

NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak

(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeagok

(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour

Hon. P.J. Akeagok

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs

Bobby Anavilok

(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross

(Cambridge Bay)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Education; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for Seniors

George Hickes

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Hon. David Joanasie

(South Baffin)

Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

Joelie Kaerner

(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee

(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak

(Rankin Inlet South)

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

Adam Lightstone

(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Solomon Malliki

(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, 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. Karen Nutarak

(Tununiq)

Hon. Daniel Qavvik

(Hudson Bay)

Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Joanna Quassa

(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq

(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Joe Savikataaq

(Arviat South)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 12, 2024**

Members Present:

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

>>*House commenced at 10:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, my colleagues. Welcome to the House. I'm glad that it is our last sitting day. Thank you. Welcome to the visitors in the gallery. Welcome to the people who are watching the televised proceedings and listening to the radio broadcast.

(interpretation ends) No. 2. (interpretation) Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends) Hon. Government House Leader, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 414 – 6(2): Minister Absent from the House

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to see many visitors in the gallery and our beloved elders are here. I warmly welcome you.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise members that the Hon. David Joanasie will be absent from the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 415 – 6(2): Family Wellness Centre Opens

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Welcome to the visitors in the gallery and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services is dedicated to developing programs that cater to the needs of families and children in our communities.

To that end, I am happy to announce that we are repurposing one of our facilities and opening the Family Wellness Centre in Iqaluit this week.

With seven bedrooms, programming space, and office facilities, the Family Wellness Centre is a valuable and safe resource that will provide emergency foster placement for children when needed.

>> *Applause*

The building will also be used to facilitate visits between children in care and their parents or guardians. The space is designed to create a homelike atmosphere, where family resource workers and community social services workers collaborate with families on life and parenting skills.

Mr. Speaker, a more appropriate name for the Family Wellness Centre will be chosen once the department discusses the building's purpose with elders and selects a more meaningful name. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Minister's Statement 416 – 6(2): Corrections Act Coming into Force

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) For more than ten years, the Department of Justice and the Corrections Division have been working to transform the vision and infrastructure of correctional services in our territory.

Although this work was already underway, the Office of the Corrections Investigator and the Office of the Auditor General made important recommendations that helped to shape this undertaking and the direction of reforms.

A major milestone was the design and construction of the new Aaqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility in Iqaluit.

Of equal importance was the need for legislative reform. In 2019 the Legislative Assembly passed the new modern *Corrections Act*, which represented a complete overhaul of Nunavut's corrections legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that after completing comprehensive regulations, the Government of Nunavut brought into force the new *Corrections Act* on January 22 of this year. Bringing the Act into force helps to increase accountability and transparency by establishing the Independent Investigations Officer. This position's mandate is to ensure

the fair treatment of clients by investigating client complaints, as well as practices, policies, and decisions at Nunavut Corrections.

I am pleased to advise that the department has retained Kim Cholette as Investigations Officer. Ms. Chollette is an experienced administrative law lawyer with extensive correctional investigative experience in Yukon, and experience conducting investigations for the Government of Nunavut.

Additional highlights to bringing the Act into force include:

- new measures to support clients with mental health issues;
- modern protections for client safety and rights;
- a mandated corrections annual report; and
- the creation of an Inuit Societal Values Committee made up of elders, nominated from the Inuit organizations, to advise on issues respecting Inuit culture, values, languages, and programming into Nunavut Corrections.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 417 – 6(2): Recruitment for Legislative Committees

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission is looking for qualified candidates for two legislative committees, the Safety Advisory Committee and the Mine Occupational Health and Safety Legislation Committee.

The role of committee members is to make recommendations for updates and changes to Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission legislation in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. The ideal candidates will demonstrate an understanding of workplace safety, have high ethical standards, be reliable, and have a respect and appreciation of the diverse stakeholders' interests. Interested individuals should reach out to my office for more information by March 22, 2024. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 418 – 6(2): Working Together and Aging with Dignity Agreements

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues and visitors in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, on March 5, I was honoured to host the Hon. Mark Holland, Canadian Minister of Health, here in Iqaluit. On that day I was pleased to announce the signing of two crucial bilateral agreements, one called "Working Together" and the other "Aging with Dignity," between Nunavut and the Government of Canada. With Nunavut Tunngavik President Aluki Kotierk in attendance, we jointly celebrated the investment of over \$35.6 million into Nunavut health care.

(interpretation ends) Through the "Working Together" agreement, we will focus on enhancing primary care and increasing Inuit representation in health care roles, including a new radiological technician program and midwifery training. Need assessments will take place in our communities, aiding in the enhancement of our existing health care teams. The paramedic program will expand, and the Qikiqtani General Hospital will see improvements in various medical services. Additionally, efforts will also enhance recruitment of health care professionals and expand culturally relevant mental health and addiction services, including training for paraprofessionals and the continuation of trauma symposiums.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the "Aging with Dignity" agreement will support work to meet elders' needs in Nunavut. We will be reviewing and expanding home and community care programs to help elders who are aging in place. This funding will be focused on increasing Inuit staff, service hours, and workforce skills through training for nursing students. It will support our work with Nunavut Arctic College's Personal Support Worker Program, help enhance care worker skills, and implement virtual care by nurse practitioners for long-term facilities. Additionally, it supports aligning with national long-term care standards, emphasizing culturally appropriate care and Inuit-specific counselling.

While in town, Minister Holland took the time to tour the Qikiqtani General Hospital and we discussed how these agreements would benefit health care not just in Iqaluit but in every community. We also had time for a meaningful discussion with our partners at Nunavut Tunngavik about health care needs and supporting the dignified aging of elders. I expressed my sincere gratitude to Minister Holland for this additional funding which will enable accessible, culturally attuned health care, and strengthen in-territory health resources for Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, the coming years will see this important funding in action and supporting improved care across Nunavut. These agreements embody our dedication to accessible, quality health care and the principle of aging with dignity. I look forward to further

opportunities to collaborate with our federal partners to move health priorities ahead for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Gross.

Minister's Statement 419 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Conference in Iqaluit

Hon. Pamela Gross (interpretation): Good morning, Nunavummiut. (interpretation ends) It's so lovely to see everyone here in the House with us today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues about the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit conference that was held here in Iqaluit from November 16 to 17, 2023.

The theme of this conference was "Inuusiqattiarniq," where a variety of topics were discussed. More than 67 participants attended and shared feedback related to learning Inuktitut terminology, child-rearing, and Inuit counselling.

Mr. Speaker, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values are integral to our society. In the spirit of *Ikajuqtigiinniq* and *Piliriqatigiinniq*, we continue to work with our partners to integrate *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* into the design of policies, legislation, programs, and services.

The Government of Nunavut's interdepartmental Tuttarviit group members also participated. Today I ask all Members of this House to join me in thanking the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit members and the Tuttarviit members for their commitment to collaborating and promoting the use of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3. (interpretation) Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 547 – 6(2): Tribute to the Late Pat Lyall

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today because I feel that unsung heroes have to be mentioned in the House, Mr. Speaker, so here it goes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge that Alex Ittimangnaq Jr. of Kugaaruk, who is the Tuugaalik Cup senior men's hockey tournament organizer, has made an announcement on Saturday, March 9, 2024 that the Game Changer Award is renamed to the "Pat Lyall Award."

Mr. Speaker, last year the Tuugaalik Cup created the Game Changer Award to recognize and give thanks to individuals who have volunteered their time to give back to their communities through hockey. Mr. Speaker, Jesse Ulliaq Apsaktaun was the first recipient of the award.

Mr. Speaker, the Tuugaalik Cup recognizes the immense hockey talent throughout the Nattilik region, and we cannot imagine having the Tuugaalik Cup without our fellow Nattilingmiut. Mr. Speaker, we want our region to shine together so that we can all move forward together. With that in mind, the Tuugaalik Cup is proud to rename the “Game Changer Award” to the “Pat Lyall Award.”

Mr. Speaker, late Pat Napachee Lyall was a huge supporter of hockey in Taloyoak. He worked tirelessly to fundraise to ensure that the team could attend tournaments. He donated team jerseys and inspired many youth from his community to step up to the plate. Mr. Speaker, he is a huge part of the Taloyoak Trailblazers. He inspired them to become multi-time Nattilik Cup and Kitikmeot Cup champions. Mr. Speaker, late Pat Napachee Lyall was the shining example of how being a big supporter can ensure the success of a team.

Mr. Speaker, this year, this award will be given to late Pat Napachee Lyall’s family to recognize him for all that he has done for hockey in Taloyoak. Mr. Speaker, the Tuugaalik Cup would like to thank the Lyall family for giving us the honour of naming this award after the late Pat Napachee Lyall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members’ Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member’s Statement 548 – 6(2): Recognizing Eva Noah

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Good morning to the people of Baker Lake and have a great day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to recognize one of my constituents, Eva Noah. Eva began artwork in 1990 with sewing duffle wall hangings, art with felt figures, and she followed the inspiration from Inuit traditional legends, such as the snowy owls.

Mr. Speaker, Eva has artwork at the high society of Canada in London, England, art pieces in New York, and last summer, Eva applied for the artist in residency to be held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery Qaumajuq section. The artist residency was from January 20 to February 20 of this year. She was there for one month along with a couple of other artists from Nunavut.

The selection committee was from the culture, language, youth and elders, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the people at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Going based on Eva's work from the last 30 years, they made a great selection.

Congratulations, Eva. We look forward to seeing more of your artwork in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Member's Statement 549 – 6(2): Grateful for Qikiqtani General Hospital Health Staff

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to show my gratitude to the nurse in Igloolik, which I have mentioned earlier in the House. I would also like to thank the nurses, doctors, and the health professionals here in Iqaluit, who work tirelessly to provide medical services, and also looking at other options, so that the people who can heal.

Simon and I show our gratitude to the health professionals. Yesterday was his last day of treatment. On behalf of Simon, my husband, I show gratitude. We celebrated our 41 anniversary. Both of us just learned about patience. We thought that we weren't be able to complete the treatment, but we were provided services for 13 weeks. I think we graduated. Thank you.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 550 – 6(2): Concerns with Coppermine River

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and visitors in the gallery, I recognize you. I want to speak on, and I have spoken about it in the House before, the Coppermine River. It has been 20 years since the mines were opened, Diavik and Ekati mines. When first they opened, the Coppermine River is the place where we were always fishing. Today our river doesn't have that many fish. It has been a while now. We used to use fish nets. I got only three fish.

I want to speak about it again to the Minister of Environment. I will meet with him regarding our Coppermine River. I will speak to the Minister of Environment and to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the World Wildlife Fund because they help with fish and wildlife. I have been planning to have a meeting with them regarding our

Coppermine River because it doesn't have as many fish as it did before. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Member's Statement 551 – 6(2): 2024 Nunavut Quest

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome all the people in the gallery and good morning to the people of Pond Inlet and Nunavut.

The dog team quest for Pond Inlet has been set from April 19 to 22. At that time, I welcome everyone to go to Pond Inlet to watch the dog sledding from Arctic Bay to Pond Inlet. I welcome everyone to Pond Inlet. They will start the trek from Arctic Bay on April 15 and trek their way to Pond Inlet. There will be a huge dance, where they will have a dancing contest. Remember to bring proper shoes. There is also going to be a hockey tournament to get the qamutik up. There will also be women, and, possibly, men who will win prizes for wearing the best attire. I welcome everyone to Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 552 – 6(2): Arctic Bay Participants at Arctic Winter Games

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, we had the very good news for the athletes who went to the Dene games. We got the third place, Marcus Kigutaq from Arctic Bay. I also talked about the athletes attending the Dene Games, but there are other athletes from Arctic Bay, and I hope that they have a very good experience.

There are some athletes who are playing ping pong from Arctic Bay, Trudy Qaunaq, Keegan Qamaniq, and Puka Allurut from Arctic Bay, and I'm sure that they will represent Nunavut. For the coach for the Dene Games is Rex Willie, who is also there in the Arctic Winter Games.

There are quite a few people from my constituents who are attending the Arctic Winter Games, and I urge Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay to practise and attend the Arctic Winter Games. I congratulate all the athletes who are in Alaska. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Member's Statement 553 – 6(2): Recognizing Akutaq Williamson-Bathory for Speed Skating

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to the people visiting in the gallery, and especially our elders. A very good morning to you and we will also be recognizing the other people who are here in the gallery.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am rising to recognize an incredible leader of my riding who was the first individual to bring the first gold at the Arctic Winter Games. Akutak Williamson Bathory brought home the gold at the 1,000 metre speedskating.

>>Applause

It is truly inspiring to see the incredible youth and athletes that work so hard for their whole lives to represent us, and they're representing us with so much pride in Alaska this year, and I just wanted to mention there are approximately 126 Iqalummiut, whether they're athletes, ambassadors or officials serving our beautiful city here in Iqaluit.

With Akutaq bringing home the gold, I couldn't be prouder with the strong leadership that she has shown and the true great role model that she is, not only to her peers but to all Nunavummiut about aspiring to obtain your education, but to always be dedicated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize again the gold and the incredible athletes that are all at Arctic Winter Games. We are cheering them on right here in this House, and we couldn't be any prouder of the strong ambassadors that we do have with the athletes from all our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Member's Statement 554 – 6(2): Welcoming Paisley Adalee

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I have good news which I'm very proud to announce. Paisley Adalee was born on March 10 and my grandchild, Andrew and me, our in-laws are also celebrating their new grandchild, Sepoolah and Mosesie Akulujuk, and their son A.J., and Teena. I would like to congratulate my new grandchild. She was adopted and I now have a grandchild. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Member's Statement 555 – 6(2): Cambridge Bay Participants at Arctic Winter Games

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to everybody listening.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, our athletes headed to Alaska this past weekend and I really want to wish those from Iqaluktuuttiaq all the best as they are participating.

I want to recognize the female basketball players of Willow Harvey, Simone Mala-McCallum, and Keira Tikhak-Kaomayok, as well as the male athletes, Iola Buchan, Waylon Ipeelie-Gunn, Lex Klengenberg, and Wyatt Klengenberg, as well as their coaches, Zachary Cziranka-Crooks and Gavin Greenley.

We also have a wrestling athlete who is also there, Jusipi Dimitruk, and I also want to thank his coaches and the coaches for the wrestling team that are there, Christopher Crooks, Loryn Muswagon, and Haley Heffel.

I wish all of the athletes from Nunavut all the best and I look forward to watching them compete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Member's Statement 556 – 6(2): Concerns with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my concerns once again regarding the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or CMHC, annual report on northern housing.

Mr. Speaker, the CMHC has identified that the vacancy rate in Iqaluit has remained at near zero for the fifth consecutive year. Mr. Speaker, the report indicated that there were only six vacant units identified in Iqaluit in 2023. Mr. Speaker, this is a serious problem with serious consequences. These extreme market conditions led to steep rental increases as high as 8 percent.

I would like to hereby give notice to the Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation that I will be raising this matter at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 557 – 6(2): Nunavut Success at Arctic Winter Games

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome to the elders, friends, and some family in the House today. It's very nice to see you.

Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to stand and make a member's statement until my neighbour from Tasiluk told me I had to.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join everybody in cheering on the athletes at the Arctic Winter Games and specifically the speed skating club, which has brought home three medals. We have heard of Akutaq's accomplishment of the gold medal, young Gregor Paterson won the under 15 juvenile in the 1,000-metre race. We've had over 20 personal best times in our club.

Mr. Speaker, I have to recognize one of my constituents, Napatsi Miles Brewster, who won the bronze medal and I am very proud of him.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I do have another family member, Iola Buchan, who is at the Arctic Winter Games, and I wish him and all of the athletes great success and much joy in the Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Uqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Member's Statement 558 – 6(2): The Spirit of Cooperation and Support

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I am very pleased to see all the visitors in the gallery. Welcome.

Yesterday I had a small child with me and it was my son's daughter and she asked me, "Why do you keep saying 'thank you' to the Chairman?" This was when we were saying, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman." She said to me, "You are so good that you should be thanked as well." She noticed that when she was listening to us and (interpretation ends) she picked up something. (interpretation) That was my first comment.

I rise today to state my appreciation for correcting me, for advising me not to give up, giving me suggestions on what to do and say in the House with the rest of the Members of Legislative Assembly. Although I was not so proud of myself, I'm proud of the fact that I am agreeing and accepting the advice.

It feels good to learn and that I was being brought up to take part on behalf of our representatives. Thank you for giving me strength, especially for those people who give

me advice and give me constructive criticism, and also for providing me strength. I thank God for giving me help. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 559 – 6(2): Sanikiluaq Participants at Arctic Winter Games

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning colleagues, and everyone in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I too, would like to recognize three of my constituents from Sanikiluaq who are participating in the Arctic Winter Games at Mat-su, Alaska. Three of my constituents are Kenny Takatak, Andrew Qavvik, and Nickolai Cookie. They are participating in the sport of badminton sport. I wish them good luck, and everyone else at the Mat-su, Alaska Arctic Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, it is our efforts as a government, as parents, and community members, that we make our youth thrive and make their dreams come true. I believe that dreams do really come true if anyone works hard for anything that they would like to achieve. (interpretation) That's it. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 806 – 6(2): Ottawa Medical Boarding Home

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during oral questions on March 7, 2024. The Member for Aggu requested information on the Ottawa Medical Boarding Home contract and the recent request for proposals.

The Department of Community and Government Services plays a lead role in meeting the Government of Nunavut's requirements for goods and services. In particular, it is recognized as a contract authority for securing goods and most services needed by the Government of Nunavut. With this expertise, Community and Government Services works closely with Government of Nunavut departments to provide advice and guidance on procurement and contracting practices.

For this request for proposals, the Department of Health is the client department and is working with Community and Government Services to ensure that fair and ethical

practices are carried out in its procurement responsibilities. This is accomplished through effective policies and procedures aimed at:

- Obtaining the best value for Nunavummiut;
- Creating an open, fair, and transparent environment for suppliers;
- Providing an appropriate recognition of Inuit, local, and Nunavut interests;
- Setting high standards its service delivery;
- Maintaining current and accurate information of costs, availability, and industry trends; and
- Establishing and maintaining efficient systems and processes for timely delivery of quality products and services.

The Department of Health issued a request for proposals on March 6, 2024, for service provisions of an Ottawa medical boarding home closing, on May 3, 2024. The current Ottawa Medical Boarding Home is operated by Larga Baffin Ltd. This contract ends March 31, 2028. Although there are several years remaining on this contract, the Department of Health has begun planning an open, fair and transparent procurement process to ensure a subsequent contract is in place to continue operations when the current contract expires.

The Larga Baffin boarding home consists of 170 beds. The Department of Health is aware that the boarding home is often at capacity. This new request for proposal requires a facility that will provide a minimum of 300 beds. It is common practice to issue a request for proposal several years in advance to ensure all requirements are met for continued service provisions.

The term of the new contract is 20 years with the option of two five-year renewal periods, for a total potential contract length of 30 years. A long-term contract is required to provide financing ability for vendors to secure or construct a new facility that meets the capacity requirements. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Return to Oral Question 807 – 6(2): Response to Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide an answer to a question I received on March 7, 2024, from the Member of Iqaluit-Sinaa, who enquired about the confidential investigation report into the placement of eight children with Ever Bright Complex Needs Supports Services in Alberta, specifically with whom I shared the report.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to confirm that the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs shared the report with senior officials from the Department of Family Services and the Department of Justice. In addition, a copy was provided to the Representative for Children and Youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Return to Oral Question 792 – 6(2): Direct Appointments

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question was asked on March 5, Question 792 – 6(2), asked by Ms. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, and the question was regarding direct appointments.

(interpretation ends) Since April 1, 2023, 143 expedited Inuit direct appointments were approved, 106 of which were completed using the new process implemented by the Department of Human Resources in August 2024.

Of the 143 Inuit direct appointments, 39 were in Iqaluit and 104 in the communities outside of Iqaluit. 85 of the appointments were for administrative support, 36 paraprofessional, 14 professional, 4 middle management, 1 senior manager, and 3 executives.

Of the 104 expedited direct appointments outside of Iqaluit, 54 were decentralized communities and 50 in non-decentralized. It is not common practice to hire non-Inuit using direct appointment. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. (interpretation) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

>> *Laughter*

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Speaker: Thank you. I would like to recognize the people of Gjoa Haven that are here in the gallery. For her being a role model, and when she wants to be talked to; the garment that I have on, she gave to me and she made it just in one night. I would like to thank her very much. She teaches the younger generation and she's from Gjoa Haven and her name is Miriam Aglukkaq, and my adopted son, John Aglukkaq, is her adopted son. Welcome to the gallery.

>> *Applause*

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce these wonderful people that are here with us that are on the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit, the members that are in the House. Please join me in welcoming:

Willie Nakoolak, Chairman from Coral Harbour.

>>*Applause*

Lew Philip of Iqaluit, Vice-chair.

>>*Applause*

Miriam Aglukkaq of Gjoa Haven.

>>*Applause*

Marie Anguti of Kugaaruk.

>>*Applause*

Mary Voisey of Whale Cove.

>>*Applause*

Abraham Ullalaaq of Sanirajak.

>>*Applause*

Ootoovah Audlakiak of Clyde River.

>>*Applause*

I would also like to acknowledge two other members who could not be present today; Celine Ningark of Kugaaruk and Jean Simailak of Baker Lake.

>>*Applause*

Mr. Speaker, our Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit guests are accompanied by:

Susan Enuaraq, Director of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

>>*Applause*

Teresa Hughes, Deputy Minister.

>>*Applause*

Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik, Assistant Deputy Minister.

>>Applause

I would also like to recognize Ragelee Alorut, Tuttarviit board member and also a staff member with the Department of Education.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a huge thank you to all the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit members for their commitment to guiding the integration of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* within the Government of Nunavut. We value their advice and guidance in support of improved government operations and policies. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize the elders. Welcome.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Human Resources, I stand today to acknowledge a significant accomplishment of an employee in my department. As my colleagues are aware, we celebrated Black History Month in the month of February. During those celebrations, the Government of Canada's Department of Canadian Heritage recognized Stephanie Bernard as a trailblazer who broke down barriers by founding the Nunavut Black History Society when she moved to Iqaluit in 2013.

11 years later, the organization has blossomed into a vibrant and inclusive social advocacy group that focuses on the protection, celebration, research and conservation of black art, history, and culture.

Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also issued a statement recently commending Ms. Bernard's work and said, "black excellence is all around us."

Mr. Speaker, today in the House, we celebrate black excellence. Please join me in congratulating Ms. Bernard and her supporters, including Cheick Cisse, Shanna Zwennes, Charles Zwennes, Mariama Fofana, Maya Jelali, Murielle Jassinthe, Rannva Erlingsdottir, Julian Oyukuluk, Rotimi Lawal, Akintayo Edmund, Selam Mekonen, Natalie Howell, Tedwordros Haileysus, Aramide Owaoaje, Melissa Alexander, Helen Hoang and Kristie Cronin. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to acknowledge and welcome two of my constituents from Kugaaruk, Marie Anguti and Jennifer Anguti.

Also, I would like to recognize Miriam and John Aglukkaq from Gjoa Haven. Mariam Aglukkaq is my auntie and John Aglukkaq is my cousin. Mr. Speaker, Mariam is a great part of the reason why I am here today, who had taught me well since the day I was born, and I thank her greatly.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, Marie Anguti and Miriam Aglukkaq are board members of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. I want them to feel welcome in the House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the House. (interpretation ends) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize students and instructors of the Social Service Worker Program. This cohort of students are in their second year of the diploma program and are set to complete their program on March 31, 2024. I am very happy they could come to the House and be recognized.

I would like to recognize the students of the Social Service Worker Program:

Wanda Alookie.

>>Applause

Julia Angoo.

>>Applause

Joy Angutikjuaq.

>>Applause

Elisapi Inuquq Ashoona.

>>Applause

Nina Irniq.

>> *Applause*

Eva Mackpa.

>> *Applause*

Emily Ukalik.

>> *Applause*

Lexie Upaktauyak.

>> *Applause*

Carmen Roswell.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) Is she not here?

(interpretation ends) The instructors, Shiela Higdon, and also...

>> *Applause*

...Ruth Luca.

>> *Applause*

She is not here. (interpretation) She is not here?

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as March is Social Work Month, I am proud to welcome this group into this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the House. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome you all here. I would like to welcome and recognize knowing an individual who supported much of the young people in Sanirajak, and who provides immense support, Abraham Ullalaaq. I welcome him.

When I worked for the government, I met with some of the individuals, and sometimes miss the individuals like Miriam Aglukkaq, and Marie Anguti. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. (interpretation ends) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise to recognize my constituent from Clyde River Ootoovah Audlakiak. Welcome to this House. I would like you to feel welcome, and my former hamlet council member and mayor, Willie Nakoolak. We've come a long way. Feel very welcome.

>>Applause

Also, on Inuit culture and language, I want to be alive through my voice in serving you while you are here. I feel enlightened because our language is beautiful and when you practise it, it becomes more joyful, and it really unfolds our culture. We are much better for that. Welcome here and thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I am pleased that I am MLA for Rankin Inlet South.

Mr. Speaker, when we have visitors come in, I sometimes feel I am one of the elders.

>>Laughter

Today I feel young, it's great. Elders, welcome. I would like to recognize Rankin Inlet delegates here, Nina Irniq and Lexi Upaktauayak. Welcome to the Assembly, and others who were recognized, welcome. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is an individual here from Whale Cove and it is great. This morning I would like to recognize Mary Voisey Kanayuk.

>>Applause

Welcome. Ever since I started serving the community of Whale Cove, she's always been very welcoming, although I don't live in Whale Cove. Thank you. She's often given me

advice how the smaller communities go through different obstacles and difficulties, and we have to think, the smaller communities, how may I say, there doesn't seem to be that many emergencies and whatnot, but in the small community, the community of Whale Cove has a totally different lifestyle and I would like to recognize Kanayuk and welcome her here. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome everyone here, and our elders in particular. Miriam welcomed my wife when she visited Miriam, and I would like to thank you while she's here. When my wife worked in her community, she was welcomed in her home, and I would like to welcome everyone there and I am thankful.

There are former high arctic individuals here; our minister's deputy minister from the high arctic, Theresa Hughes, thank you.

Also, an elder of mine, Lew Philip. When we went through difficulties here, he watched us all the time and comes over to talk to me and sometimes scolding me, but I am always pleased. When we deal with difficult issues, when you have an elder talking to you, it lightens you up completely. When I think we're not doing much work, he is there to advise me and we are able to communicate. Sometimes he is a little intimidating because he is my son, so I'm not that intimidated. He has always given me a lot of support, Mr. Philip. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 827 – 6(2): Housing in Iqaluit

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, everybody. It's great to see so many Nunavummiut joining us in the Chamber today.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and are regarding the leasing activities of the corporation.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my member's statement, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, also known as CMHC, has identified that Iqaluit had a near zero

percent vacancy rate in the housing market and, at the time of the report, only had six vacant units across the city.

Mr. Speaker, these extreme market conditions have led to steep increases of the rental rate on the residential market as high as 8 percent. Iqaluit residents are not just being priced out of the market; they are being forced out of the market before they can even get their foot in the door.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government leases approximately 500 units and the last figure that I had seen from the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the NHC had leased in excess of 700 units here in Iqaluit. I would like to ask the minister to provide an update today on how many units that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is leasing for public housing and staff housing units here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. It is a sad fact that there are probably zero houses available, not just in Iqaluit but across the territory, and it's a battle that we are committed to fight and we can fight that battle together. In Iqaluit in terms of staff housing units, there are approximately 707 staff housing units, of which around 665 are leased from the private market. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret that leasing activities of large organizations will have an impact on the market rates, such as the amount of staff housing leased and the amount of public housing leased, but also the number of transient housing units being leased in a specific community.

As the Nunavut Housing Corporation is responsible for creating these lease agreements for transient housing for all Government of Nunavut departments, I would like to ask the minister to provide an update today on the number of transient housing units currently being leased here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the public housing units, we have about 600 public housing units that are currently occupied. We have about 700 private homeowners in Iqaluit on top of the other close to 700 units that the government is leasing.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of transient and transition housing units, I don't have the particular details on those, but we continue to try to find more housing units. It's a battle that is ongoing. When a city like Iqaluit is going through a boom, we have to try to find as many land lots available to be able to build more housing units. It is a battle, Mr. Speaker. I understand the frustrations of my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response of sharing frustrations with myself, and other Iqalummiut. I'd like to ask the minister to express those same concerns to our Member of Parliament and his fellow counterpart at the CMHC.

Mr. Speaker, every unit that is leased, is a unit that's taken away from residents that desperately need housing. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's annual report has identified the challenges of having an imbalance in the amount of leased first-owned units, and recognized the need to re-balance the staff housing and public housing portfolio.

I would like to ask: when will the Nunavut Housing Corporation begin to allocate the construction of public housing and staff housing units in Iqaluit to alleviate the situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're doing that now. We are continuing to build public housing units; we're continuing to build staff housing units. We just cannot keep up with it. Mr. Speaker, it's important to realize that it's easy to, not easy, but you can build many houses, but you need the land to put them on. You need the infrastructure surrounding the house to be able to build a house. So the corporation has to keep up with the infrastructure required to build the housing units, so we are trying to keep on top of that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that the corporation is currently working on is to see if there is, and we know there is, but to see how can transform some of the public housing units into private homeownership to see if there are any leased units that can be transformed to private homeownership. We do have different programs out there within the corporation that are coming up in the upcoming months, and new envelopes of affordable housing, homeownership programs, and other programs we hope the public will take advantage of so we could begin to continue to tackle the shortage of homes.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate this is being felt here in Iqaluit, but it's also being felt in Whale Cove, Coral Harbour, Chesterfield Inlet, and all the communities across the territory, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 828 – 6(2): Baffin Island Caribou Management

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask questions I had previously asked, but I wanted to get back to this to the Minister of Environment. I had mentioned that I would refer back to it. It's been circulating in my mind for quite some

time, so I'd like to ask this question once again this morning to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, I did not receive a clear answer last week from the minister when I asked about caribou in the Baffin region. I will ask again today. As the minister will recall, there was a public service announcement to the communities on the day of February 12 regarding the closure of the 2023-24 Baffin Island caribou harvest. During the time of the public service announcement, you had mentioned that they indicated the total allowable harvest of 400 had been reached and it had gone over 400 to 421, as you stated.

However, I will ask the minister again: How many caribou have been harvested in areas that fall within the jurisdiction of the Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq hunters' and trappers' organizations? That's the question that I had asked you. I want to get a more specific answer to that for those two communities and not the whole of Baffin Island. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member for the question. In terms of the member from the Uqqummiut's riding, for the communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, their total allowable harvest for those two communities; Clyde River has 41, and Qikiqtarjuaq has a total allowable harvest at 3, based on my information in front of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is quite clear. Thank you, minister for mentioning that. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he made a statement here in the Legislative Assembly at its sitting of February 28, 2024 this year, in which he indicated that there are "Positive and encouraging signs of possible recovering in some areas of the South Baffin area."

When I asked the minister about this work, he indicated that a final report will be distributed to all co-management partners in early 2024. Can the minister confirm today when this will happen? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to clarify my first response. Qikiqtarjuaq has a total allowable harvest of 20, not 3. Clyde River, 41; Qikiqtarjuaq, 20.

During my member's statement in regard to the identified Baffin Island caribou harvest that will be taking place this calendar year, my department is currently working with co-management partners to plan a southern Baffin Island caribou abundance survey for March 2024, this month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that clarification, because it sounded a little bit too low earlier.

In his statement the minister also indicated that there was going to be an abundance survey of South Baffin Island planned for March 2024.

You also have similar surveys planned for north and central Baffin Island in the coming year, using *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and participation of various hunters' and trappers' organizations.

My question to the minister is: Can you describe how you are going to work with them using *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. The Department of Environment works very closely with the hunters' and trappers' organizations to identify areas where caribou integrate and roam about the environment. The Department of Environment incorporates *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and also the scientific portion of the study and combines those two together to have a better report. The Department of Environment definitely incorporates *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in consultation with the elders in the communities and also other stakeholders within the community that the study is taking place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 829 – 6(2): Elder Abuse

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad that the Minister of Health made a statement today on aging with dignity.

My question today is for the Minister responsible for Seniors and it's regarding elder abuse.

Mr. Speaker, what work is being done to support seniors and promote services that are available to help address elder abuse in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for that question. I know that there are a number of different avenues that our departments within the government serve and support our elders and seniors across the territory. There is important work that does happen in many different departments, but the Department of Justice really has a number of different services and initiatives targeted for our Nunavut

elders and seniors, which also includes a commitment to including elders in programming and decision-making. The department is committed to ensuring that programs and legislation includes protections for individuals experiencing elder abuse. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Financial abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse. What are some ways in which this government helps elders and families address elder financial abuse? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. Elder abuse is something that was brought up in the Elder Care Strategy and I know it will be looked at in depth more to support the elders. Our hearts always feel compassion for those that might be experiencing any type of abuse and I do know that there are ways and avenues that can be supported directly to our elders. If they are going through a hard time, I would recommend that they go speak to the Department of Justice community justice outreach workers, which are in our communities, as well as the RCMP and go support, if it's a younger person there to support the elder, to bring them there and have them work through the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is I would like to know how many departments or government organizations have accessed New Horizons for Seniors funding, which program objectives include promoting volunteerism among seniors and other generations; engaging seniors in the community through mentoring of others; expanding awareness of elder abuse, including financial abuse; supporting the social participation and inclusion of seniors; and providing capital assistance for new and existing community projects and/or programs for seniors, like vans as an example, Mr. Speaker. Some of the funding priorities include supporting healthy aging; preventing senior abuse; celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion; and supporting financial security. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for that question. That is a federal funded program and when I did meet with our federal Minister responsible for Seniors last year, they indicated that, I believe, one not-for-profit, the Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautini, the Kitikmeot Heritage Society, would be a recipient of that New Horizons for Seniors funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Question 830 – 6(2): Public Housing Construction

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation this morning.

Mr. Speaker, in the government’s mandate, it is mandated to build a minimum of 1,000 public and staff housing units. In the first summer of this Assembly, in 2022, zero construction was started. On April 23, 2023, 150 units were announced to start construction, and then there was another announcement in 2024, January 31 of this year, that 166 units will be built this coming summer.

Mr. Speaker, it’s just simple math and I know that the Minister of the Housing Corporation has deep conversations with the Minister of Finance, so the math should be easy for the minister. Those total builds come out to 316 units.

My first question is: will 684 units start construction in the last construction season of this government’s mandate? Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our target is to have at least a thousand by 2030. That’s still our target, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those houses that my colleague is talking about are public housing units. In our plan for the Nunavut 3000, it includes private and public housing builds and I believe that if we continue down the path we are, we will be able to accomplish the number of houses we have targeted before the completion of 2030. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was talking about this government’s mandate, not the Nunavut 3000. I don’t want to muddy the issues, but I’ll go on to my next line of questioning.

In Arviat there are 20 public housing units being built. In the old form of tendering, companies used to have to stay in commercial establishments, hotels or otherwise, in the communities to help the local community’s economy. In Arviat we had a company that did have a bunkhouse that used to be leased out or rented out to construction companies building houses and it helped the local economy. Currently, the Nunavut Housing Corporation is providing free accommodations in Arviat for the Nunavut Development Corporation.

In the old system, there was a minimum percentage of Inuit employment that had to be fulfilled for construction in the community. In Arviat there, does the minister know what

the percentage of Inuit employment by the NCC in Arviat is with the current public housing unit builds? Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The percentage of Inuit employment fluctuates. Sometimes it goes up and sometimes the numbers might decrease, but the plan with all communities to build is where they're looking at about a 30 percent Inuit employment rate throughout the communities where construction is happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it does fluctuate. It seems like near the end of the construction phases, there is generally less Inuit employment, and I understand that. Are there any penalty clauses within the sole-source contract that has been issued to the NCC if they don't meet the minimum requirement of 30 percent employment at the end of a job? Is there a penalty requirement for the NCC to the Nunavut Housing Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to double-check if there is a penalty clause in the agreement with the Nunavut Construction, but there definitely is a plan to hire as many Inuit as they can. In fact, there was a training program done in the communities to attract and get as many Inuit working within the Nunavut Construction Company as we can. I'll double check with the penalty clause if there is one and get back to my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 831 – 6(2): Suicide Prevention

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Nunavummiut. A beautiful last day of sitting.

I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health and the Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention.

It has been fourteen years since the suicide prevention strategy was first introduced in Nunavut. It has now been two years since the completion of the government's third suicide prevention plan, Inuusivut Anninaqtuq. Last May, the minister tabled its final report.

Mr. Speaker, the final report lists many activities and initiatives that were undertaken under the auspices of the Suicide Prevention Action Plan. However, it does not include

any numbers, statistics or measures that could inform us of how successful the action plan has been in achieving its objective and actually reducing the number of suicides in Nunavut.

Can the minister provide an update on the current rate of suicide in the territory and clarify whether or not Nunavut's suicide rate has decreased, stayed the same, or risen since the implementation of the suicide prevention strategy and action plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that question. Although it's a very difficult topic, it needs to be talked about and questioned about suicide prevention.

There have been some changes that we have noticed, but as to actual statistics, we don't have any information from a statistician, but I can say that looking at the numbers, more work needs to be done.

We need to work harder on suicide prevention. Even if one person commits suicide, that is too many. More work needs to be done on the matter obviously, and we are starting to complete our plan. It will probably be finished in April or May.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in terms of the action plan, one of the only statistically proven ways to reduce suicide is through means restriction, and I can assure the member that that will be a component of the updated action plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree, it is a very difficult subject indeed, and it's important that we continue to talk about it. I would also like to have it that my thoughts are with anybody who is either contemplating taking their own lives or to family members who are dealing with loss.

Mr. Speaker, if you will recall, I asked the government to consider declaring suicide in Nunavut a public health emergency. The minister's response to my request dated February 19, 2024, which I tabled in this House on February 22, 2024 indicated that declaring a public health emergency is not recommended at this time. The minister's letter also notes that previous action plans on the issue have made some progress, but not enough.

Mr. Speaker, taking into account the minister's declaration that the department currently does not have a statistician, can the minister clearly describe what measures, statistics, or other indicators were evaluated to determine whether progress was, or was not made by the government's previous action plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question again. In terms of the previous action plans, one of the previous actions plans under the Suicide Prevention Strategy, one of the big issues was impacted by a bunch of different factors in terms of the effectiveness.

One of the big issues we ran into was, of course, the pandemic, COVID. Many of the partners, including the Department of Health, for a period of years had existing work plans and action items kind of upended by the pandemic. That had a big footprint.

Looking at the previous action plan, there was some success. These were some definite gaps, in terms of accountabilities. It's fine to have action items and have ideas for things that need to happen, but we've learned that the accountability of who is going to do what and when is key if we want to have effective implementation.

In terms of the indicators that we're looking at, it's not just the numbers of suicides completed. We also look at numbers of suicide attempts, we also look at other indicators such as mental health related medevacs, numbers of Nunavummiut sent out of territory for specialized mental health care.

There are a number of different indicators that are looked at in terms of analyzing the needs, as well as analyzing effectiveness. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thankfully, the minister actually responded to my final question, which is a request for ensuring that every action and initiative included in the new suicide prevention action plan will have specific measures to track and evaluate its progress toward reducing the number of suicides. I heard that clearly in the minister's response.

Can the minister ensure that there will be an implementation plan that clearly defines the responsibilities of partners, especially within the Government of Nunavut, and to ensure that there is actually funding that goes with that action plan and implementation plan to ensure that those intergovernmental partners are able to action the plan successfully? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can commit to the member that the action plan will be comprehensive. It will have sufficient detail in it in terms of setting up those accountabilities, as well as being able to measure progress.

However, I do have to add a comment that some of the root issues on suicide that we look at in Nunavut in trying to get at the root issues, some of them, if we address the root issue today, we might not see a payoff, in terms of statistics 15 years down the road.

If we're looking at child sexual abuse, which is a major risk factor for suicidal ideation later in life or mental health issues, it's a huge issue that we're dealing with as a territory, and there's no doubt that it is contributing to the issues around people taking their own lives. That's where I have to commend my colleagues for raising this issue on a regular basis and shedding light on it because there's many different things that can contribute to that feeling of hopelessness or the impulse to harm oneself.

Another of the root issues that we are committed to developing protection around or trying to bring more support around is support for individuals in Nunavut who have different sexuality and a young person who feels like they can't tell their family that they're gay. That's unacceptable and it's also another risk factor for suicidal ideation and mental health issues. That is one that I can share with the member that it will be a component specifically developing more supports for LGBTQ2+ individuals; particularly youth in Nunavut.

That will be a component in the upcoming action plan, and we're trying to get at some deep seeded root issues. It's going to take a lot of sustained effort from partners, and I look forward to involving regular members in the review and the rollout of the upcoming action plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 832 – 6(2): Coppermine River

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment today.

I did not receive clear answers last month when I asked the minister questions about the Coppermine River, so I will try again today. As the minister is aware, Kugluktuk's Coppermine River has always been a source of drinking water and food for Inuit, and it is essential that the river be clean, healthy and free from pollution and contaminates.

Mr. Speaker, I'll ask these questions in English. (interpretation ends) When I raised this concern with the minister, he stated that water testing from time to time is a challenge when trying to reach the federal government. Can the minister clarify what he meant by those comments and can he confirm how often the Department of Fisheries and Oceans shares the result of Coppermine River water testing with his official? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Minister Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for getting back to the question. As I noted, the water testing requires 24-hour transportation from the community being tested to a facility laboratory in southern Canada. That's a challenge for any testing requirement to submit to laboratory testing as it requires a timely manner to be tested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. (interpretation ends) As the minister will be aware, the federal government made a decision in the year 2015 to reject the request by Kitikmeot Inuit Association for the Nunavut Impact Review Board to conduct a review of a project related to diamond mining in the Northwest Territories. Concerns have been raised with me that mining activity in the region is adversely impacting the health of the Coppermine River. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The diamond mine, the Government of Northwest Territories holds responsibility for their mining activities in their jurisdiction, and the Government of Nunavut does not play a role in the diamond mine activities within the Northwest Territories.

I do recognize the concerns from the member. The river leading from the diamond mine flows to our bordering area along the Lac de Gras River in Kugluktuk, but the responsibilities from the diamond mine at the Northwest Territories does not fall under the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions there, there seems to be a mistake, but I'll read them anyway and go to the last question.

When I asked the minister to describe how his department works with the relevant environment monitoring and regulatory agencies across transboundary impacts of mining in Kitikmeot, he simply stated that "The Government of Northwest Territories is responsible for environmental assessment."

The one question for that is: can the minister clarify how often his officials meet with the compartments in Northwest Territories to discuss transboundary impacts of mining in the Kitikmeot.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again take this opportunity to extend an invitation to the minister to personally come to Kugluktuk to meet with the hunters and trappers organization in the community. This would be preferred in June as a good time. Can the minister tell me today if he will accept my invitation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Environment is looking into how better to collaborate with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Government of Northwest Territories and stakeholders when it comes to the effects of the Northwest Territories' Diavik mine.

I accept the member's invitation. June is the best time of the year when the snow starts to melt and best time for hunting. I'll expect the member's invitation in writing and map out our possible visit to Kugluktuk. I would be more than happy to go to Kugluktuk as I never been to the far west. That is something I will commit to getting into. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Question 833 – 6(2): Upcoming Student Career Fair

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Human Resources.

Mr. Speaker, the government recently announced an upcoming student career fair that will be held in Iqaluit on March 22, 2024.

Can the minister provide an overview of which departments will be participating in the career fair and what types of occupations and jobs will be promoted? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) It's very exciting to have a career fair for our youth in the territory, as well as the public in general, just to share and promote our positions within the territory.

I don't have the details as to what departments will be included or if there are any others outside of the department, but I could certainly get back to the member on the details of that career fair that's coming up. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. I will await your response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the career fair will be taking place at the Aqsarniit Hotel in Iqaluit, which will be very accessible to Iqaluit students, but not so much to students in other communities.

The public service announcement indicates that a number of speaker panels and presentations will be streamed live on the Government of Nunavut website and social media.

Can the minister provide further detail on how her department works with schools and communities outside of Iqaluit to inform high school students about this career fair to ensure that they will also be able to watch the livestreams and access the information? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) I could certainly work with the Minister of Education in terms of how we can promote that into the schools. I think it's very good that we can now do more virtual visits outside of where we're sitting. I certainly would like to ensure that there are students involved in looking at some career fairs from different departments that will be at this career fair, and I just did get confirmation that all departments will be at the career fair. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. I am very pleased that the career fair will be available through a website and social media. I hope all the schools take part in this career fair, even though they're not physically present.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Summer Student Employment Equity Program seems a very good opportunity to get on-the-job work experience, and hopefully, an early start on a career path.

Can the minister provide an update on how many summer student employment opportunities will be made available for students to apply for, and can she assure me that these positions will be available in all communities across Nunavut, including the community of Igloolik? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) In the recent times, as I had stated in the House, the Government of Nunavut has been recognized as the number one employer for youth. It's really because the Summer Student Employment Equity Program has been very successful within HR. We certainly encourage all departments to contact the Department of Human Resources to ensure that youth are applying, or have summer student employment within the communities throughout Nunavut.

To date, we have had 504 students that have been employed under that Summer Student Employment Equity Program, and 447 were Inuit. We certainly want to increase more

summer student employment with the Government of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 834 – 6(2): Supporting Elders at Home

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

There are a number of elders in my constituency who are still quite independent, even though they may need some support and assistance from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on how his department identifies and keeps track of elders in the communities who may need extra services and support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. (interpretation ends) It's through our Home and Community Care Program that we provide most assistance for elders, who are still living on their own, as the member outlined.

There are different ways that elders or their families can come into that program. They can be referred in if a care provider recognizes that some additional assistance with daily living would be beneficial, there can be a referral into the program, or family or elders themselves can sign themselves up, or inquire and be added to the roster of clients.

That's the main avenue that we would be keeping track of the clients in each community.

Mr. Speaker, if you at year over year, I'm happy to report that the number of clients through our Home and Community Care Program is increasing year over year. That's right across Nunavut. When I see those increasing numbers, Mr. Speaker, I see more Nunavummiut getting supports.

Through our bilateral agreement with the federal government that I mentioned earlier, we're looking at ways to expand home care and to strengthen supports for elders right across Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some of our elders are on strong medications. When they do not take the right dose, especially if they take too much medication, it can have other serious impacts on their health. Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what

specific supports are available to assist elders in making sure they take their correct medications at the right times? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When we look at the supports that are provided through the Home and Community Care Program, it can vary, depending on the client's needs. It's everything from nursing care to rehabilitation, to home making.

In this case, I believe the member is asking specifically about medical issues, or issues related to pharmaceuticals. The way that those individuals could be assisted would be working with a clinician, so it would be either a nurse, or it could be one of our nurse practitioners that would help them to better track their medications. There are ways that elders can be assisted with keeping track, particularly if they're on multiple medications. It can get confusing for anyone, let alone an elder. That's where we have like blister packs, which are pre-packaged doses of medicine that some of our seniors prefer, in terms of being able to keep track of their medications.

I would encourage anyone, if it's a family member, or an elder themselves, and they want additional support, or they have questions around drugs that they have been prescribed, feel free to reach out to one of our nurses, one of our clinicians at health centres across Nunavut for a consult just to discuss any questions, or any concerns they might have. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Premier tabled the government's Aging with Dignity Elders and Seniors Strategy. One of the government's commitments published in this strategy is to "Make a wider range of homecare programs and services available 24-hours a day when needed."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify when his department will be providing these additional homecare supports in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) Part of the work that will be done in this area will be funded through the Aging with Dignity Action Plan that we recently signed with Minister Holland here in Iqaluit.

Before we can make expansions to the Home Care Program, there are a couple of things that are needed. First is an analysis of what types of resources would be needed to make those expansions: Do we need additional staff? Do we need additional equipment? Do we need additional training to happen?

Through the Aging with Dignity Action Plan, we're looking at all the building blocks of the program. One of the big components that we see as being key is more training. That's where we're working with Nunavut Arctic College on the Personal Support Workers Program, or other training initiatives. It's going to be a major part of any expansion that's going to come down the line. I don't have for when we will be turning the key on announcing the expansions. It is something that has been identified. There is funding resources behind it. We're now focused on pushing this forward and making it happen.

In terms of the seniors strategy which the member mentioned, the Department of Health is fully committed to seeing those incredibly important actions and building blocks for elders in Nunavut made a reality. We are very thankful to Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs for leading the work on this incredibly important area. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members, we will break for lunch and report back at 1:30 and continue with question period.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 11:58 and resumed at 13:30*

Speaker: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome back. When we left, we were still at question period. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Question 835 – 6(2): Therapeutic Justice Program

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today with questions to Minister responsible for Justice and they concern healing.

Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that in dealing with individuals who are on probation there are activities they may participate in that are in accordance with Inuit culture and foundation, and the area of mental health.

(interpretation ends) This program integrates culture and mental health services to focus on addressing the root causes of an accused person's criminal behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the minister and his department for this continued effort to provide support and assistance to individuals who have come into conflict with the law and require support to avoid re-offending.

Mr. Speaker, the Therapeutic Justice Program continually operates in Arviat and Cambridge Bay. Can the minister clearly explain what factors his department will take into consideration when deciding to which communities his department will expand this important program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great that she raises this issue, and we will want to expand it to other communities. There are different aspects of it like which community will be chosen to see how many clients, instead of incarceration, can take the program.

Perhaps the communities, what programs they may have, and any support that may be offered with different programs will be identified there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that. Yes, we really believe that when they are able, and that you realized that in your response. Based on what I believe, Mr. Speaker, on Inuit ability to do social work with their fellow Inuit with their language and service, that can have many beneficial impacts.

Mr. Speaker, As such, I would like to have the opportunity in that social issues are very important, and programming is able to provide a lot of benefits. Ilisaqsivik in Clyde River is one. It is operated by Inuit, a non-profit organization. They have many differing programs that are offered to Inuit in the area of social wellness.

For that, can the minister commit to working with the department to provide more programming to have Inuit participate in social wellness through the justice department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Ilisaqsivik has many responsibilities. We appreciate them and are proud of them. They're able to provide programming in different communities. They are quite well advanced and show leadership in social wellness.

When communities are struggling, they are asked to come in. When that occurs in communities, as ministers in cabinet, we look at what further supports we may provide by giving directions, and Ilisaqsivik is very much part of the team in this area. QIA also provides support for communities in distress. We will continue with that programming.

As the Minister of Justice, the people who will be incarcerated, we'll continue to look at other means of providing programming with our staff in our communities for this particular purpose. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for outlining your efforts.

Mr. Speaker, the minister had also indicated in the area of services, to initiate therapeutic services with Inuit culture and Inuit ways of social wellness through these, also being out-on-land, sewing classes, making clothing, and it also includes mental wellness, with support from Inuit.

For that, Mr. Speaker, social wellness can be more beneficial in the communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq with the support, and the use of individuals based on their skills, and the courses they have taken in the communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, and not just those communities. To expand this program on social wellness, the communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq should be looked at. They have the means and the ability. I am asking if he can initiate that area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is very good news to me; the MLA's comments. We constantly strive for that and we will continue to do so. There are two areas where we can visit communities, not just in this area but also our probation officers in our communities who service those who are incarcerated, as does the justice committee with their staff.

What courses can we provide, and what funding may we find for them to access? Our staff will definitely find funding for them and provide workshops. Also, we continue to encourage the utilization of *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit*. I appreciate that my colleague is raising this issue. This is the only way to progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 836 – 6(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation Capital Plan

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. I hope that the minister recognizes that he is the luckiest minister of all, given that he now gets to travel to Baker Lake on a regular basis to meet the head office staff there in Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up today on issues related to the corporation's capital plan. I listened with interest to the minister's responses to questions that have been asked by my colleagues during our current sitting concerning new power plant and generator set replacements in Chesterfield Inlet, Kugaaruk and Kugluktuk.

I want to make it crystal clear that I do fully support all necessary investments to ensure that power generation infrastructure in all 25 communities is safe and reliable. However, as the minister is well aware, I do have concerns about the extent to which the cost of new power generation infrastructure will ultimately be paid by ordinary Nunavut rate payers. I would also like to point out that we do have a very small customer-base here in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of the Utility Rates Review Council regulatory process in respect to the generator set projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for raising this issue on the infrastructure that needs change, power generators, and so forth. It is a difficult area, but when a community needs it, we recognize that.

(interpretation ends) In terms of responding to that question, from Qulliq Energy Corporation's perspective, the review through the Utility Rates Review Council is ongoing, and we haven't yet received a response regarding the gen. set replacement application. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When my colleague from Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet was questioning the minister last week during the sitting, he was informed that the federal Arctic Energy Fund is no longer sufficient to fund power plant replacements in a number of communities.

Can the minister clarify what specific discussions he has had with federal authorities to identify new sources of funding for essential energy projects in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank my colleague for the question. Personally, I have not had discussions on this issue where funds may be accessed. However, the corporation staff are in constant discussion and constantly looking elsewhere. They have very capable staff at the corporation. I have not personally had discussions, but we know the old power plants are numerous in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Right now we have power plants that are beyond their lifespan in, unfortunately, many communities, Mr. Speaker. It's a factor tied to inflationary pressures that has meant that originally, the number of power plants that would have been replaced using the Arctic Energy Fund contribution of \$175 million in federal funding, the number of plants has come down as a result of the inflationary pressures, but we know that we are at increased risks of things like fires or catastrophic failures in communities that have plants that are beyond their life.

Looking at communities like Kugaaruk, Chesterfield Inlet, Sanirajak, Arviat, Rankin Inlet, as well as Resolute Bay, those are the power plants that are next in the priority listing, and we certainly intend to look under every rock and every nook and cranny for that elusive federal support to help us to deliver more reliable, cleaner, and safer power in

those communities through power plant replacements. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. As the minister will recall, he recently confirmed that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has entered into negotiations with the Kitikmeot Corporation to enable the Kugluktuk power plant project to move forward.

I'm wondering now if the minister can clarify if the corporation has also had any discussions with the Inuit development corporations in the Kivalliq with respect to partnering on major power infrastructure projects in our region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Currently, there haven't been any discussions in the Kivalliq region along the lines of what the member is asking.

The Qulliq Energy Corporation has a relationship with regard to the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project where the Qulliq Energy Corporation officials are in ongoing communication with the officials from Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link.

With regard to the Kugluktuk power plant, the key piece that allowed us to enter into discussions with Kitikmeot Corporation was approval from executive council. We haven't sought that approval for any other projects at this point in time.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the plants in Cambridge Bay, Igloolik and Gjoa Haven, we do anticipate putting out public tenders for those projects to initiate the work for those projects in the next few months. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 837 – 6(2): Support for Nunavut Arts and Creative Sector

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for recognizing me a second time today, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, circumstances didn't permit me to be here until the end of Saturday's sitting, so I'll take this opportunity to explore some important issues with the minister today.

As the minister is aware, my background in the arts has afforded me the privilege of working with and learning from some of the most creative and talented people in

Nunavut. I strongly believe that a healthy and vibrant art sector is critical for Nunavut's economy and society.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister aware, his department's current business plan indicates that it has been working to develop a new arts and creative industry strategy, which is anticipated for release by the end of 2023-24 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm that he will be tabling the new strategy in the Legislative Assembly during our upcoming spring sitting, and can he highlight some of the main ways in which it is expected to differ from the department's current approach to supporting the sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The work is progressing on that strategy, and it's something that once it's done, I'll be able to table in this House and put it out for the public.

I don't have a firm timeline on this, but the strategy is focused on key values identified through our consultative process, which is Nunavut first, innovation adaptation, artist-centred, and collaborative growth, which are the four pillars that are part of this strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those sound like very interesting pillars and I look forward to hearing more about the strategy.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department's current business plan also indicates that one of its priorities for the upcoming 2024-25 fiscal year is to host an art summit in the territory to discuss how a territorial organization for artists could be structured and more inclusive of all forms of art.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify if he is looking to establish an entity that will have its board of directors appointed by the government, or is he looking to facilitate the creation of an organization that will be constituted under the *Societies Act* and which will elect its own senior leadership? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the summit is being planned and being shaped into how it's going to be, we haven't predetermined what kind of entity it will be. The entity that we currently used to have under the *Societies Act* is no longer functioning.

We need to look at options. It's something that I'm confident that if that art summit does proceed, those that are participating will have a huge influence in terms of how it should be shaped. As the department and as a minister, I'm quite open in terms of how to do it. We need to do it from my perspective because artists are crucial to our economic sector and something that I think we need to provide more support towards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very excited at the prospect of another entity being pulled together to concentrate on the arts in Nunavut. It's my sincere hope that that entity is afforded a great deal of support in its governance and in any actions that it takes.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned yesterday, when Kenojuak Ashevak's iconic piece, the Enchanted Owl, was first released, it sold for less than \$25. All too often in our history, Inuit artists have had to grapple with an exploitative economic system.

I was happy to note that the department's business plan also indicates that it plans to develop a curriculum for business skills for artists.

Can the minister elaborate today on how he sees this initiative rolling out? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the artists being trained in terms of proper business, a lot of these intellectual properties and how to ensure that you keep what you deserve are all part of the business plans that are taken into account when they're provided training.

On that, there are a number of fronts that would play into this factor, but the emphasis is that we want to train our artists how to value their products, and also how to keep benefitting from them. If there are ways that we can help out, I'm definitely open for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you. Members be aware, the time allotted for question period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Ms. Brewster.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 007 – 6(2): Suicide Rates and the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written questions today are for the Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention, and they concern the subject of suicide rates and the Nunavut suicide prevention strategy.

Mr. Speaker, my written questions are very detailed, so I ask that they be entered into the record as read.

Preamble:

The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 26, 2010. The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan - September 2, 2011 - March 21, 2012, was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 28, 2011. The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Progress Report 2013-2014 was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 16, 2015. The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Evaluation Report Executive Summary was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 30, 2015. The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Partners Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022 Final Report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2023.

1. Between October 27, 2010, and March 11, 2024, broken down by calendar year and month:
 - a. How many residents of Nunavut died by suicide within Nunavut?
 - I. How many of these suicides were committed by Inuit?
 - II. How many of these suicides were committed by non-Inuit?
 - b. With respect to suicides committed by Inuit, please disaggregate the data by:
 - I. Sex;
 - II. 10-Year Age Cohorts;
 - III. Method;
 - IV. Presence of Intoxicating substances in body at time of death;
 - V. History of substance abuse;
 - VI. Engagement with counselling services from the Department of Health or other Government of Nunavut entity within the 12 months prior to death; and
 - VII. Previous reported suicide attempts.

¹ Within the meaning of subsection 8(1)(a) of the *Coroners Act*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Do members agree that the written question be entered into the record as read?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement.

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. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 262 – 6(2): Response to Letter of Expectation from Nunavut Arctic College

Tabled Document 263 – 6(2): Response to Letter of Expectation from Nunavut Business Credit Corporation

Tabled Document 264 – 6(2): Response to Letter of Expectation from Nunavut Development Corporation

Tabled Document 265 – 6(2): Response to Letter of Expectation from Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the response to letters of expectations for Nunavut Arctic College, Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, Nunavut Development Corporation, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Lightstone.

Tabled Document 266 – 6(2): Petition Concerning Arctic Winter Games

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table correspondence that contains the names and signatures of 165 Iqalumiut, who are calling on the Legislative Assembly to “Advocate for the inclusion of male figure skaters at the 2026 Arctic Winter Games.”

Mr. Speaker, although this document does not strictly conform with formal petitions under Rule 43, it clearly demonstrates the position of many Iqaluit residents on this issue. I strongly support the position taken by the concerned residents, and I will be raising this issue in an appropriate manner at the appropriate time with the minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Mr. Quqqiaq. No? Tabling of Documents.

Tabled Document 267 – 6(2): Speaker’s List of Outstanding Statutory Tabling Requirements

I have one document to table today, which is a list of outstanding statutory tabling requirements. Thank you.

Item 14. Notices of Motions. I will recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 14: Notices of Motions**Motion 032 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment – Notice**

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 14, 2024, I will move the following motion:

I MOVE, seconded Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that pursuant to provisions of Rule 3, that when the House concludes its present sitting, it shall be adjourned until May 23, 2024.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. I recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 16: Motions

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays. There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Motion 032 – 6(2): Extended Adjournment

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that pursuant to the provisions of Rule 3, that when the House concludes its present sitting, it shall be adjourned until May 23, 2024.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Hickes, Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, I feel obligated to voice concerns that I have regarding the government's current management of its legislative agenda.

Mr. Speaker, this winter sitting marks the first time in my memory that no substantive bills, other than appropriation acts, have been introduced. Mr. Speaker, neither the House nor the general public has heard a clear explanation for why this is the case.

Mr. Speaker, this current session, although without new legislation, at least had the government's operations and maintenance budget to create the need for Committee of the Whole work for the past two weeks. It is also the reason for the 10 a.m. starts that we've had, as there has not been work for the committees to meet in the mornings.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that a number of substantive regulations have been published in recent months, but I am concerned that we may be faced with the situation where the government dumps a large number of lengthy and complex bills on us within the final few months of the life of the Legislative Assembly and expect us to rubber stamp them without due consideration and scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, the government may choose to speak this motion and state that they may have legislation to introduce in the spring sitting. However, all that means is that the first and second reading would occur, adding maybe a minute or two to a day's agenda.

Mr. Speaker, other than that, we're looking at meeting as little as two and a half to three hours a day with little or no work for the committee meetings to fill the rest of the day's agenda, so I have to question the value of bringing the Assembly together for likely two or three days for the subsequent spring sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: To the motion. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the motion, with respect to the concerns raised by my colleague there in terms of the piece of the legislative activity within our government, despite encountering capacity challenges, I want to ensure the members that due diligence efforts are underway to advance different legislations and our officials are continuing to work and bring forward different bills.

To date, Mr. Speaker, our government has successfully passed several critical pieces of legislation, including the *Nursing Professions Act*, the *Mental Health Act*, the *Liquor Act*, the *Income Tax Act*, the *Commissioner's Land Act*, as well as the *Opioid Recovery Act*. Further to this, additional legislative initiatives are in the pipeline that are nearing completion in terms of the policy and the legislative development.

These measures relate to the privacy of health records, the protection of our parks, vehicle safety, support of post-secondary students, childcare, as well as administration of our communities.

As legislative proposals are completed and approved on each of these items, I will be able to share further details on the specific Acts and amendments that are being planned, but there are two years remaining in our term. There is significant work ahead.

However, I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that through collaborative efforts with the members that we could make real progress in moving forward on the legislative front. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: To the motion. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 38, 39, and 40, with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 29 – 6(2), the committee will remain in session until it reports itself out.

I ask that members remain at their desks so that we can immediately proceed to the Committee of the Whole.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

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

Chairman (Mr. Savikataaq): Good afternoon. I'd like to start our Committee of the Whole meeting. Sorry. Just a moment here.

Good afternoon. Let's have a fresh start. I would like to start our Committee of the Whole meeting. In the Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with; Bill 38, 39, and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to commence with the review of the following bills along with the supporting financial documents; Bill 40, Bill 39, and Bill 38. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Are we in agreement to first deal with Bill 40?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 40 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2024-2025 – Consideration in Committee

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your patience. I do, Mr. Chairman.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials to the witness table. Minister Kusugak, you can introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance and to my left is David Kunuk, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. At some point during the discussion of Bill 40, I may require to make a change and do a substitution as they say at the Arctic Winter Games, during this sitting.

Mr. Chairman, I appear before you today to present Bill 40, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2024-2025*.

Through this bill, we are seeking \$230.5 million in supplementary capital appropriations for 2024-25, including \$222.2 million in previously approved funding from the 2023-24 fiscal year which needs to be carried over into the 2024-25 fiscal year, and \$8.3 million in new funding for four projects.

The \$222.2 million that we are requesting to carry forward is tied to 135 capital projects. \$212.2 million is allocated to 122 projects which are already started or where the GN has already made legal or financial commitments to start. The remaining carryover of \$10.4 million is associated with 13 projects which have not yet started.

This is the first year we are requesting capital carryovers in the winter sitting. Through this adjusted process, we hope to help smooth operations for projects which rely on carryovers to continue their progress. Because carryovers are based on estimates and projections, we know they are not completely accurate. The final numbers will be determined once all entries have been recorded and the 2023-24 Public Accounts are completed. We will request final adjustments based on actual expenditures in the Fall sitting.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to note that about \$19.3 million of the total carryover relates to the North and South Baffin Energy Management Projects which are non-cash items, but they must be included in this appropriation for accounting purposes.

In addition to the projects in the carryover list, Bill 40 seeks \$8.3 million in new funding for four projects.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is requesting \$1.4 million in 2024-25 to begin the rehabilitation of two airport surfaces, one in Pangnirtung and one in Kugluktuk, as well as mobile equipment shelters in six communities. If approved,

these projects will require future years funds of approximately \$13.5 million. The department anticipates that they will receive significant federal funding to offset some of these costs.

Finally, the Department of Community and Government Services is seeking an additional \$6.9 million to continue improvements to Rankin Inlet's Utilidor system. This multi-phased project is making significant progress toward correcting long-standing problems that have plagued the community's water distribution system for years.

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, I am available to address questions about this supplementary appropriation or our capital process generally. However, I do encourage members to save their questions on specific projects for the responsible ministers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do any members have any general comments before we proceed to the detailed questions? I see none.

Can members go to page 4 of Bill 40? *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act No. 1, 2024-25*. Page 4. Department. Government of Nunavut. *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2024-25*. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$41,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to page 5. The same Bill 40. Government of Nunavut *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act No. 1, 2024-25*. Department of Finance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$22,209,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to page 6. Department: Justice. Not Previously Authorized. Total Directorate. \$347,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Total Corrections. \$4,828,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Total Department. \$5,175,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to page 7. Department. Culture and Heritage. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$700,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to page 8. Department: Education. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$30,775,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to page 9. Department: Health. Not Previously Authorized. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the second item on this page 9, the Nunavut Long-term Care Project, Phase 1, Rankin Inlet, requesting a carryover of \$2 million, it was recently announced here in the House and publicly that the federal government has now contributed \$25 million to this project and during subsequent lines of questioning I was under the impression that this project would have quite a significant surplus. I would just like to get some clarification on why this carryover is needed when that project is going to have such a significant surplus? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That money will be used to continue the project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I acknowledge that money is needed to complete the project. However, with \$25 million, according to my math, even with this \$2 million, we're still looking at a \$23 million surplus upcoming.

So I would just like to get a little bit more clarification from an accounting standpoint. If the minister could explain why that \$25 million is not included in this project when in the House he said that he was under the assumption, he didn't clarify with me since, that the budget deficit from the overall government accounted for that \$25 million coming in the door into general revenue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's correct, we will take this money and it will help fund previous expenditures on this item. If I could have my deputy through you, Mr. Chairman, elaborate a bit more on those details. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. As Minister Kusugak said, that \$25 million we just signed will be used to offset costs that we have already spent.

So basically, we'll place the money back into our bank account for use for future projects. We do still need this \$2 million carry-over to finish the project next year. Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I'm just confusing myself now, but if the \$25 million has been received in this current fiscal year, I would just like to get some clarification on why the need for a carry-over from monies that the Government of Nunavut appropriated to this project when, as the deputy minister just stated, is that the money from the federal government can be used to provide funding for work already completed, which is the fiscal year that we're in right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As it's the same line of questioning there, Mr. Young.

Mr. Young: Thank you for the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. The total project was almost \$60 million. The intent of the agreement with the federal government will bring the Government of Nunavut's portion of that down to \$59 million minus the \$25 million.

Basically, the end result of this is we've already spent that cash that we were going to be receiving from the federal government, but we will have an additional amount in our bank account. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just don't have the numbers right in front of me, but what was the original amount appropriated for this project, for the total expense of this project by the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it was just over \$59 million, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand correctly from the deputy minister's response that it is now at a cost of \$69 million, where it's been stated numerous times including in the media that this project, although not on time, is on

budget, I'm just hearing of a \$10 million overage. I would just like to get some clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As this is the same line of questioning, I will go directly to Mr. Young.

Mr. Young: Thank you again for the question. Just to confirm, the number is \$59.1 million not \$69.1 million. Sorry if I misspoke. Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you for that clarification. I would just like to get confirmation again. The \$59 million price tag is the final one that is still the project, is still anticipated to be completed on budget and ready for occupancy sometime in the next coming months, and that \$25 million will go back into general revenue for upcoming capital appropriations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague is correct on those. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Department: Health. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$26,134,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Okay, I would like members to go to page 10 of the same Bill. Environment. Not Previously Authorized.

I've got to have a question. I'm just curious. One of the items there is the Grise Fiord Wildlife Office fuel tank replacement for \$157,000. That seems awful steep for a fuel tank replacement. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Fuel tanks are very expensive in Grise Fiord. To replace them is even more expensive. That's what the budget alignment called for. That's how much it costs to do a fuel tank replacement in Grise Fiord. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Maybe the fuel tank replacement budget for general Nunavummiut will have to go up then, I guess. Department. Environment: Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$4,484,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go to page 11. Community and Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. Flip on to page 13. Community and Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$124,919,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sorry, was there a hand up? Sorry, I didn't see that. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to go to the third last item, the Nunavut ICIP Undersea Fibre Optic Cable. I know there have been a number of questions during this current sitting, as well as just some recent minister's statements.

I believe it's been approximately \$10 million that has been expended on this project to date, with in my opinion, more questions than answers on what the next step is and what routes are going to be taken. It just seems like the last four years of this project, it's almost like we're starting over again.

I would like to get some assurance from the minister that this capital project is going to see some momentum in the coming months if not weeks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In conversation with the minister and the deputy minister of the department, they were quite comfortable stating that we will see some movement on this file and advancement in the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. We'll start this over. Community and Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$124,919,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go to page 14. Economic Development and Transportation. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$14,737,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Okay, members go to page 16. Family Services. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$1,336,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members, go to Bill 40 in your legislation binder for clause-by-clause review. I think members should be ready. Bill 40, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act*, No. 1, 2024-2025. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary Amounts Appropriated for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025. Total Supplementary Appropriation. \$230,510,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go back. Clause. 4. Agreed.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 40 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 40 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak, brief closing comments?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for passing this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak, you can proceed with your opening comments on Bill 38. Minister Kusugak.

Bill 38 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2023-2024 – Consideration in Committee

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will proceed with my opening comments on Bill 38.

I appear before you today to present Bill 38, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024, No. 2*.

Through this bill, the government is seeking to increase its overall appropriation by \$100.88 million in 2023-24 for three departments: Health, Community and Government Services, and Family Services.

The Department of Health requires a supplementary appropriation to cover its projected operations and maintenance deficit of \$76.1 million. Health's budget deficit is attributable to overspending in several areas, but most notably \$20 million for medical travel, \$31 million for agency nurses and paramedic services, and \$11.3 million for out-of-territory treatment for Nunavummiut. Many of these shortfalls were addressed in the proposed 2024-25 budget.

Through this bill, we are seeking \$4.94 million for the Department of Community and Government Services. Unanticipated increases in the cost of fuel have had large impacts on the department's budget, including an additional \$409,000 paid directly to municipalities to offset their increased fuel costs.

In addition to increasing fuel costs, maintenance of the government's assets and logistics costs have continued to rise this year. While the department has worked to absorb many of the cost increases within its approved budget, they will require an appropriation for the costs which they were unable to absorb.

Aside from the requested appropriation for their core business needs, the Department of Community and Government Services also requires \$4.72 million to bring the Petroleum Products Division's Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund back within its approved range.

The Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund was established to accommodate fluctuations in global crude markets and assist in stabilizing retail fuel prices in Nunavut. Like a retained earnings account in the financial statements of a private sector company, the Stabilization Fund accumulates annual profits and losses of the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund. The authorized limit for the Stabilization Fund is plus or minus \$20 million.

Based on the Petroleum Products Division's 2022-23 draft financial statements, we expect the Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund to be in deficit of \$24,719,000; \$4,719,000 more than the approved limit. A supplementary appropriation is required to return the fund to its limit of \$20 million in deficit.

Colleagues, we are also seeking \$15.1 million for the Department of Family Services. The department has overspent in five areas, but the majority of this request comes from the Family Wellness Division, including \$7.5 million for residential care contracts.

A key theme across the department is the spending on salaries and service contracts. These have been addressed in the proposed 2024-25 budget.

Mr. Chairman, there are more details in the briefing notes that you have been provided, but I have brought officials from the affected departments to assist in answering any questions you may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do any members have general comments before we proceed to the detailed questions? I see none, so members go to Bill 40. Government of Nunavut. Sorry. Bill 38. That's the second time now. Members, please go to Bill 38. Government of Nunavut. Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) No. 2, 2023-24. Department of Health. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$76,100,000. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Here's my first question to the minister would be: is the minister aware that in the last two fiscal years we're now nearing \$138 million in supplementary appropriation specifically for the Department of Health? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am aware of that. It is a staggering amount, but if I can, before we get into further details, I would appreciate inviting a witness from Department of Health to the table with your permission, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the committee agree to have the official appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official to the witness table, and Minister Kusugak, you can introduce your officials to the committee.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My official to my right hasn't changed yet. Mr. Young, the Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left is Deputy Minister of Health, Ms. Megan Hunt. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know from the background information that we've been provided, a number of these items are through forced growth or consumer-based increases, and I do recognize the demand for agency nurses and paramedic services have increased dramatically.

Subsequently, the government has made the decision to increase the budget allocations for those lines for the next fiscal year in recognition, again, likely from this supplemental appropriation.

The one item that I do see is controllable that is in the list provided to us is the duty travel component originally budgeted at \$11.2 million forecasted at \$19 million created an overage of nearly \$8 million.

To me, if you're running close to your budget line, you start restricting travel, you start using technology a little bit more, as we've learned to adapt to that technology. I would like to get a little bit more detail on how duty travel is over 60 percent over budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you (interpretation ends) to the member for the question. The majority of the duty travel that the member raises really comes from our travel for travelling nurses. As in years previously, many of the nurses stayed for a longer period of time in their community visits.

We've seen over the last number of years, and especially since COVID that nurses are taking shorter durations in community, which means that we are utilizing travel more often because that cycle or turnaround is more often. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that response from the deputy minister. Again, sounds like for the bulk of this increase or increase in the budget is nursing or agency nursing. Maybe the deputy minister or the minister would be able to provide a little bit more detail, and I know it's a competitive market and I know our neighbours to the west are going through these very same discussions probably as we speak or very recently.

What work is being done by the department to help alleviate the pressures that we're putting on our own healthcare system by having to continue to use agency nurses in this volume in addition to having to spend literally tens of millions of dollars for paramedic services across the territory just to keep our health centres open? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As it is the same line of questions, I'll directly to Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you (interpretation ends) to the member for his question. Thank you for the recognition that ultimately our goal is to make sure that our health centres are open and serving Nunavummiut. We definitely see the need and the necessity to have a bit of a hybrid approach with nurses as well as our ACPs or our paramedics, sorry for the terminology.

Part of that is to ensure that we are creating a balance of resting periods, especially for our nurses who work tremendous hours and overtime, and we want to make sure that all of our healthcare professionals are safe to practice.

That has been one of the utilizations or models that we have used. We've definitely also have undertaken recently a very strong review of our casual nursing pool, made sure that there is a process now of extensive follow-up looking at availability, making sure that those reach-outs are happening so that we can further increase and improve nursing staff directly in our communities, and then the utilization of our paramedics as a complement or an asset to the delivery of healthcare. Thank you, (interpretation) Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Department of Health. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$76,100,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go to page 5. Community and Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. Total infrastructure. \$4,533,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: On the next one. Total Local Government Services. Not Previously Authorized. \$409,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Directorate. Total Directorate. Not Previously Authorized. \$4,719,000. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the second time we have been asked to provide a supplemental appropriation to bring the stabilization fund limit with its legal parameters. This is a significant one. I'm not sure how to word this without... . Mr. Chairman, we elect cabinet to make the tough decisions, to stay within the fiscal boundaries of the budgetary process that we approve here in the House, and it's been brought up a few times now that the fuel pricing is too political, that there is too much opportunity at the cabinet-level to ride that stabilization fund limit at the highest amount

obviously to reduce increases in fuel prices for Nunavummiut, but at the end of the day, the obligation of cabinet is to maintain that fuel stabilization rider within its legal parameters, and I find it, offensive is too strong of a word, but it's on that spectrum where now this decision of fuel pricing is put on to us as regular members, as an Assembly when cabinet is... . We've given you guys the authorization to make these tough choices and to pass along legitimate fuel price increases to Nunavummiut.

Whether we like it or not, price of fuel is going up, and now instead of cabinet making the decision to raise prices, the onus is now on the Assembly to help cover a \$4.7 million overage or shortfall, whichever way you want to look at it in revenue. I do have an issue with the Assembly approving these dollars. The minister in his budget address recently stated that although a small deficit, we're in a deficit position, and this just adds to that deficit. Even if it's been accounted for already, it's still contributing to a deficit for the territorial Public Accounts.

I would just like to get a little bit more information from the minister on how fuel pricing got to the point where this is a situation that we're having to cover from the Assembly standpoint when it's supposed to be a true revolving fund basis on a cost recovery bases. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy minister for the department responsible for petroleum products is here. I would like to do a substitution if I can, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the committee agree for a substitution of an official?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please let one witness go and escort the other official. Minister Kusugak, if you can introduce your new official for the record.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your patience. To my left is Mr. Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services. I'm sure he is more than capable of responding to the question that was asked by our colleague. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the question on how it is that we arrived to the point where we're coming forward with this request for an appropriation. In previous years' sealift resupply, the fuel price increase, the 2022-23 resupply was delayed significantly, we had a lot of resupply issues, outages and shortage in communities. The total cost to resupply is what informs the price setting for the following year. In that year,

we re-forecasted the fuel increase based on the information that was available in late December, when resupply was completed. At that time, the total cost of that resupply was underestimated.

The way that the revolving fund is structured, where there is an overage, we are required to come forward with a request for an appropriation to correct that overage. If that appropriation is not approved, then we will be in a position where we will need to revisit that. We'll carry that loss forward; we'll be outside the boundary of the stabilization fund and we'd be required to revisit our pricing strategy at the next pricing change decision to accommodate those prior losses. So this appropriation request stems back to the former resupply that we did have some issues with two resupplies ago. I hope that answers the question. Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I recall, we had a similar occurrence from the Third Assembly carried over to the Fourth Assembly where we had to put, I think it was \$284,000 to bring the stabilization fund back into balance, and that was when it had, I think only a \$5 million limit back then.

Now that we've got a \$20 million limit, now we're again nearly 25 percent over that limit, where there should've been measures taken sooner to bring this stabilization fund more within compliance, and as my colleague from Iqaluit-Manirajak has mentioned a few times recently, of taking the politics out of the fuel pricing structure.

I have an issue and I've been a part of discussions where we have had to make significant increases in fuel rates and it's not a pleasant ordeal, but it's necessary. When you're on a cost recovery basis within a revolving fund, your parameters are pretty narrow and we've given the Petroleum Products Division some significant wiggle room by increasing the stabilization fund to \$20 million.

At the time, I believe the Minister of Finance, when they got that increase, spoke to the need to keep a dotted line within the \$5 million range, so again, it restricts some of the political decision making behind fuel pricing, and again to take such a significant overage and put that pressure on the Assembly here today, I find is unfair. Those tough decisions are what we elected cabinet to do.

In this manner, I don't think they did their due diligence, or what reasoning came in behind to allow this to go to such a significant amount. I will not support the funding of this \$4.7 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment. Minister Kusugak, I don't know if you want to comment on the comment? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We were just as surprised. Mr. Chairman, the Petroleum Products Division has been very understaffed from what I understand. They've just recently, as last summer, or this fall, hired a new comptroller. They're working to make improvement in how they measure and decide on their funding. They're at 50 percent capacity right now. I could see where things like this failed, and unfortunately it drastically failed when it came to that.

I have been given assurance the department is working to ensure that issues such as this are better handled by their department, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the comments from my colleague. I think we're all concerned about fuel pricing and where it has gone but I have been given assurance from the minister and the deputy, that they are trying to fix the matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What kind of timeline would it entail to bring the stabilization fund back within a \$10 million range? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As we're on the same line of questioning, I'll go directly to Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The timeline for returning the stabilization fund within its limits is dependent on a couple of things. One, with an appropriation. That would happen once the appropriation was approved.

The other option is that if there is no appropriation, we need to look at recouping those that lost through sales revenues. There are two functions. One is how much prices would increase to offset that loss and the other thing is how much fuel we're actually selling. So the volume of sales, and/or the price increase would determine that.

I think based on about a 200 million litre inventory we would be looking for a \$5 million increase. We would most likely spread that out over an entire re-supply season to minimize the price per litre impact decision when that price is actually changed rather than making one big change to recoup it in a shorter period of time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to request a five-minute recess to consult with my colleagues. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We'll take a five-minute break.

>>*Committee recessed at 14:49 and resumed at 15:17*

Chairman: Good afternoon. I would like to call our Committee of the Whole meeting back to order. Mr. Hickes.

Committee Motion 005 – 6(2): Deferral of Bill 38, Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2023-2024

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate everyone's patience while we are discussing this matter. There is still a lot of uncomfortableness with the way that the current fuel pricing price setting methodology is being used, and we would like to give the government a few months' time to be able to take a look at some of the suggestions that have been made to involve the Utility Rates Review Council or some other entity to have more uninfluenced fuel pricing. I would like to move to defer Bill 38. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion. Any speakers to the motion? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we defer this bill, it will have some implications on some departments such as Health. I understand, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Any more to the motion? Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not supporting this motion, and we have indicated the government requesting this amount for appropriation and I don't understand why we're not voting. We've been given a briefing that's quite understandable and I know everybody's been in communication on this, and there was already reading and that was approved. We're finally hearing about issues and concerns that people have and it's almost like people are just playing their cards and almost against the government. I understand that there's going to be no vote and I want to support the minister that he had brought this to the House prior to today and was raised at a time when this Community and Government Services had his moment to talk in the House about his budget, and perhaps it's our first time to hear.

It's a misunderstanding on our part perhaps that there was a big concern about it from the last time. This is a very serious issue. I'm not going to support this motion today. We have to vote today for the Supplementary Appropriation and Maintenance Act. I feel that on this to move that. We're going to be in the minus to do that. We want to ensure that there is accountability with our finances. That's what I'd like to share. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the motion, the minister had indicated that the deferral of this bill would have implications. It's quite frequent that in the spring sitting we do pass supplementary appropriations post-fiscal year end. It may merit some discussions and debate as to what sort of expense a deferral may have on the government before making a vote on the motion. I just thought maybe we're jumping ahead on voting on a motion.

I know how I'm going to vote, but I am curious about the implications that my vote will have. I just think that it might be pertinent to have little bit of debate prior to this motion. I guess that's all I can really say to speak to the motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Anymore to speak to the motion? We can only speak to the motion. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If this motion to defer this goes through and is passed, every time, for example, the Department of Health wants to make payments on bills, they will have to first call the Department of Finance and get an override on every single time that health wants to make a payment. Otherwise, the other option would have to be that Finance removes all controls of that to all departments. It's going to really complicate things in that front.

The reason why this Petroleum Products Division item on the stabilization fund is before us is because it says right in the Act "Where a deficit balance in the Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund exceeds \$20 million at the end of the fiscal year, it shall be charged to an appropriation." That's right in the Act. That's why we are there, but in terms of deferring this, it will cause delays and hiccups, hiccups is a pretty loose term, but in terms of funding Health, Mr. Chairman. I too will not support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. I see no more. So the mover of the motion, speak to your motion and then they'll be the vote.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I respectfully disagree. When the topic came up of potentially having to not be able to deal with certain bills this sitting, the minister, from what I understand, spoke to the Clerk's Office and didn't have any issue with deferring this bill.

I am just curious as to what has changed in the two days. We weren't sure of we were able to get to this bill with our schedule, and how things were going with Bill 37. Now that we have been able to debate this bill, we do have it in front of us, but with the communication that was offered by the minister himself as recently as a couple of days ago, there weren't any concerns raised with deferring this bill.

I'm curious as to why all of a sudden it's an issue. Maybe there were some decisions that weren't thought out properly, but it was communicated quite clearly to us, as the Regular Members' Caucus, that if we ran out of time to be able to deal with this bill during the

current sitting, there would be no implications or minor implications to the government of deferring, even opening this bill for debate until the May session.

I'm not sure what concerns have changed since then. Contrary to comments made, it's not about being against anybody, it's about accountability. Again, I'll just reiterate; we all elected the cabinet of the Nunavut government to make some of these tough choices and not put it back on the Assembly to have to account for or to substantiate lack of action. With that, I do hope that people do support the deferral as it was communicated to us quite clearly that there would be no major implications. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We have a motion in front of us. To the motion to defer Bill 38. All in favour, raise your hands. Opposed. The vote is tied, so it falls on the Chairman, and I vote with the motion to defer Bill 38. We will take a 20-minute break.

>>*Committee recessed at 15:27 and resumed at 15:47*

Bill 39 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4, 2023-2024 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Good afternoon. I would like to call our Committee of the Whole meeting back to order. We have Bill 39 in front of us. Minister Kusugak, if you can reintroduce your officials and commence with the opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Dan Young, Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left is Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am here today to present Bill 39, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4, 2023-2024*.

Bill 39 seeks a supplementary appropriation of \$3.45 million for capital projects in 2023-24 for two departments, the Department of Community and Government Services and the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Chairman, we are seeking \$3 million for the Department of Community and Government Services for repairs to the Kinngait water treatment plant. Kinngait identified a problem with their municipal pump house in May and contacted the Department of Community and Government Services for assistance. The Department reacted quickly to assess and correct issues with the pump house. This was an emergency and not included in the government's capital plan. A supplementary appropriation is needed to cover the costs that the department absorbed.

We are also seeking \$450,000 for the Department of Family Services for their implementation of a case management system. The Auditor General's recent report on child and family services in Nunavut highlighted the department's lack of proper

software to record and access information about cases under their care. Additional staff training and other implementation costs have pushed this project over the original approved budget. Caseworkers across Nunavut have been using this valuable software since November.

This ends my opening comments. I am available to answer your questions relating to the two projects. However, if I am unable, I'm sure my colleagues beside me will be able to support us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to the detailed questions? I see none. So, members please go to Bill 39, budget document page 4. Government of Nunavut. *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4 2023-24*. Community and Government Services Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$3 million. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go to page 5. Government of Nunavut. Supplementary Appropriation Capital, No. 2. Family Services. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the supporting documentation on this amount of \$450,000, it's completely attributed to additional staff training and project completion date extension costs.

I know we have a number of projects in the past and given the software before this, they incurred a significant expense that was not able to be utilized, but the \$450,000, when we're looking at training for software, to me that would normally be included in the contract cost. Just an explanation of what kind of costs were incurred by the completion date extension. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll need to do a substitution in order to get into the details of that cost, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the Committee agree to substitute officials?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort one official and escort the other official to the witness table. For the record, Minister Kusugak, you can introduce your official. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Jonathan Ellsworth, Deputy Minister of Family Services to my left. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Ellsworth, I don't know if you can answer the question now or would like the member to repeat it, but Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, hon. members. It's a pleasure to be here again with you. The additional costs associated with this project as I understand it, Mr. Chairman, had to do with the expedited nature with which we wanted to have it implemented.

Recognizing the serious gaps that we had internal to the Department of Family Services, the original implementation plan was a little bit longer, and because we wanted to have it implemented quicker, it meant we have to engage a more rigorous training strategy. We also had to engage a more rigorous and expedited data migration plan. I understand there was an additional cost with respect to hosting that was unpredicted originally. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Government of Nunavut. *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4 2023-24*. Family Services. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$450,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members go to Bill 39 in your legislation binder for clause-by-clause review. Bill 39. *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act No. 4, 2023-24*. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary amounts appropriated for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. Total supplementary appropriation, \$3,450,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 39 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 39 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak, brief closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the deputies that were able to supplement our answers today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials at the witness table. That concludes the duties of the Committee of the Whole. I will rise to report progress.

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. Your committee has been considering Bills 38, 39, and 40 and would like to report progress and that Bills 39 and 40 are immediately ready for third reading, pursuant to Rule 73, and that one committee motion was carried. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Simailak. To the motion. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. I recognize the Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills**Bill 40 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2024-2025 – Third Reading**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 40, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2024-2025*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. Opposed.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 39 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4, 2023-2024 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 39, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 4, 2023-2024*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried, and Bills 40 and 39 are ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Okay.

>>*Laughter*

Speaker: Members, the Commissioner of Nunavut is not available to give assent to bills, and the position of Deputy Commissioner is currently vacant. Hence, Bills 37, 39, and 40 will receive assent by way of a Written Declaration, as provided for by section 58.1(b) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*.

Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for May 23:

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 38
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Before we leave, I would like to thank our pages. If I can say the name right, Makayla Mike...

>> *Applause*

...and Darren Ningeongan.

>> *Applause*

Thank you so much for your help. You kept everybody from getting thirsty, so thank you very much for that. I hope you learned something from the people sitting in here.

I would also like to thank our Sergeant-at-Arms for carrying our Mace every day. Thank you very much.

>>*Applause*

Sometimes you would act as a page, giving us water.

I would also like to thank our special people behind the glass, who have made everybody understand what we are saying and what we are talking about, both Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, and English. Thank you all to the translators.

>>*Applause*

I would also like to thank my staff who kept me in line, hoping I'm making not too many mistakes. I think I did very well; I think so.

>>*Applause*

Thank you to the staff and keeping everybody in order, especially to the people working in this building, keeping things going as we go along.

I want to thank all the members. (interpretation) My colleagues, I wish you safe travels home tomorrow and see your families once you get back. I thank you (interpretation ends) and we will come back sometime soon. Thank you all for working hard for the people of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) This House stands adjourned until Thursday, May 23, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:03*

