Mr. George Hickes
Chair
Committee of the Whole
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

November 10, 2023

RE: Response to Questions During Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes,

During my appearance before Committee of the Whole on November 3rd to discuss Bills 30, 32, 33, and 34, members of the Committee posed several questions to which I committed to responding to in writing. My officials have worked with their colleagues in the Departments of Environment, Community and Government Services, Family Services, and Economic Development and Transportation, to collect information to answer the questions below.

Energy Support Programs in 2022-23

Members were interested in the uptake of two related programs funded by the Department of Environment in 2022-23 – the Renewable Energy Homeowner Grant Program and the Renewable Energy Cabin Grant Program. The breakdown of the two programs for 2022-23 is below.

2022-23	Spent	Applications Approved
Homeowner	$ 73,383	4
Cabin	$ 589,617	124
Total	**$ 663,000**	**128**

In 2023-24, Environment has approved 66 Renewable Energy Cabin Grant Program applications and there are another 40 applications on the waitlist. If an appropriation is received for this program in 2024-25, these applications will be prioritized for funding.

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Electrical rates

In relation to Qulliq Energy Corporation's recent application for a base rate amendment, members asked questions about the energy rates that Community and Government Services pays on behalf of all GN departments. First, members asked about the impact on the budget resulting from the proposed rate adjustment. The new proposed rates have not yet been released. Any increase in rates will increase energy costs for the Department, at this time we do not know yet how much the budget will be impacted.

Members also asked for a comparison of energy costs so far this fiscal year and for the same period last year. From April 1 to October 31, 2023, Community and Government Services has paid $11.1 million in energy costs. For the same period in the previous year, energy costs were $9.0 million.

Casual and unfunded positions in Family Services

During the review of Bill 32, it was noted that Family Services overspent their compensation and benefits budget, partially because of the numbers of casual employees hired into unfunded positions. Members inquired about the number of vacancies in the department and the number of unfunded casuals employed in the department.

At the material time, the Department of Family Services had 85 vacancies and 104 employees hired on a casual basis, 31 of these filled positions were unfunded.

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Iqaluit Deep Sea Port

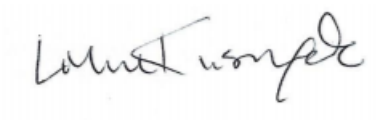
Members asked for information about how many ships have used the new Iqaluit Deep Sea Port this season. The new port construction includes a dock as well as a double width ramp system that is available at all tides. All ships used one, or both, of these components of the port.

Ship Type	Alongside the dock	At Anchor	**Total**
Cargo	5	6	**11**
Tanker	3	0	**3**
Coast Guard	5	4	**9**
Total	**13**	**10**	**23**

One more Coast Guard visit is expected at the port during this season.

I trust that this letter addresses the outstanding items which were left unanswered in my appearance. If you have further questions about the programs discussed above, the responsible Ministers are best positioned to answer your questions.

Sincerely,



Lorne Kusugak
Minister of Finance

cc: Hon. David Joanasie, Minister of Community and Government Services
Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Minister of Family Services
Hon. David Akeeagok, Minister of Economic Development and Transportation
Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Minister of Environment
Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance

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