

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation; Minister
of Human Resources*

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Rankin Inlet South)

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responsible for Suicide Prevention*

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)

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

Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government
Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;
Minister of Languages; Minister
responsible for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation*

Hon. George Hickee
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
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responsible for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

*Government House Leader; Minister
of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Homelessness; Minister
responsible for the Status of Women*

Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

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

Calvin Pedersen
(Kugluktuk)

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, May 31, 2021

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeegok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, let us pray.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Nunavummiut, I welcome you once again, as well as those who are watching the televised proceedings and listening to the radio broadcast.

Before we proceed with the orders of the day, I wish to make a statement.

Speaker's Statement

As Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tragic discovery that was made last week in the province of British Columbia.

On behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, I wish to mourn the tragic loss of 215 children who never made it home and whose remains were recently discovered buried on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.

(interpretation ends) Last Thursday, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation released a statement confirming that the 215 deaths were never documented by the authorities of the day.

As a survivor of residential school myself, I feel profound sorrow for everyone who has been personally impacted by this terrible event.

All of us in this House have family and constituents who are, to this day, grappling with this dark legacy of our country's history. The intergenerational impact is very real, and we in this House have the duty to do all that we can to work for justice. It is difficult for words alone to adequately convey our pain.

In an expression of solidarity, I am announcing today that all 25 of the community flags that fly at the Legislative Assembly will be lowered to half-mast. This is the first time in

our history that this has been done, and I strongly believe that is very important for other indigenous peoples to know that we stand with them.

The mourning period will last from now until June 9: a total of 215 hours to represent the tragic loss of 215 souls. As we honour their memory, let us also keep in mind today and every day their families, survivors, and descendants.

I now ask all members to join me in observing a minute of silence.

>>*Minute of silence*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We will now proceed with the orders of the day. Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 629 – 5(2): Federal Government's Continued COVID-19 Support

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say "good day" to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on recent financial commitments from the Government of Canada to help Nunavut in our continued response to COVID-19 in the territory.

In early May the federal government pledged \$8.65 million in new financial and in-kind aid to the Government of Nunavut to help offset our costs in fighting and responding to the pandemic. This includes \$4 million for social supports, including alternative isolation accommodations, support for households in isolation, and increased costs to help enforce public health measures. There is also \$750,000 to support remote learning for Nunavut Arctic College students and over \$1 million in in-kind health care supports like personal protective equipment, testing, and virtual health care.

Additionally, \$1.5 million has been allocated to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to help us administer remote learning for our kindergarten to grade 12 students. We are working with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to ensure we are able to get support to our students as quickly as possible. There is also a commitment to keep inmates safe in federal facilities as we recover from the fire and manage the cases at the Baffin Correctional Centre.

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the Government of Canada, the Prime Minister and his cabinet for their strong collaboration and support of the territory for the past 15 months. They have truly gone above and beyond in supporting and provided for our critical needs and their prioritization of our population for vaccines. Their response has been a truly Canadian effort and one that Nunavut is very proud to be a part of.

Mr. Speaker, we're all in this together, and our government is committed to keeping Nunavummiut safe and healthy. I urge everyone to continue to follow all public health measures and get vaccinated if they already haven't. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 630 – 5(2): Coordination of Government of Nunavut's Human Resources in Response to COVID-19

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Nunavut recognizes that a healthy workplace is essential to the well-being of all our employees. Following the recommendations of the chief public health officer, the Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with the departments of Community and Government Services, Health and others, developed an internal, comprehensive and consistent response to the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to provide services to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Human Resources has implemented and communicated the following measures to support the health and safety of our employees:

- Introduced a work-from-home model for Government of Nunavut employees across the territory from March 23 to June 5 and November 18 to December 1, and for Government of Nunavut employees in Arviat, Kinngait, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Sanikiluaq, and Whale Cove during outbreaks in those communities.
- Developed comprehensive business continuity plans and remote work protocols to ensure continuity of services to Nunavummiut.
- Collaborated with the Department of Community and Government Services in the distribution of extensive information technology resources, such as laptops, Internet, remote access to work emails and shared drives, and more.
- Offered courses on how to use the Microsoft Teams communication platform and training and tips on how to work from home effectively.
- Collaborated with the chief public health officer and the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission to develop a comprehensive set of health and safety checklists, safety posters, contact lists, and questions and answers for employees in the workplace.
- Introduced a special paid leave for employees impacted by school and daycare closures due to COVID-19.
- Introduced a paid self-isolation leave for Government of Nunavut employees under investigation for COVID-19 or who have been advised to self-isolate at home.
- Temporarily waived the requirement for medical certificates for sick leave.
- Suspended non-essential duty travel outside Nunavut.
- Temporarily suspended non-essential duty travel within Nunavut.

- Decided not to grant half-day leave for civic holidays while public gatherings were subject to health restrictions.
- Introduced summer bonus days for employees taking annual leave within Nunavut from June 15 to September 25, 2020.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the COVID-19 pandemic can cause stress and anxiety. We provide our employees and their families with an Employee and Family Assistance Program that can connect them to professional counsellors at any time in any of Nunavut's official languages. We have also provided courses and articles that will help them cope with this unique situation.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut takes the well-being of its employees seriously. Without healthy public servants, we cannot provide the support Nunavummiut need. *Qujannamiik* to all our health care employees and essential service employees on the frontlines and to all employees who keep the Government of Nunavut running during this pandemic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends)
Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 631 – 5(2): Recognition of Community Radios

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important role community radio stations play in Nunavut, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, community radio stations served as a vital communication link between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavummiut. The stations ensure that important information, such as public service announcements and important public health information, is broadcasted in a timely manner.

My department provides funding to community radio stations through our grants and contributions programs. In 2020-21 my department provided additional one-time funding to further support community radios during the COVID 19 pandemic. Community radio stations also play an integral role in the promotion and preservation of Inuktut by broadcasting local programs in Inuktut.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize community radio operators across Nunavut, many of whom are volunteers. They are dedicated to ensuring Nunavummiut have access to information, news, and programming. I ask all members in this House to join me in giving them a round of applause to show our appreciation for their hard work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Minister's Statement 632 – 5(2): Community Banking Services in Kinngait

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce that the Royal Bank of Canada is opening its third agency outlet in Kinngait. Residents will now have access to community banking services at West Baffin Co-operative.

In 2018 and 2019 the Royal Bank of Canada opened outlets in Arviat and Pangnirtung. These efforts were a result of the Government of Nunavut's 2016 request for proposals for banking services. Mr. Speaker and members, the proposal focuses on expanding and improving banking services available to Nunavummiut, especially in communities where there are currently no physical banking operations.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this partnership benefits the residents of Kinngait as they now can bank in-person in their community. The Government of Nunavut will continue working with our banking partner to provide these much-needed banking services to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 900 – 5(2): Mourning 215 Lives

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Iqalummiut. Very excellent news we received this morning.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the thousands of people across Nunavut and the nation who are mourning the tragic and horrifying discovery that was made public last week in British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, the discovery of the remains of 215 children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School was shocking.

Mr. Speaker, all Canadians should be feeling a great sense of pain and loss. These 215 children were precious. They had families and loved ones. Their lives were cut short and we must remember.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of leaders and institutions that are making efforts to mark and mourn this tragedy, beginning with the lowering of flags across the country for a period of 215 hours, from our Legislative Assembly to government offices, Inuit organizations and city offices.

Mr. Speaker, as a government we must support ongoing work to address the intergenerational trauma of the residential school tragedy and we must advocate for all necessary resources to conduct similar work at other sites of former residential schools.

I recommend that the Premier show solidarity with all First Nations, Inuit and Métis and demand Canada-wide investigations into these crimes against humanity.

Mr. Speaker, Premier, Iqalummiut, Nunavummiut, no child should be forgotten. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 901 – 5(2): Baker Lake Bowhead Hunt 2021

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased today, Mr. Speaker, as Baker Lake hunters will hold their inaugural bowhead whale hunt later on this summer in the month of July.

There will be a total of nine boats that will be travelling from Baker Lake. If the weather cooperates, they will depart on July 19. The hunters that will be taking part are:

- (interpretation ends) Captain Philip Putumiraqtuq; on his boat there will be Hosea Iksiraq and Daniel Tagoona;
- Co-Captain skipper/runner will be Charlie Tautuaqjuk and with him there will be Leonard Kuummak Amaruq *amma* Johnny Etegooyuk;
- First Mate John Avaala with Ken Avaala *amma* Nehemiah Umingmak Kabloona;
- Second Mate Patrick Attungala with Jonathan Tootoo *amma* Charles Oosuaq.

(interpretation) If you were wondering who Jonathan Tootoo is, his nickname is Joco in Baker Lake.

- (interpretation ends) Third Mate Jamie Kataluk with Kelvin Niego (high school student youth representative) *amma* Winston Ookowt.

There will also be skippers and runners:

- Mike Nukapiaq with Kyle Netser and Eric Nukapiaq;
- Qarliksaq with Roy Avaala plus one more to be named yet;
- Casey Tulurialik with Joe Uqayuittuq and Norman Nuilaalik;
- Desmond Kreelak with Martin Kreelak and Sanaaq Kreelak.

Mr. Speaker, we wish them all success and safe travels when they take off in July. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I wish the people of Baker Lake a successful bowhead whale hunt this summer. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Member's Statement 902 – 5(2): Issues at Isolation Hubs

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Netsilik, as well as my fellow Nunavummiut and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, today I wish to speak to the issue of medical travel patients who are required to undergo isolation prior to travelling home due to the COVID-19 protocols in place.

The patients who are required to isolate must do so for 14 days, thereby adding additional time apart from families. The 14-day isolation period is additional time placed atop their days attending to medical appointments.

Some patients become quite disconcerted and many Inuit who are spending more time in southern locales, especially at a time when infections are on the rise, have no desire to catch COVID-19 nor infect fellow citizens and a myriad of reasons why patients need to be careful.

Some people are asymptomatic as well and with that being part of our reasons, Mr. Speaker, as a government, we have to be very efficient and assist our residents who need our assistance as they are our residents whom we nominally administer requiring medical treatment in other places.

I will have questions at the appropriate time about this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 903 – 5(2): Happy Birthday to Aana, Lena Pedersen

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, everybody.

I would like to ask my colleagues to join me today in wishing a very special lady to me a happy birthday. I've got a picture to show you guys, so I'll hold it up and hopefully you can see it.

Happy birthday to my *aana*, Lena Pedersen. I'm here in a big part thanks to her and her positive influence on my life and many other Kuglukturmiut. She has spent her life trying to better the lives of many people wherever she lived, and she continues to do that today.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to wish my granny a very happy birthday. *Aana*, I love you, I wish I could give you a big hug today, but that will have to wait until Wednesday, when I see you.

One more thing, I would like to wish Mr. James Panioyak, one of our translators, a happy belated birthday for yesterday. Many more to come to both of you; I hope you both enjoyed your days and your day today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Happy birthday, former MLA in the First Assembly. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Ms. Angnakak.

Member's Statement 904 – 5(2): Happy Birthday to Sister, and Annie Joannie

Ms. Angnakak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Welcome everyone, especially my husband.

Today I would also like to say "happy birthday." My older sister who lives in Grise Fiord is having a birthday, and also Annie Joannie. Happy birthday. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Member's Statement 905 – 5(2): Mourning 215 Lives

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was on my way home, I received a letter. Firstly, to the people of Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet and my colleagues, have a great day.

I received an email briefing yesterday about the 211 children entombed in the ground that was discovered in Kamloops, British Columbia. Initially I was confused what it was about, but shortly thereafter when I checked the news online, I realized it was related to residential school where these children's remnants were found. When I finally understood, I could only cry.

As Inuit, our culture was attacked with the goal of eradicating native-ness as children would be told they were partially wild animals or (interpretation ends) savages (interpretation) and severe repercussions ensued for speaking their mother tongue. This is all Canada's blame to shoulder. Many other secrets remain at this time.

Nonetheless, I wish to say “thank you” to you, Mr. Speaker, as we held a moment of silence for these lost ones, and for us Inuit, our culture was forcibly changed when children were apprehended and taken from families to school. No more children ran around gaily amongst our camps, with peals of laughter no longer echoing, and this drastically impacted our elders, and our culture also changed and those of us in that era all changed!

If any cases exist in Nunavut resulting from that era surrounding pain, please raise your hands to ask for help, as many Inuit who suffered will have flashbacks and unpleasant memories may arise.

That is what I wanted to voice, and to the person who wrote to me from Chesterfield Inlet, I thank you, Garth Walters. I hope I pronounced your name properly. I apologize if I misspoke. He felt the anguish from this event and sent it to me, and I know that the people of Chesterfield Inlet will definitely feel the impacts.

Anyhow, let us move on and try to have a good day as we Inuit will continue to survive in our lands. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members’ Statements. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Member’s Statement 906 – 5(2): Congratulations to Nunavut Sivuniksavut Students

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow community members of Pond Inlet, my colleagues, and all Nunavummiut.

Today I rise to voice my pride in the recent graduates who attended the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program from our community of Pond Inlet. Students graduating from the first year were Chantel Kunuk and Jeannie Qiyuapik, and Dylan Mablick just completed the two-year studies certificate in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program.

I am proud they were able to complete their studies in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and finish their current education.

And further, these other students who graduated were learning office administration at the adult education school. They are Leena Aqqiaruq, Natalie Arnakallak, Joyce Arreak, and Mona Milton.

The students attending our adult education centre for the (interpretation ends) pre-trades program (interpretation) in the community completed their course as well. They are: Moses Amarualik, Jordan Angnetsiak, Samson Kilabuk, Alexander Killiktee, and Ernest Merkosak.

They ensured their ability to work towards attaining the career they want, as this program is the beginning towards a better future and I wish them success after their graduation and

to continue trying to increase their education to get the job they desire. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Member's Statement 907 – 5(2): Addressing Historic Injustices

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

I have a short statement as well to make today regarding the matter of the residential school historical issues.

Mr. Speaker, what my colleague, Ms. Towtongie, just spoke to are issues I second. I thank you, Cathy, as you related a very moving story one can easily understand.

As my constituents are aware, I have kept them informed about issues since 2017 and I continue to learn about the impacts of this experience directly from my constituents about their experiences from and by government representatives, whether it was related to residential school, with some older folks having been sent out for TB treatment, along with the descendants of the Ahiarmiut clan who were forcibly moved several times, along with the people who went through the (interpretation ends) federal day schools, (interpretation) as they too are students who underwent traumatic experiences.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my constituents and the residents of Arviat and Whale Cove in light of my youthfulness as well as being one of the non-Inuit representatives, for still being allowed to share in relaying their past painful experiences, some of it severely abusive.

Over the years I have gained more insight into what transpired and what impacts have been wrought on later generations, as past abuses to some of my constituents still surface and I want to acknowledge the stress and difficulties they experienced that they are still suffering from today. In my eyes, you are exemplary and capable people.

I will continue to listen to all of my constituents when you have anything to pass to my attention and want my support. Your hardships and struggles, when anybody represents others, have to be met with understanding and support and one can only slowly learn to help.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank every one of my constituents, as some of them have undergone traumatic experiences in the past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Ehaloak.

Member's Statement 908 – 5(2): Tribute to Residential School Survivors

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon to my colleagues and all across Nunavut.

Uqaqtii, I rise today to pay tribute and honour to the children who have died, suffered, and survived residential school, as I am a survivor.

I was taken with my four siblings when I was just four years old. I can't imagine my children and all of my grandchildren being taken away at that age.

To my parents, who went from six children to one in a matter of hours, I feel your pain and my heart goes out to you.

For all those who have been affected, my heart goes out to you as well. To you and your loved ones, I know and feel your pain, for I pray one day that we will have peace and solitude. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**Return to Oral Question 1300 – 5(2): Status of Capital Projects during COVID-19**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Asked by Mr. Joelle Kaerner, MLA for Amittuq, asked of myself as Minister of Community and Government Services, No. 1300 – 5(2), on May 27, 2021, regarding status of capital projects during COVID-19.

The question was:

Were there any postponed government projects Nunavut-wide rather than cancellation? Were there any postponements for the upcoming summer projects between cancellations and postponements? Are there any postponements with the government projects that were approved for this fiscal year?

My response:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify my response to the member from Amittuq and provide members with some additional information on the status of approved projects being managed by the Department of Community and Government Services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a wide variety of new challenges to how Community and Government Services plans and manages construction projects. Factors

such as travel restrictions, increases in the cost of building supplies, changes in the labour market, and additional job site safety requirements have each presented challenges and, in some cases, led to delays within some projects managed by the department. Despite these challenges, I would like to confirm for members that Community and Government Services is committed to delivering the projects approved in this Assembly and has not postponed or cancelled projects due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to project the mid- to long-term impacts the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the cost of delivering projects here in Nunavut. The recent influx of federal infrastructure funding has led to an increase in the number of infrastructure projects across the country and the market is responding to the increased demand for the materials and labour.

There is no question that increases in the cost of building supplies will impact the cost of delivering projects. I can appreciate the interest members have shown in the impact these price increases will have on the status of infrastructure projects managed by Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, most projects managed by the department are multi-year projects, where tenders are issued for the full scope of the project from design to completion within a target timeline. In cases where the bids received in response to a tender exceed the project budget and additional funding is not secured in the time necessary, the tender may be cancelled.

The cancellation of a tender is not the same as cancelling a project. In fact, where a project tender is cancelled due to insufficient funding, the department may revise the scope and approach of the request and issue a separate call for proposals, including only the preliminary components of the project, such as architectural and engineering work.

Mr. Speaker, this is one strategy available to ensure we maintain progress on the design and construction of vital infrastructure and to prevent the postponement or cancellation of projects despite the challenges of the pandemic. Community and Government Services is responsible for managing the construction of critical infrastructure in non-tax-based municipalities and for Government of Nunavut client departments. Since the start of the pandemic, Community and Government Services has worked with our partners and clients to identify solutions to the unique challenges of proceeding with projects during the pandemic. The department will continue to monitor industry trends and examine methods to ensure critical infrastructure projects approved here in the Assembly can proceed.

Where a solution cannot be found and a project must be postponed or even cancelled, the department will ensure its clients and the Assembly are informed.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this clarifies my earlier response and reassures members that the Department of Community and Government Services continues to work toward delivering on its mandate. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Returns to Oral Questions. Continuing on. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Oral Questions. (interpretation ends) Oral Questions. (interpretation) Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 1312 – 5(2): Municipal Infrastructure

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services and they concern municipal infrastructure.

As the minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved capital funding last fall for the construction of a new hamlet office complex for Sanikiluaq. This essential project was required as consequences of the severe damage that occurred last year in the municipal office in the community following a major storm.

In March of this year the minister's department issued a request for proposals for the design and construction of a new hamlet office facility. The request for proposals closed in early April and it is my understanding that the contract was supposed to be awarded by the end of this month.

Mr. Speaker, today is the last day of May. Can the minister confirm when the contract for the design and construction of the new hamlet office will be awarded? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The member is correct; the request for proposals is being reviewed by the department and the department will announce once the contract is awarded to the municipality when the contract is awarded. Community and Government Services is still on schedule to continue working on the new hamlet office slated for Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will also recall, I asked her a number of questions during the recent winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly about the issue of office space in the community. At that time the minister stated that the Government of Nunavut was "planning to repurpose portions of the existing health centre to accommodate both hamlet short-term office space as well as GN office space." Can the minister update me today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Community and Government Services has been working with the Department of Health to take some of those hamlet employees and put them into the old health centre on a temporary basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During last week's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, we learned that a number of capital projects are being delayed or have their budgets impacted as a result of the dramatic increase in construction costs that is occurring in Nunavut and elsewhere. I know the minister did touch on this in her return to oral question, but I would like to ask the minister if she could confirm the extent to which this situation is impacting her department's plan to construct the new hamlet office in Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. For the Hamlet of Sanikiluaq, the office space, issuing a design/build request for proposals should result in the procurement and construction start in the summer and fall of 2021. Other bids have come in higher than budgeted and this project had a similar outcome, but we're still working to try to get this facility built this summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 1313 – 5(2): Nutrition North Canada Program

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier and they concern the Nutrition North Canada Program.

As the Premier will recall, he made a statement in the Legislative Assembly at its sitting of October 30, 2018, in which he indicated that he had raised the issue of the Nutrition North Canada Program at a meeting with the federal Minister of Northern Affairs.

As the Premier will be aware, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs is currently undertaking a study on the issue of food security in northern communities.

In its recent submission to the committee, the Government of Nunavut identified a number of issues with the program, including “cost-matching criteria, language and Internet barriers, eligible and ineligible costs, and contributions and maximum funding levels that do not take into account either the high costs of the north or the capacity and infrastructure deficits of the north.”

Can the Premier update us today on what specific changes to the Nutrition North Canada Program are supported by the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member stated and is aware, Nutrition North is a federal program and they were doing a review on the program. Mr. Speaker, also, there was an application-based process where they were asking for board members. To the best of my knowledge, they have not picked board members yet.

Mr. Speaker, the outcome of the Nutrition North program that is most ideal is that the funds put into the program result in cheaper food, cheaper good, nutritional food for Nunavummiut. Our government’s role is to make sure that the money put into the program...this is a federal program, but the money put into the program has achieved the outcome of having cheaper nutritional food in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was exactly one decade ago today that the Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board held its first public engagement session in Nunavut at a meeting held in the capital city. In the ten years since the start of the program, we have heard a lot of different feedback from our constituents about the effectiveness of the program. It is my understanding that, as the Premier mentioned, there are currently no Nunavut residents on the Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board. Can the Premier indicate whether he has raised this issue with the federal Minister of Northern Affairs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the best of my knowledge, like I had said earlier, there was an application-based process for people interested in becoming board members for Nutrition North, and to the best of my understanding, they are in the final stages of picking board members. I’m very hopeful that a board member from Nunavut can be appointed to the Nutrition North board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A specific concern that has been raised with me by constituents concerns the impact that the cost of power has on the cost of food. As the Premier will be aware, commercial facilities that process meat and fish consume a lot of power, as do commercial bakeries. Here in Nunavut, all such power is currently generated through burning diesel fuel. I believe that consideration should be given to reducing the cost of power that is used by such facilities. Can the Premier indicate if this issue has been raised with the federal department that administers the Nutrition North Canada Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the best of my knowledge, that has not been raised, but any subsidized program to make Nunavummiut pay less for nutritional food should be transparent and any program that is issued would ideally be as transparent as possible. Currently right now with the way that Nutrition North seems to be, it is not that transparent in terms of people are confused on where the subsidy goes and how they come up with the price and what products are covered and what products are not covered.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to take some of the Nutrition North funds, not the Government of Nunavut but it's a federal program, if they were to take some of the funds and subsidize power rates, then that would take away from the cost of subsidizing nutritional food. Mr. Speaker, that has not been mentioned and I don't know if it's on the radar of the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Ms. Angnakak.

Question 1314 – 5(2): Status of Non-Insured Health Benefits

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

Mr. Speaker, when we reviewed the Government of Nunavut's proposed budget for 2021-22 in March of this year, it was noted that the Department of Health's budget for medical transportation was reduced by \$20 million from the previous year in anticipation of increased funding from the Government of Canada towards co-payments for medical travel for Inuit.

On the final day of the sitting, on March 16, 2021, the Minister of Health rose in his place to inform this House that negotiations for the new contribution agreement with the federal government had not progressed.

Can the minister update this House on the current status of negotiations with the Government of Canada with respect to the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Good day, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question. The funding we use, actually those funds provided by the federal government are under aboriginal affairs, specifically NIHB for medical transportation. As I alluded to earlier this winter, I stated the need to expand this funding amount and to pay for the entire costs of the medical travel. We are still negotiating this increase and continue our discussions with the federal government on this issue. Nonetheless, I believe we are nearing the completion of these talks and will soon reach an agreement in my estimation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear that. Hopefully you come up with a good arrangement.

(interpretation ends) Can the minister tell us whether he anticipates... ? I'm sorry. I got the wrong page.

Mr. Speaker, we are all aware that the cost for medical transportation is one of the biggest line items in the government's budget, with over \$100 million spent to transport medical clients and their escorts to receive medical services that are not available in their home community.

Can the minister tell us whether he anticipates his department will be able to stay within the budget allocated for medical transportation in 2021-22 or will another supplementary appropriation be necessary? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For far too long, this government has had to supplement the medical travel of the Non-Insured Health Benefits and that takes away from infrastructure that we could have built so that we could keep our people from having to travel south; we spend on sending Inuit down south for medical services.

Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard and negotiating with the federal government to ensure that the federal government will pay 100 percent of the travel costs on Non-Insured Health Benefits. That discussion continues, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. I do hope that that would work out.

On March 16 the Minister of Health stated in this House and the minister said that “We have made it clear that unless full reimbursement occurs for medical travel, we will transfer the program back to the federal government.”

If things don’t go according to plan, can the minister clarify what steps the Government of Nunavut would need to take to transfer medical travel that is funded by the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program back to the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m anticipating and I state “anticipating” that the federal government will come and pay for the full travel costs, but should that not come to fruition, then we would negotiate with the federal government in transferring that portion of Non-Insured Health Benefits. Mr. Speaker, those discussions would have to come through so that it happens seamlessly, but we’re not anticipating that to happen at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 1315 – 5(2): Policies for Medical Travellers in Isolation Hubs

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all Nunavummiut in different ways. Some of my constituents are very concerned when it comes to medical issues. When medical clients from my region travel out of the territory, they are required to isolate in the hubs in Yellowknife or Edmonton before they can come home.

Can the minister clarify if the rules and regulations for individuals staying in the isolation hubs are communicated to them? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For patients who have to travel for medical appointments outside of Nunavut, they are informed of all rules and regulations and policies, as there are different criteria for the passengers depending on their circumstances, and they are not required to do the two weeks isolation period.

Some patients are able to travel home faster when they are not exposed to any public gatherings or places with outbreaks. They have to follow all the rules listed if they are in the expedited stream within the medical travel procedures, but only if they adhere to the specific guidelines listed.

For patients who are going to southern medical institutions, yes, they are informed of the requirements they may have to follow, as well as the rules or policies they are to follow within the isolation hub my colleague referenced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clarification. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the two small communities in my constituency of Netsilik have been very fortunate in being free of the COVID-19 virus to date. However, as we have seen when an outbreak occurs, it can spread very rapidly.

Can the minister tell this House what updates on the COVID-19 situation in Nunavut communities are provided to medical travellers while they are isolating for the two weeks before travelling home? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once medical travel patients are in the isolation hotels, they are provided the rules by presentations and outline what is allowed and what is not allowed, Mr. Speaker.

Also, they try to keep them informed and to have informed consent and if they are experiencing any distress or difficulties, they are provided numbers listing the different services. If they require mental health counsellors, then they are provided contact lists.

Mr. Speaker, they are also provided backup information to try to make it clearer as to what is needed, and the workers try to keep them informed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issues I raised earlier in my statement where I first spoke of the need for information for any Inuk patient who is required to travel, but all patients experience homesickness from time to time and it can become quite distressing for the patient. They can become stressed out by any disturbance and the things to combat boredom are not readily available.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, everyone has the right to their privacy, wherever they are and no matter their circumstances. Individuals who are on medical travel must have their privacy protected even if they are struggling to follow the rules and regulations for

staying in the isolation hubs. I completely agree that the rules and regulations must be followed by everyone to keep everyone safe and protected.

Can the minister clarify what guidelines are in place to enforce the rules and regulations for medical travellers in the isolation hubs? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Patients who have to go through isolation have rules they have to follow and they are explained to them as they are being checked in to the isolation hubs. They have to make sure that they socially distance themselves from other people. That is the big rule, and wearing masks is mandatory, and if they want to go outside, it has to be done by appointment or a schedule.

As for meals, they can inform the hotel of special dietary requirements. Their meals; breakfast, lunch, and supper are delivered to their hotel room doors. Whenever they need anything else, they can check with the hotel staff for assistance. There are counsellors available, and interpreters can be made available as well.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is very hard to be in a hotel in an isolation hub. It doesn't seem so hard thinking about it, but when you actually have to experience it, it is very difficult, but we try to help them all to ensure that their stay in isolation is easier and we are always looking for suggestions on how we can improve that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 1316 – 5(2): Safe Spaces for Youth

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Family Services, and the topic is safe spaces for youth.

Mr. Speaker, a little over a year ago this Assembly voted to approve an increase of \$300,000 to the Department of Family Services 2021 budget for youth support services. At that time the minister had indicated that the funds would be used for temporary overnight safe spaces for youth in crisis.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of months ago during the winter sitting, this Assembly approved a further \$600,000 increase to the Department of Family Services 2021-22 budget for youth support services.

Mr. Speaker, the minister had indicated that the additional funding would be used support the development of youth crisis initiatives across Nunavut.

My first question for the minister is: can the minister describe what specific initiatives have been funded through the department's Youth Support Services Division since April 1, 2020. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question from the member. I am proud to stand here and say our department actually delivers two kinds of different programs within Family Services from two different divisions.

The other one is the career development youth program. On the new initiative, Mr. Speaker, yes it was announced, \$900,000 for 2021-22, and each region is eligible to receive \$300,000 per fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I can stand here today and say that two projects for 2021-22 have been approved thus far. Arviat has received \$63,712 in funding for the Rise Up program, which is an after school program for youth 14-18. The other project; Cambridge Bay received \$300,000 in funding to operate the Okalik Youth Shelter for youth ages 12-16.

Those are the two projects that have been approved to date so far (interpretation) Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response. That actually leads into my next question regarding the establishment of the Cambridge Bay safe space youth shelter.

The minister had indicated that \$300,000 was awarded to provided assistance in establishing this much needed youth safe shelter, but I would like to ask the minister if she would be able to elaborate a little bit further exactly what sort of support and assistance has the Department of Family Services provided in the creation, as well as subsequent operation of this safe shelter in Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question. I think it's really important that because this is new funding, that we provide that information.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated, we have only got two projects so far. Our funding applications and guidelines have been distributed across Nunavut through [Family Wellness] regional managers and directors.

As you know, COVID-19 has slowed down, unfortunately, activities within our territory, but we certainly plan to reach out to other communities of the two regions to ensure that the communities take advantage of this new funding. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister again for that response. Mr. Speaker, the Umingmak Centre, which is operated by the non-profit Arctic Children and Youth Foundation, provides support and services for children and youth who have experienced abuse here in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, in the first 12 months of operation the Umingmak Centre provided support to over 80 children. There is a clear and obvious need for a safe space for youth to go here in Iqaluit. I truly hope that the regional manager that the minister has indicated has provided such funding application guidelines to institutions here in Iqaluit.

My last question for minister is: will the minister commit to establishing a much needed safe shelter for youth in the community Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Will I commit to providing a safe shelter for youth in Iqaluit? I would gladly commit to that. I can also say that we just recently received federal funding through COVID for the transitional housing for youth. So there is funding available. It is a matter of having the partners getting together and making it a reality. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Question 1317 – 5(2): Caribou Survey for North Baffin

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment.

The minister had planned to do a survey of caribou in the North Baffin to see where the caribou migrate to. In 2021 apparently they were going to start collaring caribou to see where they migrate to. Were they surveyed this year and did you collar any caribou this year so far? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the proposed caribou survey for the North Baffin was conducted. They surveyed how many calves

were born, and we have the actual numbers from the survey now, but they need to be analyzed for trends.

With respect to the question on the collaring, due to inclement weather, no caribou were collared as the original plan was to collar seven caribou in the North Baffin region, but as of today, there are seven caribou that have collars now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for that information indicating the survey went ahead. When will the findings and report be made available to the hunters and trappers of Pond Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I foresee that the report will be completed in the fall 2021, and the HTO in the community will be notified of the survey results and what they mean. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for pointing out the timeline. We eagerly expect the report from the Government of Nunavut.

I have another question with respect to the survey and the caribou restrictions. Are there any changes expected on the quota, and will the quota system still be in place even after the survey has been conducted? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, you are correct. The caribou tags for the Qikiqtaaluk region have all been used, but on July 1 the 250 tags will be reissued and the results of the survey will determine the quota. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 1318 – 5(2): Children in Out-of-Territory Care

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, I have read the document that the minister tabled, the (interpretation ends) *Child and Family Services Act 2019-2020 Annual Report*. I'll switch to English here; apologies.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister regarding out-of-territory care for children and youth. The most recent annual report on page 5 provides numbers going back five years in terms of the number of children and youth receiving care out of Nunavut. I'll quote from the report from page 5. It says, "Since fiscal year 2015/16, the number of children and youth residing out-of-territory has ranged from 60 to 70." Later on it says, "The Department will only place a child or youth out-of-territory if the child's needs cannot be met in-territory..."

My first question for the minister is: why is it so important to keep children and youth from Nunavut in Nunavut as much as possible? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question, John. I was going to look at you and looking at myself threw me off.

Thanks for the question. It's very important, obviously, when we have to apprehend that we try to keep within the territory. Unfortunately, sometimes for medical reasons, those children have to be sent out of territory or families that are living in southern Canada, sometimes their children are apprehended and obviously sometimes it's easier to keep them within southern so that the families can visit the family and start to make plans to reintegrate back into the family. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) It is very clear, going through the report, that out-of-territory placement is used as a last resort, and I really appreciate the work that the department does to keep Nunavummiut in Nunavut.

Regarding these children and youth who are residing out of territory, there are 67 as of this latest report. How often do departmental staff visit these individuals and conduct inspections? How often do department staff visit those children or youth? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It's mandatory that these families that are gracious enough to assist us are visited

annually or more often if needed. There's actually a client liaison officer in Ottawa, as an example. That person visits regularly or makes phone calls for each client.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) My last question is regarding the family of these children and youth. It's nice to know that the departmental staff are checking up on or visiting these children and youth at least once a year.

How about the family members, particularly those who don't have the means to pay for their own plane tickets? How often are family members of these children and youth provided support to travel and visit the child or youth who is in care out of territory?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My recollection is that a client can visit twice a year. If it's a family of two, they can go visit the client instead once a year. Currently right now with COVID, we have been arranging Zoom and phone calls. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Question 1319 – 5(2): Fair Compensation for Our Elders

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Amittuq and Nunavummiut. My question is for the Minister of Education.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education has a grants and contributions policy. The first principle of that policy states that the department is committed to "...the provision of support for endeavours that encourage the participation of elders..."

I want the minister to clarify how the department ensures that elders receive fair compensation for their contributions to initiatives which are paid for through its grants and contributions. Can the minister explain on that [under] grants and contributions?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for that question. We remember the residential school students and their families.

Mr. Speaker, for our elders who participate in our schools, the local district education authorities have an agreement under our financial policies as to how the funds are to be used for compensation. They are compensated and that is the way it functions at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, with regard to the knowledge of our elders and their wisdom, as I have mentioned before, I don't just want them to be used; I want also them to be compensated for their contributions.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister just mentioned, the district education authorities do compensate the elders. When they ask elders for their help, what is the pay rate? Is it in three stages? There is the high end, the middle and the lower scales?

Looking at these figures, can you clarify them for me? I reviewed this earlier and things have not really changed; particularly the requests from the district education authorities. Can you further clarify how the budget is determined in this area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The district education authorities are able to appoint individuals they consider elder teachers, whether it is for culture or language. They look at the elders' abilities and they are certified as cultural instructors.

Irrespective, Mr. Speaker, this hinges on finances and asking what pay rate is in place. Is it mid-range or the lowest range, as a question? Mr. Speaker, we just abide by the policies as government and we also have policies with respect to how funds are appropriated in these programs for elders and the financial guidelines Mr. Speaker. Elders' compensation is determined by the policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister did not provide any tangible evidence in his verbosity, so perhaps I can reword it this way. Now the Department of Finance's policies as written here also list that when elders are interviewed or form part of any program, that it is capped here at \$150 per event up to \$300 maximum daily rate.

Now I want to point this out, Mr. Speaker, that Act No. 25 or specifically the *Education Act* has been quite difficult to try to amend, and can the minister commit in this House to deal with the financial policies related to compensation of our elders, and whether the minister can amend this particular daily rate prior to the end of our mandate or prior to October? Can the minister commit to increasing the daily rate of the elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funds we provide to the district education authorities falls into the unconditional funding category and they decide how the funds will be allocated, nonetheless, they must still abide by the policies especially government fiscal regulations or financial policies.

Mr. Speaker, he did however ask if the amount for the elders' daily rate can be increased, and what I can expound on here, is that this can be reviewed in terms of the rate, however, we would have to search for additional funds if we went that route, but I can state that we can review this issue as to whether we can increase that daily amount. However, I cannot commit at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Question 1320 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to those who are following the proceedings in Clyde River, as well as my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as the Member of the Legislative Assembly representing the constituency of Uqqummiut, I have been a strong advocate for building modern marine infrastructure in the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River.

As the minister is aware, the federal government's most recent Arctic and Northern Call for Proposals under Transport Canada's National Trade Corridors Fund closed on March 15, 2021, just over two months ago.

Can the minister confirm that a new proposal concerning Qikiqtarjuaq's marine facility was submitted by his department for consideration, and will he commit to providing the municipality and my office with a complete copy of the proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, if we have not already provided a copy, we shall provide one as soon as possible before the deadline. We have not heard whether it has been approved or declined at this time, but we did draft a proposal. We will make sure that it is submitted if it hasn't been already. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that clarification. As the minister will recall, his department issued a request for proposals in October of 2019 for a comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping study in a number of communities including Qikiqtarjuaq. Can the minister describe the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on this work and can he confirm when the final report from the study will be ready to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, in fact the pandemic has impacted this project the most. We have wanted to visit the communities but are not able to do so because of the pandemic. However, we are still writing the final report and once it's done, it will be distributed to the communities and tabled in the Legislative Assembly. We will make sure to write additional proposals for further funding for this project. This is one of the projects that has been most impacted by the pandemic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The request for proposals indicated that Clyde River is one of the communities that is expected to receive marine infrastructure investments under the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation area Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement. Can the minister provide an update today on his department's involvement with the Clyde River project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to that project, the community of Clyde River received that via the Tallurutiup Imanga Conservation IIBA which is under the QIA's purview and this agreement was between them and the federal government. Our government has no involvement in that particular project and how it will be constructed.

Nonetheless, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is currently working on it, and when I was in Arctic Bay, they were studying the deepness of the ocean. I'm sure that those types of studies will eventually be conducted in Clyde River and it will be good to know that those studies were facilitated through the regional Inuit organization's agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 1321 – 5(2): Bigger School Bus for Gjoa Haven

Mr. Akoak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to all residents of Gjoa Haven. As well, my grandchild celebrated a birthday yesterday and is now nine years old. I am grateful to be still around to witness that.

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

Mr. Speaker, as in many communities, the population of Gjoa Haven has grown over the years and our student population in particular is growing fast with a current total of 400 students.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how his department takes the size of a community's school population into consideration when determining school bus allocations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, for busing allocation, we have a budget to purchase about one large and one special needs bus each year and we look at different needs across the territory, including student population, the spread of the community, and other factors that determine where our priorities will be where to send a bus. We look at the student size as one, but there are other factors at play as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The community of Gjoa Haven does have a school bus, but it is now too small to handle the number of students in the community. It takes at least two runs for the school bus to collect and deliver students. Starting this year in the community of Gjoa Haven, we hardly ever saw the school bus running due to some issues that were never dealt with. Mr. Speaker, as a result, many students are late for school or decide not to bother going at all.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us how often his department reviews busing services and the budget allocated to district education authorities to ensure that they are adequate for the number of students in each community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We look at pressing priority needs on a regular basis and again, we do have a budget limiting our busing purchasing needs. However, when we do purchase a bus and each district education authority can submit requests for a new bus and we work on a case-by-case basis on which community is in greatest need. However, we also look at if a school or community has a small bus and the DEA helps to run the schedule. There are ways that we try to support the schools in having the best schedule possible to increase attendance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Gjoa Haven District Education Authority recently wrote to the minister regarding the community's need for a bigger school bus. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm that he has received the letter from the district education authority and will he commit to getting a bigger school bus for the community of Gjoa Haven?

Mr. Speaker, the education department as well as the minister have always promoted education for our students in Nunavut, and in this case as well, for the community of Gjoa Haven and for the students of Gjoa Haven, there should be no excuses saying yes to my question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): I apologize. We couldn't hear Mr. Akoak. We will take a short break.

Is it okay now? I apologize. There are issues with the audio. Member Akoak, please repeat the question you asked. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Gjoa Haven District Education Authority recently wrote to the minister regarding the community's need for a bigger school bus. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm that he has received the letter from the district education authority and will he commit to getting a bigger school bus for the community of Gjoa Haven?

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education as well as the minister have always promoted education for the communities, so I am asking the minister... . Am I still on?

Speaker (interpretation): I apologize. We are having technical problems with our audio system. We will take a short break and we will come back once it is resolved.

(interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:18 and resumed at 15:43*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Continuing on. It was Mr. Akoak's final supplementary. It is now your final supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: ... (no audio)... bigger school bus. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm that he has received the letter from the Gjoa Haven District Education Authority, and will he commit to getting a bigger school bus for the community of Gjoa Haven?

Mr. Speaker, the education department as well as the minister have always promoted education for the students of Nunavut, and this is one tool that they need to get to school. On behalf of the students of Gjoa Haven, the answer to my question should only be yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would very much like to give the member his yes. However, there are great needs across the territory. I can confirm that we did receive the letter from the Gjoa Haven District Education Authority requesting a bigger size bus and we will look at that and consider along with any other requests that we get from the communities, but I assure the member that we have the request from Gjoa Haven and we will look at which community will be receiving a new bus for 2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members will note that the time for question period has expired. Continuing on. No. 7. Written Questions. No. 8. Returns to Written Questions. No. 9. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. No. 10. Petitions. No. 11. Responses to Petitions. (interpretation) No. 12. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) No. 13. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeegok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 390 – 5(2): 2021-2022 Annual Report of the Ethics Officer for the Nunavut Public Service

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 2020-21 Annual Report of the Ethics Officer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) No. 14. Notices of Motions. 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. No. 17. First Reading of Bills. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills**Bill 73 – An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act – First Reading**

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, that Bill 73, *An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Bill 74 – An Act to Amend the Hamlets Act – First Reading

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 74, *An Act to Amend the Hamlets Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 75 – An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act – First Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 75, *An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

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

(interpretation) First Reading of Bills. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Bill 76 – An Act to Amend the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act – First Reading

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 76, *An Act to Amend the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act*, be now read for the first time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Continuing on. No. 18. (interpretation ends)
Second Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Thank you.

Before we proceed with the (interpretation ends) Committee of the Whole, (interpretation) I wish to make a statement. I'll say it in English.

Speaker's Statement

(interpretation ends) During last Friday's proceedings of the Committee of the Whole, members undertook a clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 57. During these proceedings, a number of motions to amend the bill were introduced by the sponsoring minister.

One of the motions had been provided in advance to all members through correspondence from the sponsoring minister and this motion corrected a typographical error in the bill. Other motions were substantive and resulted from the Committee of the Whole's consideration of the bill. I wish to note that this is in order.

As members will recall, motions to amend bills on the floor of the House have been moved on a number of occasions.

As members are aware also, motions to reduce or delete specific line items in proposed appropriations are introduced from time to time during the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole.

As members are now experiencing, the current hybrid format of our sitting poses a number of challenges to our practices, procedures, and processes.

When all members are physically present in the Chamber together, distributing motions and other items is a straightforward process, and our practices have generally been to take a brief recess so that ministers and regular members can hold appropriate discussions amongst themselves prior to voting on a proposed motion or an amendment to a bill.

Although best efforts were made on Friday to immediately send copies of the proposed motions to all members participating remotely, I believe that it would be desirable to adjust our practices so as to take into account the current hybrid circumstances of our sitting.

Going forward, if the circumstance arises again when a motion or a proposed amendment is brought forward on the floor of the House during the Committee of the Whole without notice, a 20-minute recess will be provided to distribute the documentation and allow time for members to review them.

If further time is required for members or ministers to caucus on the matter, we will proceed according to our usual conventions and to take an additional 20-minute recess prior to proceeding to a vote on a matter.

In order to allow for such discussions to be held, witnesses, media, and visitors will need to be asked to step outside of the Chamber. I thank the members for their attention.

We will now proceed with the orders. (interpretation) Item 19. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 36, as reprinted, 69, 70, 71, and 72 with Ms. Angnakak in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 114 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:56 and Committee resumed at 16:06*

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

Chairperson: Okay, we are on. Good afternoon everybody. Welcome back for those that are coming back, and welcome to those that are just joining us now. I would like to call the committee meeting to order.

In the Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 36, 69, 70, 71, and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We wish to do a clause-by-clause review of Bill 36, and once concluded, we will report progress. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Kaernerck. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 36?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 36 – Mental Health Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairperson: I would like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I do. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you. It looks like we have maybe no translation. Just hold on a few minutes. It's okay? It's okay. Mr. Keyootak? Yeah, okay.

Alright, does the committee agree to let the minister's officials go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Okay, so they're at the witness table. For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Good afternoon and thank you, colleagues. With me today at my far right is Colleen Stockley, Deputy Minister for the Department of Health. To my immediate right is Thomas Ahlfors, Acting Director, Legislation Division and the Legislative Counsel for Bill 36. To my far left is Kim Paradis, Senior Legislative and Policy Analyst, and to my immediate left is Victoria Madsen, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Inuusivut Mental Health and Addictions.

Madam Chairperson, colleagues, Nunavut's current *Mental Health Act* comes from the Northwest Territories and does not accurately reflect the needs or realities of Nunavummiut. Parts of the Act date from the 1960s. To address major issues and inconsistencies, the recommended approach was to entirely repeal the current Act and develop a brand new one. The proposed new *Mental Health Act* reflects what was heard at consultations. Inuit societal values were incorporated in Bill 36 and have influenced key policy decisions. It is consistent with modern mental health legislations in other jurisdictions, while being tailored to the unique needs of Nunavut. This new legislation is also consistent with the jury's recommendations from the systemic inquest into suicides in Nunavut.

Mental health legislations ensure that individuals in a severe state of mental illness are attended to during a vulnerable time period. Most people with a mental disorder willingly request care, obtain it, and see their health improve. However, some individuals will not seek mental health care or refuse treatment because they are unable to make decisions for themselves or because they are so ill that they cannot recognize their own needs.

Mental health legislations in other jurisdictions are therefore focused primarily on addressing involuntary treatment and are typically only for a small portion of mental health clients. Those that undergo treatment willingly and those not requiring intensive care would not fall under many provisions of these Acts. While this is also true for Nunavut, the Department of Health worked hard to broaden its *Mental Health Act* in recognition of what was brought forward in community consultations. This is why Bill 36 also includes provisions on postvention, Inuit approaches to healing, and services that people can access voluntarily, as well as a commitment to develop a strategy to improve mental health and addictions programs and services. The aim of Bill 36 is threefold: to improve the mental wellness of Nunavummiut and address Inuit-specific mental wellness needs, while targeting a small segment of the population with severe mental illness in need of treatment.

The new Act will bring about major changes and improve Nunavut's mental health system in many ways. For example:

- The new Act will allow for early intervention. The former Act left minimal room for early intervention because it required that the person be at imminent risk of causing bodily harm before the health care system could intervene against their wish. This led to situations where family members had to watch their loved one who declined care deteriorate until they are so ill that harm was imminent. The committal criteria for involuntary admission have been broadened in the new Act to allow health professionals to intervene sooner.
- The new Act provides for community assisted treatment orders. This offers several benefits, including allowing certain individuals who would have otherwise been hospitalized to receive treatment and support in their own community, and requiring individuals to take their medications. Community assisted treatment orders will allow for early intervention, monitoring, and care closer to home and will reduce repeated hospitalizations.
- Finally, the new Act better reflects Inuit societal values and provides for greater family involvement. Amongst other things, Bill 36 aims to increase family and friends' support in the care of people who are mentally ill and to harness their protective role in suicide prevention. It includes a process to appoint a selected representative, the *tikkuaqtaujuq*, who makes decisions on behalf of a patient when unable to make treatment decisions for themselves. It also makes it mandatory to consult the selected representative at various points during the client's mental health care journey and to notify them that certain events have taken place, for example, following a suicide attempt.

These were some of the main concerns raised during community and stakeholder consultations, and I am very pleased to say that they are addressed in Bill 36. The Department of Health has continued to listen to feedback received on the proposed Bill and has proposed several amendments in response to submissions from the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Canadian Psychiatric Association, and other stakeholders, and to recommendations from Standing Committee on Legislation. For instance, to address the members' concerns, Health has proposed motions to include a process that would ensure efforts are being made on apprehension to have a support person accompany the peace officer when it is safe and practicable to do so.

The new Act you have before you today is flexible to ensure it can serve the territory's needs in the short- and long-term. If passed, the new *Mental Health Act* will result in safer care for patients, families, and communities.

I would like to thank the members for making the consideration of this bill a priority. This initiative has been a long time in the making and I am very happy to see the proposed *Mental Health Act* considered today. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Kusugak. (interpretation ends) Does the Chair of the Standing Committee have opening comments? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 36, the *Mental Health Act*.

The standing committee is in support of the principle and objectives of the bill, which the sponsoring minister outlined in his opening comments.

Mental health issues, including the high rate of suicide, have raised critical concerns across Nunavut for many years now. Bill 36 proposes a number of measures to improve the ways in which individuals with mental illness receive care and support and provides for ways to address mental health issues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth, Nunavut's Legal Services Board, Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts, Nunavut's former Information and Privacy Commissioner, and the Canadian Psychiatric Association for their thoughtful submissions on the bill. Many of the specific suggestions provided by these entities led to amendments to improve the bill.

During the minister's appearances before the standing committee to consider the bill, members raised a number of questions concerning the implementation of the legislation. The standing committee would like to thank the minister for agreeing to a number of suggested improvements and, specifically, to amendments that will strengthen the involvement of support people at the community level.

(interpretation) Madam Chairperson, (interpretation ends) members look forward to the introduction of a new mental health strategy for Nunavut and to the ongoing training and hiring of paraprofessionals to provide mental health services across Nunavut's communities.

The standing committee recommends the passage of Bill 36 to all members.
(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. (interpretation ends) Are there any general comments? Mr. Netser. (interpretation) Can you hear me?

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Yes.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Netser, we couldn't hear you. Could you wait for a moment? Okay, we can hear you now. You may proceed.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. This technological world is sometimes very hard to deal with when figuring with these...playing with problems over the last six weeks. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson, I am in support of this bill and it's been a long time coming and I applaud the minister for bringing up this bill. It will make it easier for families that have members who are suffering mentally. This bill will really help move along our desire to improve the lives of Nunavummiut.

However, Madam Chairperson, I have a serious concern, just for the record, with federal Bill C-7, which is medical assistance in dying legislation that was passed by our federal government. I am very concerned, Madam Chairperson, when our patients... . As we all know we do not have any facilities within Nunavut to send them to, so we have to send them out of the territory and my concern is that they will be coerced into signing up on this medical assistance in dying that the federal government recently passed. So this is my big concern, and just for the record, I just wanted to state that. Thank you.
(interpretation) I do support the bill. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kaerner, you are next. Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister, for introducing Bill 36. I want to add that the issue of mental health should be noted and taken seriously by the government, and we should also take seriously Inuit counselling practices. Sometimes we are quite unique in Canada and the world.

I will personally support Bill 36, *Mental Health Act*. As I just commented, Inuit counselling practices will now be in the forefront and we are constantly raising the issue of *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangat* and the issue of working together. I hope this will be realized by the government as it is implemented.

This is an area where many expectations are made in Nunavut and we see many individuals who are struggling mentally and you want to help them; in particular, those who are our constituents.

Again, I would like to say further, I will support Bill 36 and also those who are directed to provide care. I am glad to see that will take place. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also support this bill because those with mental illness are often confronted and treated like criminals and many others who are mentally distraught are often just taken to jail or dealt with through corrections without any kind of support and we seem to be going in circles when it comes to people with mental health issues.

This bill is a new bill and IQ is very much a part of this and those who are appointed to be representatives will now be open for mentally ill persons to get assistance from people whom they know in respect of those who are mentally ill. This puts an emphasis that the government will have to provide (interpretation ends) resources (interpretation) and I will support it.

Today, people with mental illness are treated like common criminals and this should not be the case. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. I have no further names on my list. (interpretation ends) We will now begin doing our clause-by-clause review of Bill 36, so go to Bill 36 in your legislative binder, please.

Okay. Let us begin. (interpretation ends) Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Oh, excuse me. I've got to go back. I made a mistake. I didn't say this first: Bill 36, *Mental Health Act*; just to be thorough. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Mr. Main: I have a question on clause 4.

Chairperson: Okay. (interpretation) What about this one? Also 3.1. (interpretation ends) Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: That is on page 8. Okay. Clause 4. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Clause 4, under 1(h), makes specific reference to Inuit counselling, and later on regarding research, under 2(c), again it makes reference to Inuit-specific approaches to mental health.

Mr. Kaerner mentioned this in his comments just now. I wonder if the minister can... I'm thinking about implementing this bill. What sorts of capacity exists right now in Nunavut when it comes to Inuit counselling or Inuit-specific approaches to mental health? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) These issues surfaced when the bill was first being drafted. In terms of the number of elders, that was expanded and it added categories such as Inuit culture, Inuit traditions, Inuit social and counselling practices and whether we can repatriate them into practice as this becomes an Act.

There are initiatives being moved forward and I know for a fact, that more will surface as the Act moves forward into legal basis. And further, we have met with many organizations within Nunavut, both agencies of this government and non-governmental organizations, such as the men's groups being created, existing women's groups amongst others.

We are working with bodies created to provide more assistance to those who are undergoing stressful situations and mental challenges due to the difficulties of life up here, and it is obvious, and if I am allowed, I would ask that Ms. Madsen be able to add onto my response. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When we reference Inuit counselling and anything that would be Inuit-informed mental health and addictions services, we think of it as a continuum of the different variations that people would prefer. When we did our community consultations, people would say "I only want to speak to an [Inuk]

counsellor” or “I want to speak to both” or “I want to speak to someone who understands where I am coming from, and I want to go back and forth.” “I don’t want a counsellor, I want to go on the land and learn about my heritage and my language.” We couldn’t believe all of the different suggestions that people had given, and it was loud and clear that the mental health and addictions services will only be fully successful when this is prominent and this is what people are offered and expect to be offered all of the time.

Right now your question was specific: “what do we have to offer at the moment?” The minister did mention the men’s groups, the women’s groups, we have teen groups, we have a variety of groups where we bring people together. I want to give you a personal experience of attending a women’s sewing group. Our paraprofessional, who is an outreach worker, spoke to the women about sewing this parka together and thinking of the parka pieces as pieces of their soul and of their life and of their body, and that to me, and to the group in the room, is Inuit counselling. It is Inuit culturally-safe services, and that is what we need to increase our paraprofessional group to be able to extend and we will. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, are you done? (interpretation ends) Okay. (interpretation) Anyone else? Mr. Kaernerker.

Mr. Kaernerker (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On number 4... . (interpretation ends) Let me turn to my channel two. Under (r); training, how would the department be able to train individuals when it comes to mental health issues, when it also comes to *tikkuaqtaujuq*? How will the department be able to take this, especially when it comes to *tikkuaqtaujuq*, who will be a representative? What training is in progress? What’s in place? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe that the department will be working in terms of training with our paraprofessionals and professionals. In some cases it will be cultural sensitivity training and other training.

Specifically in terms of *tikkuaqtaujuq* training, Madam Chairperson, I believe that once an individual identifies someone to be their *tikkuaqtaujuq*, the individual most likely would not know exactly what the responsibilities become of that individual in terms of their responsibility in caring for the person that asked them to be their *tikkuaqsimajuq*. There would be training with that individual or those individuals so that they understand what their roles and responsibilities become with the individual, and there would be discussions with the person who needs mental help and the *tikkuaqtaujuq* so that they’re both under the same understandings of what that definition entails. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Any more questions? (interpretation ends) Okay. Clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 5. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In there, it says that the minister shall assess the needs of people in Nunavut with respect to mental health and addictions and design a strategy for meeting those needs. Do you have a projected timeline of when the strategy will be put in force? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It will definitely be longer than the lifespan of this government. I anticipate it will probably take about a year and maybe a little bit longer than that to come up with that strategy. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister, for the response. I assume that the respective parties from each community will be consulted, like the mental health nurse of each community or nurse in charge. Can you please verify? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, it will include consultations or keeping informed those peoples or bodies that have a role to play in the strategy. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Are you done? (interpretation ends) Okay. Clause 5. Agreed? Oh, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Sorry, Madam Chairperson. I just wanted to follow up on Mr. Simailak's question. When it comes to the strategy, the minister mentioned that it will likely take about a year or take a while to develop a strategy. What type of strategy is the department planning for? Is it going to be a ten-year strategy or sort of an evergreen document that doesn't have a specified time frame on it? What are the plans in terms of how often the strategy will be renewed going forward? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At this time we don't have a timeline in terms of if it's going to be a five-year or a ten-year strategy or an ever-evolving one. At this point we will develop a strategy and through its development, we will have a clearer understanding of how long it will take to implement some of the work that we put into the strategy. It will be a working and live document, so it will be

evolving as we move forward and as we continue to improve our mental health services in Nunavut.

I would hope that this strategy will be evolving as we go forward, but at this time we do not have a sunset clause thought of at this. It's a bit too early to decide that at this point, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) My last question on this clause, so once that strategy is in place, I'm just imagining what it will look like, but I'm just looking for a confirmation from the minister that the strategy will be the foundation on which your services are developed as well as your facilities, like the operations and maintenance side of what is going on with mental health and addictions, as well as the capital side of what is being built and what is being developed in Nunavut. I'm just looking for a confirmation that the strategy would drive both programs and capital investments. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. And c) it could include all of the above. At this stage I can't get into the particular details of those, but it would seem logical that it would have some influence on taking a look at what we have and where we need to go with the strategy. Some of it may require infrastructure; some of it will not. As this strategy evolves and moves forward, I think we will find that those very pieces that my colleague is talking about may have to be included in parts of the strategy in some form or another, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Okay. Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 8. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 9. Agreed? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I forgot to put my hand up.

Clause 9 mentions keeping records and it mentions a register or database that can be set up, but then also under 9(3) it mentions that the database has to be separate from *Public Health Act* type of registers and databases. My question is: is this going to be a new computer system that's going to be developed? Is there new software that's planned to fulfill this mental health records part of the legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I could, through you, have Mr. Ahlfors respond to that question, please. Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Ahlfors.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The registers and databases that have to be separate from the *Public Health Act*, it does not legally require you to have a completely different database system. It can be maintained in the same system as long as it's sufficiently separate from the data held under the *Public Health Act*. The main reason for that is the method that information under this Act is collected is different than under the *Public Health Act* and, more importantly, the rules around how the information is disclosed is different from the *Public Health Act*.

If, at the end of the day, someone at the Department of Health is looking at that database, if it were together, there would be a risk that they don't know: is this public health information or mental health information? How are they allowed to release it? However, if it's separate, then they would be able to identify which way it can be released and that's the reason for keeping it separate. However, it doesn't mean that it has to be an entirely separate computer system; it can be two databases on the same system. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the response. We're talking about an existing system that will be used, or is it MEDITECH? That's my last question. What is the plan for the registered or "databased" mental health records? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't know that at this time. I would be more than happy to share it with my colleagues when it becomes available. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Okay. Clause 9. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 10. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 11. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 12. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 13. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 14. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 15. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 16. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 17. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 18. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: That's okay, Madam Chairperson. I'll wait until clause 20; I have a question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Clause 18. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 19. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 20. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Clause 20 is language rights and I think we can all understand how important this is when it comes to mental health, for the right of Nunavummiut to receive services in the language of their choosing.

It has been brought to my attention that when individuals are sent out of territory, let's say for example, to Selkirk, Manitoba, they do not have the best access to language translation/interpretation. How will this clause 20 apply to out-of-territory treatment, for example, in Manitoba? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Before I go to the minister, I would just like to remind all members that it's like you're in the House here, so if you're eating and drinking, that's certainly not allowed unless it's water, just like the rest of us, please. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I lost my train of thought.

Madam Chairperson, we will do whatever is possible to ensure that the individual that is out of territory gets the proper interpreter/translation as soon as possible. Sometimes it might have to take a little more than a day or two to get there, but we will do what we can to ensure that the translation of their choice, if it's not English and be it Inuktitut, then we will try to provide that to the individual, in this case if they're where my colleague said they would be. We will do our best to ensure that the translation is available there. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) I just wanted to mention that I think this clause is very important and I really do hope that it's going to help people who need mental health services to receive them in Inuktitut. It's just a comment. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Qamaniq, I didn't recognize you at first. Mr. Qamaniq. Mr. Qamaniq. (interpretation) We can't hear you. One moment please.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): My apologies.

Chairperson: Oh, okay.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Can you hear me now? Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also find language rights very important. There will be clients who are deaf and will need signage or people with signing interpretation available. It doesn't say here, but there are also people with disabilities. Could the minister elaborate on what is available to assist people with disabilities? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It's also very important for the government that people have the right to use the language of their choice and also be provided the services. We would also have services made available for people who are mute so that there's proper communication between the client and the service provider. We will have all services available. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Are you done, Mr. Qamaniq? (interpretation ends) Okay. Anybody else? Clause 20. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 21. Agreed? Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On clause 20 for the *tikkuaqtaujuut*, if the client needs services outside of the territory, can the client ask for the *tikkuaqtaujuut* to follow him as his escort? How would you go about that? Would the *tikkuaqtaujuut* go as an escort with the patient? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With regard to language rights the *tikkuaqtaujuq*, whether the *tikkuaqtaujuut* would go as an escort with the client and so on, we would take it on a case by case basis. If there is a requirement and if you have the reasons, we would deal with it accordingly. It would be on a case-by-case basis. Madam Chairperson, Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Are you done? Do you have another question? Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, I am glad that this will be undertaken in that manner. Now, in terms of this issue, since we have a wonderfully unique language. Would the *tikkuaqtaujuq* have the ability to oversee the client services? It states that the coordinator can appoint someone else and would they also have that ability? That's my last question for the time being. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The *tikkuaqtaujuq* would be empowered to make the decision unilaterally based on their appointed mandate, to ensure that their client receives the best possible services.

As an example, if I personally had a *tikkuaqtaujuq*, I would tell this individual that if I fell into a certain situation, that I would want to be treated in such a manner, for example, I dislike needles, so I would want alternative treatment separate from shots.

The *tikkuaqtaujuq* would follow my directions based on the need to provide proper services. It would be at the time when I would be incapable of making the decisions, as that is when we fall into such problems. We will make sure that the directions are communicated to the health professionals.

The *tikkuaqtaujuq* and the client would have communication previously about if their situation falls into this case, then treatment A would suffice, and if not, treatment B would work. The Mental Health worker and the *tikkuaqtaujuq* would have to arrive at a consensus on the case as they would have to move forward. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. I believe the member is done. (interpretation ends) Clause 21. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 22. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 23. Agreed? Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Within clause 22, it states therein that if the representative cannot follow, now if the patient is only able to communicate in Inuktitut, would an interpreter/translator be made available for that individual where that person is unilingual? In the case where the *tikkuaqtaujuq* is also unilingual, would they also be eligible for an interpreter/translator? That's my question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, in accordance with the language of clause 20, the representative has to clearly understand all of the procedures in the language they use daily.

If the person is an Inuk, then they must be made to clearly understand through the linguistic services of interpreter/translators, and if they are able to converse in English, then they also would need to understand lingo such as medication names or even the times of the appointments or times of ingesting medication using the language they use officially. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. I would like to remind you that we finished that clause. (interpretation ends) Clause 23. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 24. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 25. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 26. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 27. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 28. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 29. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 30. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 31. (interpretation) Mr. Main, is it for clause 30?

Mr. Main (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Clause 30, (interpretation) I have a question on clause 30.

(interpretation ends) This clause refers to individuals taken into custody. When the Standing Committee on Legislation was reviewing this bill, we heard from the RCMP

and from the Department of Health that there's currently a lack of safe holding spaces across Nunavut and that unfortunately the last resort is the RCMP holding cells for people who are taken into custody. Maybe they're awaiting assessment or going through a mental health crisis.

My question for the minister is: is there any plan to develop safe holding spaces or build safe holding spaces across Nunavut or is this something that would fall under the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy and would be a need identified through there?
(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, there are plans to create safe holding facilities for those individuals needing this help. As new health centres are being built in Nunavut, we are working to ensure that they have safe holding facilities within the health centre to provide that for individuals. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister.
(interpretation ends) It's my understanding that there are only one or two communities that currently have safe holding spaces in Nunavut. If it takes a new health centre in order to get a safe holding space, it could be a very long time before we see these in every community in Nunavut.

I guess the question for the minister is: is there a way to address this in terms of implementing this bill? Is there a way to address this need outside of building a new health centre, which could take a very long time? Is this something that will be considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, it could take some time, but it is something that our department is looking at, and if I could have Ms. Madsen take an additional response to that through you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson: Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have been working on this for a number of years. We know that it will take some time for each health centre to have a dedicated safe room. We have asked a variety of health centres to look to see in their space if there's something that they can use in the manner for safety when it's required, so a room can have dual purposes. A number of health centres have been able to look at the space that they have and see how they could quickly make it safe so that they could have a person in that room instead of going to the RCMP cells.

Other things that we're trying to do are a little bit more creative. We're looking at even office space sometimes. There has been some creativity throughout Nunavut on how we can help our community member be safe and also less distressed. Again, when we look to our clinicians, our paraprofessionals, we hope that we will have help from the RCMP and other community agencies. Pulaarvik is a good example in Rankin Inlet. It's very supportive of this and is trying to help us identify space.

We do have to be creative until we wait for health centres to have a dedicated space for individuals. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Okay, Mr. Main is done. Clause 30. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 31. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 32. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 33. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 34. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 35. Agreed? Mr. Qirngnuq, I can hardly see you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I raised my hand before we got to clause 34, but you couldn't see me right way on the video screen. I want to understand what "involuntary status" means. Can the minister explain to us what that means? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That term means a person who is involuntarily admitted under 37(140)(1) or 41(4).

If a person needs help in a community, it allows for getting that person the help they need. When there is a call about a person having problems, it involves that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq, does that answer your question? Okay. Clause 34. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 35. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 36. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 37. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 38. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 39. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 40. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Clause 41. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 42. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 43. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 44. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) This is the part of the bill on community-assisted treatment orders, which I think could be a really great thing for services for Nunavummiut.

My understanding of how this bill is set up is that in order for a community-assisted treatment order to be issued and for an individual to receive treatment in their community, there would need to be a certain amount of resources and services available within a community.

When it comes to smaller communities such as Whale Cove, for example, my question for the minister is: is it envisioned that even smaller communities such as Whale Cove would have the ability to support an individual who is under a community-assisted treatment order, and I'm trying to understand to which degree this bill has been crafted with the different sizes of communities in Nunavut in mind. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I believe that it has been crafted as such and maybe if I could have Ms. Madsen clarify that, through you Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson: Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have thought about the smaller communities. Whale Cove is a very good example of a place that I do believe we would be able to do our community assisted treatment orders.

What will change with the sizes of the communities is the amount of detail and services we will be able to outline in this order. A minimum is usually around medication and a very common example of an individual who we would like to keep in the community is a person who requires certain medication, certain checks in with their health professional, and Whale Cove would have that. All of the communities would be able to do that with their health centre.

It's more a matter of how many services we can add onto the order and that will depend on what that community has to offer. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister and Ms. Madsen. At the end of the day it depends on what the services available in the community are and every community is different. Some communities have non-profit groups like what was mentioned, Pulaarvik, or there are different groups across Nunavut.

The question that I would have is: are there going to be specific pots of funding made available for communities that want to develop their own health... ? I'll use Pulaarvik as an example or Ilisaqsivik. Are there pots of funding that will be made available after this

bill is passed or are there already pots of funding available for these types of organizations? That's my last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think yes to both of those. There already exists pots of money out there and that's how organizations such as Pulaarvik Kablu can work by accessing different pots of money within the territory and within Canada. This money is available to any organizations or groups that qualify for that, but having said that, as we develop this strategy that we talked about at the outset, within that strategy, I foresee that there will be maybe a bit of description in terms of what kind of programs that could be run within the community or within the region or territory. That would come out of that strategy.

Yes, there is money out there to run different programs that are out there and in fact there already is through different programs. They have men's wellness training groups that happen in each community and they're starting to sprout out. Yes, to those comments, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): He is done. (interpretation ends) Okay. Clause 44. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 45. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 46. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 47. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 48. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 49. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 50. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 51. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 52. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 53. Agreed? Mr. Main, sorry I didn't see you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, it's on clause 53, 53(6), which refers to peace officers arranging transport. When we were hearing from the RCMP regarding this bill, there were concerns expressed in terms of the RCMP acting as escorts for persons who are being transported for assessment. It was mentioned as an issue in terms of capacity and taking up the time of RCMP officers who could be doing other things. That's my rough recollection, Madam Chairperson.

My question for the minister is: what alternatives exist to using RCMP officers as escorts for mental health clients needing transport? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I could have Ms. Madsen respond to that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When it comes to escorts, it's definitely an individual decision, case by case, and the first that we would look at is what's best for the client and what level of agitation the client is in at that moment. Again, we would always look for the least amount of distress, which would be an escort that's a family member or someone very familiar with them, and we would move it up and hoping we don't have to use RCMP. That is the last resort.

I do remember that last conversation and it's not the Department of Health's wish to have the RCMP as escorts. We hope that one day we will be able to have enough other options, other trained paraprofessionals, community members that are comfortable with mental health and addictions and their presentation. Though the RCMP will continue to be an escort for clients that require that amount of safety to decrease risk, we hope that that doesn't occur very often. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Main, are you done? (interpretation ends) 53. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 54. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 55. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 56. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 57. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 58. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 59. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 60. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 61. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 62. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 63. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 64. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 65. Agreed? John...Mr. Main, excuse me

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) You can call me whatever you want; you're the Chair. I have been called worse, I should mention.

It's clause 64, the Mental Health Review Board, this review board is going to have an important role and the composition is going to have lawyers on it, mental health professionals, and residents of Nunavut who are neither lawyers nor health professionals. My question is just around the timeline for getting this review board up and running. Does the department have a time frame in mind as to when this would be functioning? That's my only question on this clause. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Unfortunately at this time we don't have a timeline addressed for that appointment of this board. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Clause 64. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 65. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 66. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 67. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Clause 68. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 69. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 70. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 71. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 72. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 73. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 74. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 75. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 76. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 77. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 78. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 79. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 80. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 81. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 82. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 83. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 84. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 85. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 86. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 87. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 88. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 89. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 90. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 91. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 92. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 93. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 94. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 95. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: 96. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Do members agree to Bill 36 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Do members to put Bill 36 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Minister Kusugak, do you have any closing comments? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It's just an opportunity to thank all the people who participate in all the community consultations that we hold. (interpretation) To the elders who participated in the development of this bill, thank you. Thank you very much for the issues you brought up during the discussions, which were very beneficial. Thank you.

(interpretation ends) All the hours that so many people put into this, least of which is Victoria Madsen, thank you very much for this, Kim Paradis and Mr. Ahlfors, thank you so much, and so many other staff members that are not here today, I thank them all.

Of course I thank all of my colleagues in this room that put an awful lot of effort into this. I look forward to keeping you informed on its progress and thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, minister. I thank you as well. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Those opposed. The motion is carried and I will now rise to report progress. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Good day. (interpretation ends) Report of the Committee of the Whole. Ms. Angnakak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 36 and would like to report that Bill 36 is immediately ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion on the floor is in order. Is there a seconder? Ms. Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order.

(interpretation) I think it is okay now. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

(interpretation) Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 36 – Mental Health Act – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 36, *Mental Health Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. (interpretation) All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 36 is ready for assent.

>>*Applause*

No. 22. (interpretation ends) *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Standing Committee on Legislation meets tomorrow morning at 10:30 Eastern Daylight Time.

Orders of the Day for June 1:

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
 - Bill 73
 - Bill 74
 - Bill 75
 - Bill 76
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 69
 - Bill 70
 - Bill 71
 - Bill 72
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, June 1, at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:24*

