our capital and infrastructure issues, the Department of Health is also facing serious human resource issues and, in some cases, we are struggling to staff or provide existing services in this current environment.

I would hate for us to take a step backwards in terms of starting to send people out of territory for things that we're currently able to do in territory, but if we can't get that human resource piece addressed, and if we can't be competitive nationally, we could have the best equipment in the world sitting on the shelf and we'd have nobody to operate it. I apologize if we're going straight into operations and maintenance land, but the two are very closely connected. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member bringing up the need of accommodating the human factor associated with medical travel. It was also brought up; I believe Mr. Sammurtok brought it up yesterday on considering any addition modifications to the three regional health centres. Just to go a little step further, when you're looking at renovations or expansions to regional health centres, we want to offer new services to our residents that aren't

currently being provided for in Nunavut, or in a smaller scale. I'll use cancer treatment as an example.

Here in Iqaluit there have been some great strides by the Department of Health in the last few years on bringing some cancer cares into the territory. I know there is the ventilation hoods for mixing the drugs that are needed for cancer care, but I'm sure all, if not most of us, know somebody that is fighting that terrible disease and has to go for extended periods of time in the south, sometimes months at a time while they're receiving care and the travel policies, I'm not going to get into that of the time limits of care.

When we're looking at bringing more care closer to home, are there any other plans in place to bring not just the diagnostic equipment that's needed, but the care factor again: cancer treatment, dialysis treatment, enhanced laboratory services? What is the plan on bringing some services? As the minister mentioned, you take an evaluation of how many people have to travel, what the human factor is, and when you take those into consideration, are there any new ventures that the Department of Health is looking at introducing to Nunavut? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thanks for the question. I think one of the most recent service enhancements that we've had is the obstetrics and gynecology program at the Qikiqtani General Hospital, so that's an example that is something that's already in

motion. We're looking very closely at dialysis in terms of what is feasible. We've done some detailed analysis of the topic in terms of, again, not just what equipment would be needed, but what types of human resources would be needed around dialysis and what's feasible to offer in-territory.

So that's something that we are currently examining. The lab services topic that the member mentioned, we are struggling to keep our labs operating with our current services. In an ideal world we would be rolling at full capacity with indeterminate staff and build a strong team, and then that is kind of the building blocks for additional services, but at the current time, staffing is a difficult topic, or it's a barrier for us. So for us to be looking at expansions and additions in terms of lab services at a time where we are challenged to maintain what we have on offer, it might not be the best time for us to consider that, but we are working quite hard on the human resource aspect to see what we can do to stabilize things.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know there are many professionals within the Department of Health that are working hard every day to help improve the health outcomes of Nunavummiut. I do apologize to the committee. There was a question asked earlier today on the pediatric care unit and unfortunately I was grabbing some papers from my office. I missed the dialogue back and forth, but when we're looking at the renovations that are to be needed when

you're changing the scope of a portion of a facility such as the Qikiqtani General Hospital, I know it was announced sometime back that the pediatric unit would be up and running I think about a year ago or so. I could be mistaken, but I would just like to get a update on the status of the pediatric unit taken over the space that it was originally intended to be moved to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Qikiqtani General Hospital pediatric ward is currently in the planning phase and the planning phase is on hold currently. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: One word; why? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Budget. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: A lot of quick answers and questions. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope the chairman will allow this because part of it is the capital. Is the capital budget that is in question or the O&M budget that is in question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. That is reasonable. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We are putting together a business case to secure the person years that would be attached to that pediatrics ward, so it an O&M type of matter, but I think as the member will understand, we are also quite stretch in terms of the capital dollars that we are able to secure. For example, the ongoing lifecycle items, that \$3.5 million per year, our assets are depreciating faster than they should be because we don't have enough money to take care of them properly. So yes, just to illustrate the crunch that we're in. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just want to get back to the capital estimates from your opening comments. As prioritized by Health, further planning initiatives to be considered in future capital estimates processes include the replacement of the Kugluktuk community health centre.

(interpretation) The question I would like to ask is in regard to the health centre that was identified for renovations, and when done, it will have a lot more space for employees and will have space for the patients going to the health centre as well as they will be adding an addition. This is all I wanted to ask about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Yes, thank you for that question. The health centre in Kugluktuk is not in the preplanning process yet, (interpretation ends) but once it does and it goes from preplanning to planning, there will be identification in terms of the staffing complement and what, if any additional staff will be required in the community.

So that would be part of those that would be identified in the design and planning, and then typically the department would come through the operations and maintenance budgeting process to request additional positions to be funded. For example, the Rankin Inlet long-term care facility, now that that is going to be coming online, the department will be, through the budgeting process, bringing on new staff to staff that facility.

So in Kugluktuk's case, if there is additional staff, that would be through the operations and maintenance side. I hope I answered the question, and if I didn't, if I misunderstood I apologize. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The next person on my list: Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is regarding the medical travel in the Kivalliq, because they have to pass through Rankin Inlet to and from Winnipeg. When the weather or the plane becomes mechanical, patients from the surrounding communities have no place to stay due to the case that the hotels are booked solid. My question to

the minister is: are there any plans in future to build a boarding home in Rankin Inlet to service the surrounding communities for the patients that travel to and from Winnipeg? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Currently the Department of Health has no plans for a boarding home in Rankin Inlet. We have discussed this in the House and as the member knows, the numbers of travellers don't support the concept of a boarding home, so we turn to local hotels in terms of medical travellers for their accommodations.

In terms of Rankin Inlet being the travel hub, I understand that to some hotel operators, the medical travellers are an important source of income for those private businesses. There are, in some cases, travel options, let's say for Arviat, for example, where there are now flights that go to Gillam and then straight onto Winnipeg. I have heard some feedback on that travel route that it has proved beneficial to the medical travellers in terms of reducing their travel time and also the issues around delays.

Baker Lake is the other community that due to travel schedules seems to be getting impacted the most and we are currently looking at what options are available to accommodate them in the case of weather or mechanical issues. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On November 19, 2021, the first sitting of the Sixth Assembly, all 22 MLAs tabled a petition signed by their constituents calling on the Government of Nunavut to build an elders home in every community and provide resources to handle complex care needs. On March 18, 2022, the Premier tabled the following response to the petition:

“I’m tabling a response of petition 1 – 6(2) to 22 – 6(1), dated November 19, 2021 involving building elders care facilities in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, providing quality medical care to Nunavut elders is a priority to the Government of Nunavut. It is important to remember that elders care goes beyond health care and requires a government-wide approach. The Government of Nunavut remains committed to meeting the long-term care needs to Nunavummiut and providing quality care in a culturally appropriate manner. Mr. Speaker, we will carry out on our mandated actions in collaboration with the Sixth Assembly with a broad input from elders, families, communities, and partners to enable Nunavummiut to age with dignity and care.”

My question is regarding the Martha Talirug Centre in Baker Lake. Will it be reopening as an elder care facility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok, that question was asked and it was answered, and the minister stated that it will be reopened, but not as an elders facility. The building is owned by Health and will be used for health-

related services, but will not be reopened as an elder facility. Mr. Sammurtok, any more questions? Minister Main, do you want to supplement? Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to add in terms of the petition, which was requesting, if I recall correctly, smaller facilities in each community. While we are fully committed two new facilities in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay, as highlighted in our mandate, which follow an institutional model, there are some quite exciting initiatives coming forward which would fall under our residential model of care. This is something that department is interested in investigating further. There are the potential lower operating costs, benefits to residents and staff, so that is something that in the longer term may hold potential for, for Nunavut, particularly in smaller communities.

I don’t want to raise expectations that facilities will be built tomorrow, of course, but it is I think in line with the standing committee Chair’s comments that around elder care there have been changes in recent years during the pandemic. It’s something that Department of Health is interested in looking at further, in collaboration with our colleagues, with our fellow departments, because as mentioned, it’s not just the Department of Health issue. It’s a government-wide issue. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Correct me on this one too.

Currently how many elders are on waiting lists for a bed in a Nunavut-based long-term care facility and what is the current status of the long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet, and will it be completed by the winter of 2024? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Just one moment. Thank you. (interpretation ends) Currently we have seven individuals on the waiting list for continuing care and that is for all regions and facilities, and that is just a snapshot as of September 30 of this year.

In terms of the Rankin Inlet long-term care facility, the structural steel works have been completed. The building envelope and roofing works are progressing and the contractor is planning to continue work through the winter. In terms of timing, I believe that the facility is on track in terms of the expected timelines. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The next person on my list: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome again, Minister Main and Mr. Demavivas.

Minister, a couple of things; one question I have is around the Qikiqtani General Hospital's artwork that is on the exterior of the building. A number of individuals have raised concerns the steps that were taken to paint over what is well-known as a historical piece of artwork that was on the side of the clinic

side, which is the old hospital. I'm wondering if there is any possibility of having that art restored. Farther down along the outside of the corridor that connects the two sides of the hospital, in a courtyard as well as on the other side of that, actually, the old ambulance bay, there are paintings of spray paint art that was created by an artist that kind of lost the well regard of many Iqalummiut. However, that's not what I'm here to address.

I've had people share concerns that that specific artwork that was created can be a little bit alarming for people who are living some specific kind of mental health issues, such as paranoia and schizophrenia, because that artwork depicts animals that don't have pupils and it can just raise some major or some discomfort in people who are viewing that art. We know that a lot of people who are in search of support for their mental health issues do end up at the Qikiqtani General Hospital and they may be affected by that art.

I'm wondering if there is any move to also just make some changes to that artwork so that it's less distressing for people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, this is an issue that has been flagged to us previously and it's something that the department is looking into. We have tasked the Office of Patient Relations to work with partners in terms of what options are available. The cost would be quite minimal, as I understand it, but the question for us is

looking to include that under ongoing lifecycle where, as stated in the substantiation sheet, we're strapped for money. Health and safety hazards to the staff or public are the highest priority in terms of allocating that money, but the concerns around the artwork have been noted and we are committed to looking into them. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Minister Main. Just for clarification, are you referring only to those pieces of art that may impact people's mental health or are you including the restoration of the art piece along the walls? Actually, if memory serves me correct, that wolf also doesn't have the pupils. Thank you for that response.

Staying on that, who is the Office of Patient Relations working with for specific advice about restoration and handling art? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll allow it in terms of it's the structure, as long as we're not talking about art in the hospital so much. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have that level of detail in terms of who specifically they're working with. Those issues were flagged with us quite recently and I can commit to updating committee members as that work with partners progresses. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for allowing that question. Just to be clear, I was interested in hearing who the OPR would be consulting with and not deep specifics on that.

On the issue of all of the new builds that are going on, we know that there is a lot of art that is stored at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, outside of Nunavut, and when there is new construction, we have an opportunity to provide a culturally appropriate space, especially when you consider elders' homes and elder care centres. It's important to be surrounded by what you know and it helps people feel more at home if they can't bring their own art.

I wonder whether or not these capital projects do have plans that include creating space for art that doesn't require special climate control or lighting to protect it in order to work to repatriate some of the art that is stored outside of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet, we have budgeted, as mentioned in the correspondence, \$25,000 and we're looking to local artists in terms of that future work. Also, Health is going to work with Culture and Heritage on looking at whether we can showcase artwork from the GN's collection. I'm not aware of that, specifically artwork that's out-of-territory or in-territory, and similarly for the Nunavut Recovery Centre, the integrated development team is going to

be tasked with this area and it includes Inuit representation from all three regions. I'm sure that there will be consideration given around artwork for the Nunavut Recovery Centre and again, we will be looking to involve Culture and Heritage in that work.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, minister. I'm very happy to hear that. Just moving on, in May 2022 the Assembly approved a capital carryover to upgrade staff residential units at the old Taloyoak Health Centre. I recall in some setting that you did give a little bit of an update on that, but I would appreciate an update here on what is the current status of those repairs and how has staff housing access been impacted in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. The gentleman next to me knows more about the details, so I would like to have Mr. Demavivas respond to the question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Demavivas.

Mr. Demavivas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of that carryover is for the replacement of the boiler and we will delegate the remaining to CGS to engage a consultant to do a building assessment to know what priority that needs to be replaced, for example, there are windows that need to be replaced, the

kitchen, the washrooms, and the flooring. The boiler replacement is expected to be completed in March 2023. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that response, Mr. Demavivas. Minister Main, could you elaborate a little bit on the second part of my question which was: how has staff housing access been impacted in the community due to that delay? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) At this time the apartments are still in use and so as such, the staff housing availability hasn't been impacted to date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I would just like to go back to that earlier question regarding how the Department of Health determines which modifications, if any, will be included in the designs of new health centres.

One part of your response, minister, was that Arviat is getting a birthing centre. I would like to know about that. It really piqued my interest because having children at home is so important and for many years, Inuit have been asking to be able to give birth at home and not have

to convalesce outside of home and leave family.

I'm wondering if you could just elaborate a little bit more because you did mention that it's because of the size of the community. I would like to know: what is the threshold for the size of a community and what other metrics are considered in a decision to build a birthing unit or a birthing centre into any new build in a community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's an excellent question in terms of what the threshold is specifically around inclusion of a birthing centre. I don't have that information in front of me in terms of what the threshold is, but I can certainly look into that and see because the number of health centres that we do have to replace is significant and as mentioned previously, it is having real impacts on our patients and staff. It's something that the department will be pushing for quite hard on the need to bring these facilities online as soon as possible and in order to make that case, I do want to be as transparent as possible with members in this House. I apologize; I don't have that specific threshold in front of me, but I will look into it and respond in writing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister Main, would you also include in your written response

back to us the other metrics other than the size of the community? I don't know if that's what you were alluding to when you talked about thresholds, but I would like a really fulsome picture of what goes into that decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Yes, we can provide additional information about what goes into the planning in terms of aspects that are considered. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list, but I would just like to ask the minister for clarification. When Mr. Sammurtok asked about the boarding home in Rankin Inlet, minister, you stated that there was not enough travel going through to justify a boarding home. I would like to know the justification for a boarding home in Churchill, Manitoba, which I believe is only used for dental surgery, and how bed nights is that used that it is still operational. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main: If you will just bear with me a second.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Apologies for the wait.

The Iglood centre in Churchill began operating in 1980 and can accommodate 26 people. There is one room on the main floor equipped for patients with mobility issues. The primary use of the

Iglualuk facility is for patients seeking oral health procedures or surgeries and so in that aspect, it is an important facility for us that capability to have somewhere for patients to stay. However, we are looking at the utilization of that facility and looking at different options for ways to deliver those services.

On the volume of travellers through there, I recall having been questioned on that in the past, but I don't have the numbers in front of me but can of course provide them, if the Chair would prefer. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Yes, that information would be nice in terms of how many bed nights a year is that facility used because that would give us an idea of how many people travel through Rankin Inlet or are put up in the hotels there during their medical travel. We're looking forward to getting that information.

Going back to the page, Directorate, Total Capital Expenditures. \$32,454,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page H-2. Total Capital Expenditures. \$32,454,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree that we have now concluded the review of the Department of Health?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Main, if you have any short closing comments. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to thank the members for their really good questions. I do honestly and sincerely appreciate your input, your suggestions, and I hope to provide information in written form through either to the Regular Members' Caucus chair, I believe it would be addressed, to follow up on the enquiries.

I want to thank all the hard-working staff within the Department of Health, including of course Mr. Demavivas, who helped to put all of this information together and prepare me to present to you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort the witnesses out? Members, we will take a 10-minute break before we proceed with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, 10-minute break.

>> Committee recessed at 17:23 and resumed at 17:37

**Bill 10 – Appropriation (Capital) Act,
2023-2024 – Nunavut Housing
Corporation – Consideration in
Committee**

Chairman: Thank you, committee members. I would like to continue our committee members and we're here to review the capital budget of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I would like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have any officials that you would like to appear

before the committee? Minister Kusugak.

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

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and then proceed with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Okay, I'll wait for my officials to come in.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak, while we're waiting for the officials...oh, they're here? You can start with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak, opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today is Juanie Pudluk, Director of Infrastructure for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, to my left, and soon-to-be to my right who will join us is Mr. Eiryn Devereaux, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, Juanie Pudluk is no stranger to the Legislative Assemblies. His dad was the well-respected Member for the High Arctic, Ludy Pudluk, and I welcome Juanie to this Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, I am here today to present the Nunavut Housing Corporation's capital plan for 2023-24.

Mr. Chairman, the capital plan consists of \$110.5 million from the Government of Nunavut and \$28.3 million from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). CMHC's funds include \$4.29 million under the Social Housing Agreement and \$24 million through the National Housing Strategy. We have also successfully secured \$30 million from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). These funding sources bring the total NHC capital budget for 2023-24 to \$168.8 million.

Mr. Chairman, NHC capital funding for 2023-24 represents an increase of approximately \$87 million from 2022-23. The increase in investment is critical to our government's commitment to make a dent in the housing supply gap. With the proposed 2023-24 GN public housing funding of \$70 million, the federal funding just mentioned, along with funds from the Nunavut Housing Corporation existing surplus, we plan to initiate construction of approximately 175 to 200 new public housing units in this upcoming fiscal year.

Within the proposed \$110.5 million funding from the Government of Nunavut, our Modernization and Improvement (M&I) program for public housing improvements sees an increase of \$3 million. Combined with CMHC funding of \$4.3 million, this represents a total of \$14.3 million to maintain our public housing stock.

The funding for staff housing increases to \$10 million from \$6 million. These additional funds will allow the NHC to continue to build upon its current inventory of staff housing and hopefully create more opportunities for increased

retention and recruitment of employees. The NHC anticipates building 10 new staff housing units in 2023-24 as well as seeking increases within its leased staff housing portfolio.

Other areas seeking budget increases are the Local Housing Organization (LHO) Warehousing Fund and the Mobile Equipment Fund. Many local housing organization warehouse facilities are more than 40 years old and are inadequate to support current LHO operations. With the mandated commitment to increase housing construction exponentially in the coming years, it is necessary to invest in this infrastructure that is critical to maintaining housing stock. This year's increase to \$4 million will allow us to move forward with design development for facilities in Pond Inlet, Kugluktuk, Igloolik, and Gjoa Haven.

The Mobile Equipment Fund sees a slight increase of \$43,000. This support to local housing organizations will help to keep up with the increased demands for maintaining units in their communities.

Funding remains at approximately the same level as last year for modernization and improvement of staff housing, homeownership programs, and mould assessment and remediation. The Fire Damage and Replacement Fund is the only budget item to see a decrease from fiscal year 2022-23. This is because no unit replacements are scheduled for 2023-24 as the NHC did not lose any units to fire in fiscal year 2021-22.

Mr. Speaker and members, you are aware that the last two years, the NHC has cancelled construction tenders for

new public housing and staff housing units across Nunavut. We recognize the significant impact this decision has had on your constituents in all your communities and we share in your level of concern. However, as we discussed during the spring sitting earlier this year, we could not award units at \$1,000 a square foot. Doing so would make it impossible for us to "make a dent in the housing supply deficit," meaning less housing units which are so desperately needed to improve the lives of Nunavummiut.

Our government's collaboration with all Members of the Legislative Assembly, along with NTI and the regional Inuit associations, resulted in the *Katujjiluta* mandate which declared that housing is major priority for our territory. As such, the Nunavut Housing Corporation is taking significant steps to achieve this strategic objective, including, as just mentioned, the plan to start construction on approximately 175 to 200 new public housing units in 2023-24. This target represents substantial progress towards achieving the mandate of 1,000 new housing units by end of 2025. Of course this ambitious goal is subject to this Assembly's approval of the capital estimates and subsequent sittings.

On October 18, 2022 I was pleased to be a part of the public launch of the Nunavut 3000 Strategy – "Igluliuqatigiingniq" (building homes together). The strategy calls for all housing sector stakeholders and partners to leverage their collective resources and expertise to see the construction of 3,000 new units by 2030. The initial targets include approximately 300 transitional housing units, 1,400 public housing

units, 900 affordable housing units, and 400 market housing units.

To be clear, the NHC is not going to build and own/operate all 3,000 units; we will own and manage the targeted 1,400 public housing units, but we want to support and incentivize other key housing sector stakeholders and partners in the delivery of the other affordable and market housing units. We need to strengthen all types of housing across the continuum.

At the public launch of Nunavut 3000, we also announced a transformative partnership agreement with NCC Development Limited, a 100 percent Inuit-owned organization controlled by the regional Inuit associations and their respective development corporations, along with Nunasi. This relationship allows for up to 2,000 new housing units to be delivered by NCC over the next eight to ten years. I was pleased to hear NCC's strong commitment to partnering with us in the delivery of much-needed housing units, as well as their commitment to ensure Inuit employment and Inuit training in the pre-trades and apprenticeship are key success factors. We have so many shared values in relation to housing and we are very pleased to build this important relationship over the coming years.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to speak. I look forward to a meaningful discussion. My officials and I are here to hear your comments and answer any questions you may have. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Hickey): Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee

have opening comments? Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2023-24 Capital Estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's proposed capital budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year is \$110,510,000. This represents an increase of approximately 114.7 percent from its 2022-23 capital budget. The majority of this change is accounted for by the corporation's increase in the amount budgeted for construction of new public housing units.

The ongoing shortage of public housing in all of Nunavut's communities is an issue of significant concern to all Members of the Legislative Assembly. The April 2022 federal budget announced that the Government of Canada will provide \$60.0 million in affordable housing funding over two years to the Government of Nunavut. The federal budget also indicated that \$845.0 million in indigenous-specific housing funding for Inuit communities will be provided over seven years. The extent to which Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami are working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to identify specific projects for this funding remains unclear.

On June 2, 2021 the Legislative Assembly was informed by way of a formal minister's statement that a number of planned public and staff housing construction projects for the

2021-22 fiscal year were to be deferred as a consequence of rising construction costs. Information provided by the Nunavut Housing Corporation indicates that subsequent housing construction tenders for the 2022-23 fiscal year were cancelled due to the high cost of construction.

On August 24, 2022 the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited announced the signing of an “Agreement in Principle to pursue a strategic partnership in relation to the delivery of much-needed transitional, public, affordable and market housing units across the territory.”

On October 18, 2022 the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited announced the signing of a formal “Master Partnership Agreement.” This agreement as well as the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s new “Nunavut 3000” strategy were publicly released on the same day. The standing committee looks forward to ongoing updates on the status of implementing this agreement and the new strategy. The extent to which the new Nunavut 3000 Strategy will complement the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s existing “Blueprint for Action” strategy is unclear.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation’s methodology for determining new public housing construction allocations has been formula-driven and based on relative need. The extent to which this will change under the new Master Partnership Agreement with NCC Development Limited is unclear. Members continue to emphasize the importance of ensuring that Nunavut

residents have confidence in the accuracy and transparency of the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s approach to verifying wait-list numbers, and continue to recommend that the minister table, on an annual basis and in a timely manner, the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s updated allocation methodology, community allocations, and community wait-lists.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation’s proposed 2023-24 capital estimates include funding for the construction of new staff housing units. Information provided by the corporation indicates that “major determinants for allocating construction dollars include existing vacant units versus vacant positions in a community; planned new positions and staffing competitions in the community; forced sharing cases in the community and availability of leasable units in a community.” However, the exact process by which the Nunavut Housing Corporation determines the specific communities in which new staff housing is to be constructed is not entirely clear. The extent to which the new Master Partnership Agreement between the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited will address the construction of staff housing units is unclear. Members note that the current role of the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s board of directors in approving planned public and staff housing construction community allocations is unclear.

On June 1, 2020 the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued Request for Proposals: Nunavut Construction Cost Review. The request for proposals closed on June 29, 2020. The report from the review was tabled in the

Legislative Assembly on September 16, 2021. The extent to which the Nunavut Housing Corporation is acting on the recommendations contained in the report remains unclear.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's proposed 2023-24 capital estimates include funding for the purpose of replacing public housing units that have been destroyed by fire. Members have raised concerns regarding the lack of clarity about how the Nunavut Housing Corporation manages the fire damage replacement program. Members note that information provided by the Nunavut Housing Corporation has indicated that it has been working "towards developing a new policy to address the rebuild of fire-damaged units and how new construction may be addressed to meet the needs of communities." Although members recognize that the minister is not statutorily required to table such policies, they encourage the minister to choose to do so after the new policy has been formally approved by the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation administers a number of different programs to assist homeowners and potential homeowners in Nunavut. Members note significant improvements in the level of detail contained in the Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recent annual reports concerning the administration of its homeownership programs. This information will help all Members of the Legislative Assembly to better evaluate the extent to which the corporation's homeownership programs are being accessed in small, medium and large communities.

On November 7, 2019 the Nunavut Housing Corporation's *Homeownership Program Review* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. One of the recommendations contained in the report was that the Nunavut Housing Corporation should "consolidate programs related to purchasing or building a home into a [single] homeownership program and consolidate programs related to home repairs, maintenance and renovation into a [single] home improvement program." The extent to which the Nunavut Housing Corporation intends to implement this and other recommendations is unclear.

Members continue to emphasize the importance of ensuring ease of access to information concerning the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership programs, especially in smaller communities. Members continue to emphasize the importance of providing timely decisions on applications submitted under its homeownership programs.

Members note that information and application materials concerning the new Renewable Energy Homeowners Grant Program are now available on the Nunavut Housing Corporation's website. Members also note that information published by the Nunavut Housing Corporation indicates that its Tenant to Owner Program is "currently suspended pending further review." Members encourage the minister to table the results of the review at the earliest opportunity.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recently tabled annual report indicates that "eligibility criteria for

homeownership programs include income testing...the adjusted household income is measured relative to a community-specific Homeownership Program Income Eligibility Limit. Homeownership Program Income Eligibility Limits are derived from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Housing Income Limits." Members note that the Homeownership Program Income Eligibility Limits have not been updated since October 2014. Members continue to encourage the Nunavut Housing Corporation to work with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to regularly review its Homeownership Program Income Eligibility Limits to reflect the high cost of living in Nunavut's isolated communities.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's proposed 2023-24 capital estimates include funding for the purpose of providing an annual contribution to local housing organizations for the creation of a vehicle reserve fund. Members continue to recommend that the Nunavut Housing Corporation's annual reports include a detailed listing of vehicle acquisitions undertaken by local housing organizations.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's proposed 2023-24 capital estimates include funding for its ongoing "Mould Assessment and Remediation" initiative. Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this important work.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's five-year capital plan indicates that funding will be allocated on an annual basis for its Local Housing Organization Workshop, Warehouse and

Administrative Offices replacement project. The capital substantiation sheet for this project indicates that the design and construction of new local housing organization facilities in Cambridge Bay, Arviat, Pond Inlet, Kugluktuk, Igloolik, and Gjoa Haven will be undertaken in coming years. However, the extent to which the corporation's current five-year capital plan includes adequate funding for this work is unclear.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2023-24 Capital Estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. I'll give the minister an opportunity to introduce his officials formally to the committee. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, to my left is the Director of Infrastructure for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Juanie Pudluk, and to my right is Eiryn Devereaux, President and Chief Executive Officer for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) If members can go to the Housing Corporation's page. We just have one page to look at and approve. Total Capital Expenditures, \$110 million. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the minister's opening comments at the bottom of page 1, it says that there will be about 175 to 200 units built. Which communities are they going to be given to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated, Arctic Bay will get 20, Iqaluit will get 18, Cambridge Bay will get 10, Kugluktuk will get 20, Taloyoak will get 20, Arviat will get 20, Baker Lake will get 20, Rankin Inlet will get 20, and they will be public housing.

For staff housing units, 10 in Kinngait, 10 in Pangnirtung, 10 in Resolute Bay, 10 in Pond Inlet, 10 in Kugluktuk, 10 in Coral Harbour, and affordable housing units will also be built in different communities that haven't been identified yet, but as I stated, the numbers I mentioned are for staff and public housing units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for that explanation. On page 2 of the minister's opening comments it says that (interpretation ends) "This year an increase to \$4 million will allow us to move forward with the design and development for facilities in Pond Inlet, Kugluktuk, Igloolik, and Gjoa Haven. (interpretation) How were those communities identified? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All the housing associations have looked into their needs and we found out which had

to be the absolute priority and that's how they were set up. We used their study as to which community needs to be the priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister. On page 3 of your opening comments, last year the buildings that were supposed to be constructed, the bids were too expensive, and they were going to cost a thousand dollars per square foot. What kind of cost per square foot are you looking at this time around? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad you asked that question. We are looking at a much less expensive cost per square foot. I believe it would be between \$400 and \$700 per square foot depending on where they're built, that's the estimates that we are looking at right now for the construction, and the ones that could not be constructed, we will bring them out again through another process to ensure that they do get built at a not so expensive rate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is very good to hear that it's not going to be so expensive because we have a very serious housing shortage right now, that's very good to hear that you were able to bring down

the cost. You also explained that you want to build 3,000 houses before 2030, and all those buildings will be built. Has NCC been given the contract to build all those 3,000 houses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our target for 3,000 is not just for public housing, so that is our target for all of Nunavut to have that many homes built. This includes people who build their own homes. People do build their own buildings, and some people build apartment buildings, and some work places are starting to build staff housing. These are the number of buildings that we want to see built, and they're not all going to be public housing.

Also including the agreement we have with NCC, the public housing would be built by NCC, and government staff houses will be able to help them produce affordable housing. These buildings will have rent that will not be so expensive as now, and people who want to buy their own homes, we'll be able to assist them through the down payment assistance program. We're going to have different ways of supporting people who want to build houses. So we are in agreement with NCC to build the 2,000 out of the 3,000, and we're going to reviewing that annually in the House here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the

minister. So the housing corporation buildings, what sort of buildings are you looking at? Are you looking at apartments or five-plexes or standalone houses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, we are envisioning five-plexes, six-plexes, or even bigger plexes, like eight-plexes. We will have discussions with the contractors and work the details out with the contractor, and even the exterior of the buildings these days are different from the old days. There are building styles that people say they look like they're making a boat instead of a building, so the material is changing too, and we're trying to see if this will make it cheaper to build them, and also with mould prevention as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister. (interpretation ends) Federal budget announced \$845 million, I quote over seven years to support in the Inuit community. How much of the funding will be accessible by the Nunavut Housing Corporation to implement its Nunavut 3000 strategy? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, I can say that we don't know how much money will be given out of that money

that has gone through Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. So ITK will be moving the money to NTI, we're not handling the money, but we are thinking that that money could be used for buildings as long as some of them are used for building homes for Inuit, and if we can get other people to build more houses, we would like to support that as long as they're trying to build homes.

We're trying to do something about the lack of housing. If they're going to be built by the Inuit organizations, then we will support that, and we have informed them, if we can help you in any way, we want to help you, even though we don't get any money from them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister. (interpretation ends) Has the Nunavut Housing Corporation Board of Directors been involved in determining the corporation's plans community allocation for new public and staff housing units for 2023-24 financial year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. The Nunavut Housing Corporation Board of Directors is involved in as to the allocations of the houses, and the number of homes that will be built, so the housing corporation's board is involved in that, and then the information gets back to us, and they are very supportive and they

help us make decisions. The day before yesterday, NTI had a general meeting in Rankin Inlet, and the housing corporation board had a meeting at the same time in Rankin Inlet, and we were able to meet with them, and the NTI building people were there too, so the meeting went very well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for... (interpretation ends) Nunavut Housing Corporation's new Nunavut housing strategy include preliminary target for construction of new housing units. When will the target for 2023-2024 financial year be finalized? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman for asking very proper questions. Our plan or vision, as I stated earlier, we may need to adjust them a little bit, we may have to add to it a little bit, but the buildings that will be built in 2023-24, we are working on that right now, and we are getting an idea as to the allocations. Maybe in the new year, in January, it will be more done and we'll be able to present it. Some communities have been waiting a long time for new buildings. In the new starting of housing construction, we want to concentrate more on those so that the waiting list won't grow so much. That is our goal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister. The waiting list is long in Nunavut and they have been waiting for a long time. We know that we have to mention that people are waiting for houses.

(interpretation ends) On March 25, 2022 the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued a request for proposals for the lease of public and staff housing units. How many new public housing units have been leased as a result of this request for proposals and in which communities have they been leased? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, we realize that the waiting list is long. As of March 31, 3,021 people were on the waiting list. A lot of people have not filled out applications. In terms of your question, annually we adjust the numbers, but once I have information, I can bring it forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and minister.
(interpretation ends) On June 1, 2022 the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued Request for Proposals: Nunavut Construction Costs Review. The request for proposals closed on June 29, 2020. The final report from the review was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on

September 16, 2021. To what extent does the Nunavut Housing Corporation's new Nunavut 3000 Strategy take into account the findings and recommendations from this review? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a large report and it has various aspects to the issues related to housing from what we can use as the housing corporation. With respect to our target of 3,000 units, we have to be aware and maximize the benefits. Recently we signed a memorandum of understanding to proceed forward under the agreement and to clarify the implementation side from the housing corporation from the agreement. Every file is active in terms of moving forward and what we want to see. We currently are looking at the formula for allocating houses, but we will review that and consider what needs to be considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister. This will be my final question for now. (interpretation ends) If the funding for public housing construction was unlimited, what is the maximum numbers of new public housing units that could realistically be constructed on an annual basis, given the Nunavut Housing Corporation's current capacity to manage the public housing

construction program? (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.
Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What would
be the maximum if we had unlimited
funds would be 300 to 350 houses
annually. There are many factors:
employable workforce, whether the
communities are prepared for the houses,
is the land available, are the lots
available, are the roads available, water
trucks, water services, sewage services,
electricity-related issues, and issues
related to building houses. We will have
to preplan this process.

When we're talking about Nunavut
3000, we want to maximize and we want
to build 300 to 350 houses. It's not just a
matter of building houses; we have to
identify the lands, the lots, the
workforce, and the contractors. That is
the number we are looking at. Thank
you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.
(interpretation ends) During the
confusion of changing chairmen here, I
should have asked if any members have
any general comments before we go into
the detailed questioning. Any members
have general comments? Nope, so I'll go
to the next one on my list. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. I guess I'll start off with
Minister Kusugak, welcome, and your
officials.

Earlier in a response to a question
regarding how you came to the number
of housing units that need to be built,

you referred to housing committees at
the community level. I'm just wondering
if you can tell us how many
communities have defunct or not
operating housing committees, and if
you could tell us which communities
those are as well, I would appreciate
that. Thank you, minister. Thank you,
Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.
Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. There are no defunct housing
association boards or associations or
organizations. Thank you, Mr.
Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. The reason I asked that is
because, just over a week ago, maybe
two weeks ago, an elder from Taloyoak
reached out to me to say that she had 15
people living in her housing unit,
including her adult children as well as a
number of grandchildren, and she was
feeling desperate. This was what she
said to me is that there is no organized
housing group meeting now to make
those decisions to allocate units, so if
you could just confirm to me that
Taloyoak does have a housing
committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister
Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I really don't
know because there is a board there.
Sometimes they have problems reaching
quorum for reasons unbeknownst to me,
but there are issues with the boards, but

they are all there and they do all make those decisions. For one reason or another, I would not know why, with the issue at hand, without having talked to the individuals myself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. I realize that it's a bit on the operational side. I hope the minister can commit to going back and specifically looking into that housing board in Taloyoak to make sure that they are in fact meeting and making decisions and perhaps they need extra help to do that. I'll move on.

On August 24, 2022 the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited announced the signing of an agreement in principle to pursue a strategic partnership in relation to the delivery of much needed transitional public affordable and market housing units across the territory. On October 18 the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development announced the signing of a formal master partnership agreement and that agreement and the Nunavut 3000 Strategy were publicly released on the same day.

I'm wondering: to what extent will the new strategy complement or replace the Nunavut Housing Corporation's current *Blueprint for Action on Housing*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As both documents are live

moving forward documents, Mr. Chairman, I just believe that it would add to the compliments of that strategy, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm happy to know that one isn't replacing the other because there are significant commitments in each.

Sorry, I'm just decide what I want to ask here. In February 2018 the Government of Nunavut announced a new staff condominium program and under this program up to 60 condominiums were made available for sale in Iqaluit. The application period for this program closed on November 26, 2021. I know that you did recently update us on how many of the units had been purchased and how many remain unsold.

I'm just wondering if you could talk to us a little bit about how your new plan intends to encourage the sale and ownership of those condominium units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I think when this whole condominium idea started everybody was excited and hit the ground running so to speak. When things like that happen, there were a few unforeseen issues that did arise such as the federal government seeing it as an incentive for government employees, so therefore they decided that it's a taxable benefit. Things like this start to draw issues around it, so we are trying to work

around that right now. We are trying to find creative ways to work around it to see if they should be changing it from a staff housing incentive to open it to the market to anybody; non-GN employees included, to see if that would change the current tax clauses in that and if there would be more interest from everybody in general and increase the interest so that all of the units could be taken. There are other issues that I understand. People are holding back on insurance policies, and insurance on condominiums and apartments is one that is a heavy one. I can't expect the Government of Nunavut to carry the load on that, but I think between the different condominium organizations and insurers and the government and other key players in the housing front, we could look for ways to find a resolution on that front.

We have to take a look at how we can make this work and not just stop where it is. I think it's having a major slowdown, but we would like to get our team built back up to move forward on this program and get re-excited into it and ensure that they are there, those houses are available and at a very good price, and see if we can get people into those units and move on. We are having staffing issues and I think we're over the hump on that and with this Nunavut 3000, moving forward and the excitement built around it, I'm hoping that that momentum will bring forward and we can move on with the condominium issue here in Iqaluit because, at the end of the day, it is a really good deal once we get around the difficulties that we're facing right now, but we're hoping to work those through in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, minister. You touched on the subject of condominium insurance in your response and I know that the Nunavut Housing Corporation has been involved with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation initiative to review the issue of condominium insurance. I'm just wondering if you can give us an update on the status of that work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Yes, there's not much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's not a lot to update other than what was already put out, but I have planned meetings to travel to Ottawa in the next little while and hopefully I'll be able to have discussions with the CMHC on this and other issues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that brief update. I would like that issue to be resolved because it really does impact a number of my constituents and it's very concerning for people not to be able to insure their homes.

Moving on, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2020-21 Annual Report indicates that eligibility criteria for the homeownership programs include income testing and the adjusted household income is measured relative to a community-specific Homeownership Program Income

Eligibility Limit. HPIE is the acronym. Those numbers are derived from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's housing income limits. For the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership programs, the CMHC's housing income limits were modified to reflect actual homeownership costs across this territory.

Minister, we know, just using Iqaluit as an example, the cost of homeownership has skyrocketed in the past three or four years. Knowing that the HPIE limits have not been updated since October 2014, I'm wondering: is there a plan to update those limits and, if so, when will that happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount of expenses it costs for homeowners across Nunavut is staggering. Bigger centres like Iqaluit are able to benefit from having maintenance people right in their community. If you move into homeownership outside Iqaluit, you have to bring in maintenance people to maintain your house, so it does get very costly very quickly.

One of the things that we are doing now that, I think, we have gotten the Nunavut 3000 on the go and that has been our target since I became minister was to get the lack of housing numbers in order or at least get going. In the meantime we have some really good programs, I think, in the Nunavut Housing Corporation in the maintenance section that people get priced out at because their salary might be higher than allowed and access to some of the programs are not as easy as

it is because communities don't all have the ability to bring in someone to replace their heating oil tanks and so on.

We are taking a look at the homeownership program income eligibility guidelines to see if we cannot make changes to that so that more people are eligible. As you know, the cost of living in Nunavut is so high, your snowmobile and mobile equipment are so expensive, you have to try to maintain and get those and also buy a house and at the end of the day, your paycheque goes towards your daily needs instead of being able to make a down-payment. We're taking a look at how we deliver that, how we could improve that, and we're working on adjusting the eligibility threshold.

I would be more than happy to keep my colleagues updated in terms of where we are going on that work towards adjusting the income and that goes so too for the programs we do have; the heating oil tank replacements and those other programs for homeowners. Some of those are income thresholds and stuff and not every community, as I said, would have access to someone to tune their boiler once a year. In fact, as early as a month ago, we were having discussions about contracting some of these services out so that contractors could go into communities and do that work for homeowners and for work with the local housing associations to do them. We are on those and I appreciate your bringing them up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, minister, for that response. I think it's really important to note as well that you talked about the programs that are available for homeowners to maintain their homes and they're really important programs for people and those who cannot or do not have insurance are unable to access those programs because having insurance is part of the information process. You have to prove that you have insurance in order to access funds to retrofit your home. That's another reason why it's so important to address that issue.

I'm just trying to find the other question I had. Sorry I'm wasting my question time, aren't I? My apologies; I have a number of questions that I wanted to ask.

On November 7, 2019 the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership program review report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The report contained 18 formal recommendations and one of the recommendations was that the Nunavut Housing Corporation should consolidate programs related to purchasing or building a home into a single homeownership program and consolidate programs related to home repairs, maintenance, and renovation into a single home improvement program.

Minister, you touched on this briefly just now and I'm just wondering if we can get a clearer understanding of what actions are being taken by the Nunavut Housing Corporation to implement that recommendation and specifically how the programs will speak to each other and whether or not there will be varying degrees of ability to access based on

income level and that sort of thing.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Yes, exactly. That's exactly what we're talking about right now.

I anticipate at least a year. We're probably close to about a year away from coming up with some final draft ideas in terms of how we do that, what programs would be meld together, what programs can't we do, what should be based on income and what should not be, what are lifecycle issues and what's not.

Going forward with technology advancing as we go, those are some of the very questions you're asking are the ones we're trying to also answer. We have been having meetings on this lately and I look forward to it. We're about a year away from having those kinds of answers going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, will there be residency requirements for these evolved programs? Will people have to live here for a certain amount of time?

On the other side, will there be limitations on resale of any homes that are purchased through a homeownership program so that people aren't being seen to take advantage of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the answers to those two questions would be yes and yes because they are grants and with things like that, there would have to be some residency requirements in terms of payback and how long residency. We will work on those very topics over the next while as we move forward on this and through the evaluation of these programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) 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 this motion is not debatable. All those in favour of this motion. All opposed. You lose. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from the witness table.

Speaker: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My face is being seen a lot today.

>>Laughter

Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 10 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Ms. Nakashuk. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Standing Committee on Legislation meets tomorrow morning at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Order of the Day for November 3:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions

12. Reports of Standing and Special
Committees on Bills and Other
Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First
Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of
the Whole of Bills and Other
Matters
 - Bill 8
 - Bill 9
 - Bill 10
20. Report of the Committee of the
Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Thursday, November 3, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:46*

