

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Allan Rumbolt
(Sanikiluaq)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

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

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

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

Hon. George Hickey
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
Management Board; Minister of Justice;
Minister responsible for Labour; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

Hon. David Joanasie
(South Baffin)

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

Joelie Kaerner
(Amittuq)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Health; Minister
responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention*

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

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*

Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

Calvin Pedersen
(Kugluktuk)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

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*

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

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

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickey, Hon. David Joanase, 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. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Allan Rumbolt): I would like to start by asking Mr. Keyootak if he could please lead us in prayer. Mr. Keyootak.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Good afternoon, members. I say “good afternoon” to the people of Nunavut and the people of Sanikiluaq.

On with the orders of the day. Ministers’ Statements. The Hon. Minister for Culture and Heritage, Minister Nakashuk.

Item 2: Ministers’ Statements

Minister’s Statement 687 – 5(2): Inuktit Revitalization

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

Mr. Speaker, as I have highlighted in this House, the Department of Culture and Heritage provides important financial support to individuals, community organizations, and municipalities for initiatives that promote, protect, and revitalize our Inuktit language and culture. It is through Piliriqatigiinniq between our government and Nunavummiut that we better ensure that our language and culture thrive.

Since the beginning of the *Turaaqtavut* mandate, the department has provided funding to approximately 850 recipients under the following program areas: \$6.9 million for Official Languages, \$2.7 million for Elders and Youth, \$8.8 million for Heritage, and \$1.5 million for Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit.

Mr. Speaker, communities know best what they need, and community-led initiatives are the most effective and appropriate way for our territory to preserve and revitalize our rich language and culture. With this in mind and through Aajiiqatigiinniq, my department

worked with stakeholders throughout Nunavut to identify ways to enhance our policy to ensure that it is responsive to the needs of communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Culture and Heritage has updated its grants and contributions policy, making it less burdensome for recipients, allowing them to focus their efforts and resources on carrying out important initiatives. We now allow for multi-year funding under numerous program areas and have enhanced and broadened the scope of program areas.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing individuals, community organizations, and municipalities reap the benefits of the improved grants and contributions policy. I encourage Nunavummiut to continue seeking support for initiatives that promote, protect, and revitalize our language and culture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. The Hon. Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 688 – 5(2): Nunavummiut Mine Staff Returning to Work

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start my minister's statement, I want to give my condolences and prayers to the tragic accident that took place near one of our mines yesterday, and prayers to the family and all those involved.

Mr. Speaker, at the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Nunavut's mine operators voluntarily sent Nunavummiut employees home to protect our communities. This decision was not easy and it came at a great cost to employees, their families, and Nunavut's mining companies. My department was very pleased to learn of the chief public health officer's decision this summer to authorize Nunavummiut employees to return to work at site at the Agnico Eagle Mines and Baffinland project site.

Mines are the largest private sector employer of Nunavummiut, and mine employees have been disproportionately impacted by the border restrictions and isolation requirements. Facilitating the return of Nunavummiut mine employees to work was a complex undertaking and required the cooperation of many parties. I am grateful to the work of colleagues in the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer and across the Government of Nunavut for achieving this goal together.

As of this fall, over 200 Nunavummiut employees have returned to work at the Agnico Eagle's Meadowbank and Meliadine project sites and the Baffinland Mary River project site. Work is underway to retrain and return the remaining Nunavummiut mine employees to work as soon as possible over the coming months. Feedback from employees and mining companies about returning Nunavummiut to work has been overwhelmingly positive.

My department continues to play a coordinating function in the development of return-to-work protocols, and we will continue to support the review and approval of the remaining plans in any way that we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. The Hon. Minister of Justice, Minister Hickes.

Minister's Statement 689 – 5(2): RCMP Foot Patrols in Iqaluit

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to highlight a pilot initiative from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Iqaluit detachment.

Over the summer, officers from the Iqaluit detachment conducted foot and all-terrain vehicle patrols in high-traffic areas in Iqaluit, such as the beaches, Sylvia Grinnell Park, downtown Iqaluit, and the area around the beer and wine store.

Mr. Speaker, this program ran over the summer between July 19 and September 6 and included 12 patrols. Through this type of community patrolling, officers were able to better interact with local business leaders and community members, which was well-received by Iqalumiut.

The Department of Justice is encouraged to see the Royal Canadian Mounted Police make efforts to build public trust and positive relationships with the communities they serve.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said in the past, community-based policing initiatives are a priority for me, and I will continue to support the "V" division in their efforts to be more visible within the community and accessible to Nunavummiut.

We commend the RCMP for implementing this community policing initiative and look forward to other similar projects in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. The Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Minister Joanase.

Minister's Statement 690 – 5(2): Bachelor of Social Work Program

Hon. David Joanase (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, members and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize the hard-working Nunavut Arctic College community in Cambridge Bay for their efforts in the delivery of Nunavut Arctic College's first ever Bachelor of Social Work program.

This program, developed and delivered in partnership with Memorial University, is drawing on graduates of the college's Social Service Worker Diploma Program to ladder into the third year of Memorial University's Bachelor of Social Work program.

Mr. Speaker, this program is an articulated degree program. This means eligible Social Service Worker Diploma courses have received credit from Memorial University, and the courses taught at Memorial University will be delivered in Nunavut. This program has been enriched through the inclusion of the Nunavut and Inuit context. (interpretation ends) I can assure members that in working together, Nunavut Arctic College and Memorial University of Newfoundland have succeeded in bringing the best of both institutions to Nunavummiut through this program.

Through a diverse range of classes and practicums, students of this program will expand their understanding of the social work field. This is truly a dynamic program.

Mr. Speaker, thinking to the future, in addition to creating a pool of candidates to fill social worker positions in the territory, Nunavut Arctic College hopes that graduates from the Bachelor of Social Work will share their expertise with different sectors across Nunavut. The college also hopes some graduates are inspired to enrol in the Masters in Social Work program offered online by Memorial University of Newfoundland and consider coming back to the college to teach. As all members can appreciate, there will be so many options for graduates of this program.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Bachelor of Social Work program, the partnership with Memorial University, and the work of the college team in Cambridge Bay supports the *Turaaqtavut* mandate, specifically the priority area of Sivummuaqpalliajjutivut in supporting a robust educational system that will assist Nunavummiut in developing knowledge and skills that we need in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members to join me in recognizing the students and staff of Nunavut's first ever Bachelor of Social Work program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. The Hon. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister's Statement 691 – 5(2): New Mobile Application to Support Social Service Staff

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform Nunavummiut and my colleagues here in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly about a new mobile app developed and released by the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, known as QHRC.

The Family Services NU app was created to address a community identified need to support new members of Nunavut's family service-related workforce. Family Services NU is focused on supporting individuals who work with the public in ensuring continuity of care and trusting relationships, while addressing the repetition and exhaustion that can arise during temporary and short-term staffing.

Uqaqtitsijii, this new app has been built on the success of Health NU launched in 2017, which provides similar support to short-term health care providers. The app is now available for download from the App Store for Apple iOS devices or on the Google Play Store for Android devices. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. The Hon. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Ehaloak.

Minister's Statement 692 – 5(2): Development of Critical Infrastructure in Nunavut

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon to my colleagues and those who are watching.

Uqaqtii, at the start of this government's mandate, we agreed that closing the infrastructure gap here Nunavut was one of our top priorities. Today I am happy to provide members with an update on our progress of developing infrastructure that supports a positive future for our people, our communities, and our land through *Turaaqtavut's* Pivaallirutivut.

Mr. Speaker, in the past month we have seen two newly constructed community health centres opened. The first, in Sanikiluaq, is a 1,818 square metre facility constructed at a cost of \$30,200,000, and the second, in Kinngait, is a 2,048 square metre facility constructed at a cost \$33 million. Each of these new health centres will improve service delivery and improve the quality of life in those communities.

We have also achieved substantial completion on essential territorial infrastructure like the new correctional centre, an \$85,990,000 project that will improve service delivery and safety of staff and clients.

These are just a few of the recent steps we have taken toward closing the infrastructure gap in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, municipal infrastructure is the backbone of our communities. Critical infrastructure like water, wastewater treatment facilities, office spaces, and recreational facilities contribute to the long-term health of our communities and our people.

Projects like the \$5 million improvements completed to the Kugaaruk wastewater site were completed last fall and construction is expected to begin on a new \$23 million facility in Taloyoak next summer. This fall we plan to move to the design phase of water treatment infrastructure in Pond Inlet and Whale Cove, as well as a new hamlet office in Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, these are some examples of the work we have done and will continue to do to address the growing needs of our communities and our territory. I am proud of the work we have achieved during this Assembly to support our people, our communities, and our land through *Turaaqtavut*'s Pivaallirutivut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Moving on. Item 3. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 1000 – 5(2): Reflections on the Role of Being an MLA

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll keep my comments short.

I wish to start by thanking my colleagues, as I have acted as a chair for committee meetings over the past few years for regular members, so I thank you all. You provided much-needed assistance, and this includes the ministers and our current Premier whom I also thank as you also continue to work with the regular members.

We do not always agree on issues, and arguments also break out from time to time, nonetheless, this was accomplished without too much anger or angriness in our meeting rooms, and that is what I am proud of. We are showcasing Nunavut's best traditions and practices.

>>Applause

Thank you. I want to mention the political veterans whom I also wish to thank. These veteran politicians have formed the foundation especially for us younger and rookie MLAs. When you are a rookie and newly elected member, you have to learn all the protocols and one is often confused how to speak, how to act as an MLA, so due to our heavy reliance on you, our veterans, I wanted to voice my thanks for that.

I remember when many of you were also regular members; Mr. Hickee, I remember you as one, I remember Mr. Quassa as one, Ms. Nakashuk, we remember you as one, and I even remember Mr. Mikkungwak as one, although he is not present today. Lastly, Mr. Speaker, you yourself were also a regular member and we thank you greatly. As a veteran member, you were the trainer and the educator in our meetings.

>> *Applause*

Sometimes in the beginning, Mr. Rumbolt would scold me for being so young and naive, and for that I thank him. Perhaps being too young at the time, I did not fully agree with you, but now I thank you. I humble myself in front of our regular member colleagues as they are very capable because you are veterans. I have no further comments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Main for the kind words. Members' Statements. The Honourable Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 1001 – 5(2): 2021 High School Graduates of Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy that I could be involved in the high school graduation ceremony that recently took place in Baker Lake. Due to pandemic protocols, the graduates were split into two groups; I had to visit the first half of the graduates at the school in the morning, and the other half in the afternoon.

It was a pleasure to meet and see all the recent graduates, and I would like to mention them by name:

- Ayla Duvall
- Jackson Ford
- Erica Inukpak
- Tara Kalluk
- Bionca Kudja'aq
- Ricky Nanooklook
- Claire Tookanachiak
- Naomie Itqiliq
- David Martee
- Brianna Niego
- Rhoda Parker
- Ashley Pudnak
- Hope Tookoome

Mr. Speaker, I am very appreciative of the elementary school and the high school. I would like to thank the teachers in both schools, as well as the assistants and the directors

in the schools. They all helped the graduates, and I would now like to ask my colleagues to join me in applauding them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Congratulations to all. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Member's Statement 1002 – 5(2): Trauma Counselling

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to tell my sister Rosemary Sandy that I am thinking of her, as well as Hannah Benoit. My father used to tell me that he wanted me to be wise, and would explain that we were all simply passing through as visitors on this Earth. Even if we had property and felt like we belonged here, we were only passing through.

(interpretation ends) My father wanted me to be a wise person and he told me we are only passing through this Earth. Even if we believe something belongs to us or it's our community, we are only passing through it. He said to me, Rosemary, if you are listening, "Hold onto these: *niriunniq*, hope, *uppirniq*, and (interpretation) love because love is forever." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I recognize that mental health issues are a serious concern across Nunavut and I appreciate that our government is working hard to provide resources in this area.

However, I rise today to address an even more serious and critical need across our territory: the need for trauma counselling to support those who are left behind to deal with the immediate fallout from a crisis, a tragedy, or a violent incident.

(interpretation) The word "trauma" refers to a sudden or unexpected negative occurrence that you feel. When you unexpectedly experience a trauma, you go through a crisis and afterwards it returns to the person and manifests as anger. Sometimes it impacts one's ability to socialize or even cause physical side effects such as headaches, nausea, and so on.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, sometimes it seems as if our people face shock after shock. Crisis leads to crisis. A violent incident leaves an aftershock that ripples throughout the community.

I would like unanimous consent to finish my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her member's statement. Are there any nays? Being none, please continue Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, colleagues.

We need more support to stop the spread of trauma.

Mr. Speaker, our people, Inuit, and others are facing homelessness which impacts their ability to cope with added stress. There are mentally ill people in all of our communities who are not getting the services they need to stabilize and heal. Each of us is affected; nephews, cousins, mothers and fathers.

Mr. Speaker, when a tragic incident occurs in a community, its effect is felt immediately. Just as a wound on the body must be treated right away before it leads to other health problems, so too must the impacts of a traumatic event be dealt with quickly to reduce the negative influence on our mental health. Trauma can also be intergenerational.

I appreciate that our Department of Health has a Mobile Trauma Unit that can provide support to communities in a case of emergency. This is an important resource, but it is one resource that is shared across the territory.

I strongly encourage our government to ensure that trauma counselling is available in every community at all times. It is critical to address hard-hitting issues as soon as possible and to prevent the negative impacts from spreading and causing further trauma. I believe each of the MLAs and the ministers here have had trauma in their lives, including our Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 1003 – 5(2): 2021 High School Graduates of Kugluktuk

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and good afternoon to the people of Kugluktuk.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago I was extremely honoured to get an email and an invitation to participate in a graduation ceremony for the Kugluktuk High School. This was my first speech addressing students, so I took a lot of time in preparing and I wanted to make it as best as it can be for the students and I wanted to inspire them. I was extremely proud to be there.

There were 11 graduates from the Kugluktuk High School this year and they are:

- Clayton Kadlun
- Domonick Okheena
- Bill Ongahak
- Calden Stirrett
- Izaya Westwood
- Rylie Bolt

- Shauntay Bolt
- Mackenzie Demerah
- Delila Havioyak
- Susan Kalluk
- Star Newman

I look forward to seeing these fine young adults utilize their knowledge to their best abilities in making our community and our territory the best it can be. Go Grizzlies! Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Congratulations. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Member's Statement 1004 – 5(2): Praise to the NWT Premier

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend the Office of the Premier of the NWT for their level of transparency. Premier Cochrane continued to set the bar and recently has published letters sent to leaders of federal parties as well as their responses on the NWT Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs website.

Elections present a very unique opportunity for our territories to get commitments and support from the leaders of the federal parties, who quite often would otherwise not give our territories and Nunavut especially a moment of thought.

As our Premier has not released details of similar correspondence, I will be asking questions on the topic at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Kusugak.

Member's Statement 1005 – 5(2): Condolences to People and Family in Rankin Inlet

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the residents of Rankin Inlet, you are in my thoughts. Today I was planning on making a rambling type of statement to lighten the air, but perhaps I'll speak to it tomorrow instead.

Mr. Speaker, I will just say that my fellow residents of Rankin Inlet are going through the hardest of hardships. I would like my fellow Nunavummiut to keep them in their thoughts and hope they can be blessed in the coming days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you and my condolences to the people of Rankin Inlet. Members' Statements. The Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Member's Statement 1006 – 5(2): Fur, Fur, Fur, for everyone

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We have two last days and I have two winks left. I'll start with my wink today. It's for, as the former commissioner said, (interpretation) Local foster parents. Many of us would not be here if the real leaders hadn't done their work and gave up. The foster parents mentioned in the commissioner's address are the Alaingas, Peters, Nakashuks, Joamies, and Sheutiapiks. For those parents, I thank you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the first day I had every intention to talk about the garment that I'm wearing today, but I was quite excited and I had neglected, but God works in mysterious ways. While I was gone the last few days, we actually had a member's statement on the removal of natural furs from Canada Goose products. Thanks to our member, Ms. Towtongie, for that.

Since Inuit are a majority of Nunavut, I stand today to support my fellow Inuit men who hunt and harvest. I stand up today to support our Inuit women who support their families by sewing. I stand up today for people like me who love to purchase garments made by our fellow Inuit women. I stand up today because I want Canada Goose and anyone that will be listening [to know] we are the most sustainable when it comes to our wildlife.

>>Applause

In my mind, if you use synthetics, you're not environmentally friendly. I am very passionate and I have always been. I'm not a seamstress, but this is the most sustainable we can be. Anyone listening out there, fur is very fashionable, very environmentally friendly, and even if we can't harvest them, we harvest them because if we don't, they're going to overhunt the animals we do harvest. Please continue to make furs so we can continue to buy them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. We will move on in the orders of the day. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 6: Oral Questions**Question 1445 – 5(2): Federal General Election**

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier.

As the federal election will be held next Monday and it's very important that we now have the major federal party leaders stand on issues of concern to Nunavut and the north, and with that being said, earlier this month, as I previously indicated, the Premier of the

Northwest Territories publicly released letters to the major federal party leaders as well as the replies received to date.

I would like to ask our Premier if our Premier can confirm when he will be releasing his letters that he had sent to the federal party leaders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did write to all the federal ministers and have received responses from all except for the Liberal party to date. As this is the second-last sitting day, I don't know if I can release them here, but the letters just generally asked the... It's the same letter to all of them asking them how they would deal with our needs, our lack of infrastructure, our lack of health care services, our lack of housing, all the needs that we need, not that we want, the needs that we need and in that letter it's all addressed to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In response to the Premier of the Northwest Territories, the leader of the Conservative party committed to allowing the three territories to set their own borrowing limits. I would like to ask: can the Premier confirm what his understanding is of the positions of the other major parties on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't confirm the positions of the other leaders, but whatever positions the other leaders get, it would be more than likely that position would be the same, whether it's to Yukon or the Northwest Territories or the Nunavut territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that we have a non-partisan territorial government and I recognize that we need to have good relations with whoever wins office next week. I would like to ask: can the Premier confirm what his main priorities will be to raise with the next federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The fine voters of Arviat willing and the new MLAs that will be elected willing, if I have the same job here, then my plan will be to do what we did after the last election. After the last federal election, we had an information campaign where we went down and went to Ottawa and visited all the federal ministers that were involved in infrastructure. The second part of that is we were

going to go visit all the ministers that were involved in social wellness within Nunavut, but COVID hit and the second portion was not done.

We would run an information campaign again where we as the ministers go down and we meet with as many ministers as we can to educate them of our needs here in Nunavut and so that they're familiar with it. That would be the plan, to do an information campaign, so that any new federal ministers will be aware of our needs in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Question 1446 – 5(2): Pond Inlet's Family Violence Shelter

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my fellow residents of Tununiq, my colleagues, and Nunavummiut.

I'll speak English, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services' 2021-24 business plan indicates that the department will continue to implement departmental initiatives to address family violence. On page 169 of the business plan it states, "In this past year, funding has been provided for 4 new shelters in Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet and Baker Lake."

Can the minister provide an update on what work has been accomplished to date to establish family violence shelters in these four communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking a question on that. This is very important and we were very happy once we heard that there were going to be four shelters being built in Nunavut. I can say now that in Pond Inlet... . They get an annual approval of \$400,000 and I believe they're just going to be using \$100,000 today, but the plan is for the \$100,000 for this year. We know that the federal government, through NTI, was going to help produce four shelters.

We know that NTI has been working with the hamlet in your community as well. I also have heard that they want to build a new building and they have ordered the material. I don't know if they have arrived yet, but they have been ordered. They were able to order new materials for Pond Inlet right away.

It has already been planned for Gjoa Haven. We're just waiting on the building inspectors. They have to be approved by building inspectors before they can be opened. It will be opened after the inspectors finish with it.

In Pangnirtung they have been given \$100,000 to get started, so they're now in the planning stage and we have heard that they can probably rent a building in the community. There are indications of that in Pangnirtung.

In Baker Lake, unfortunately, we have not heard how they are proceeding in that community.

These communities are working on these, and I'm just explaining what I have heard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. Mr. Speaker, I do recognize that both the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated share responsibility for establishing these four family violence shelters. From the community perspective, it seems that each entity is waiting for the other to take the initiative.

Can the minister clarify how her department is working with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to move this initiative forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Another avenue we're using as a department is that we have new positions called the homeless outreach workers. They too will be involved in reaching out to entities like NTI when it relates to...the regionals will be reaching out to them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response again. Mr. Speaker, I have been given to understand that building supplies for the Pond Inlet Family Violence Shelter are arriving on sealift and carpenters, plumbers, and electricians have been contracted to fly into the community to begin the work. However, it is not clear whether or not the work will go ahead due to confusion over the funding status of the project.

Can the minister confirm that this project will go ahead this current construction season and, if not, will the minister commit to working with her counterpart at Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to address whatever issues are holding the project back and get it going as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will be pushing more for this, especially since we have annual funding available for those buildings. We would really like these buildings to be opened, so I will make sure that I look into this matter and ask questions regarding a completion date, or if there are any other issues that need to be addressed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

Question 1447 – 5(2): Medical Travel Escorts

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my *aikuluk* in Rankin Inlet, I love you and you are in our thoughts. I will be there on Friday for a brief visit.

Today I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

There are patients who have to travel to see eye doctors and to undergo eye surgeries. Sometimes people develop cataracts in our eyes. Now, one of my constituents stated to me that people who go out to get work done on their eyes are no longer allowed to bring escorts with them. I would like to know if that is indeed the case and why that change in policy has occurred. I would like to know. We would like to know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I feel for you my colleague. I have not been informed about medical patients travelling for eye issues not being allowed to bring an escort. Of course patients that require eye surgery would need to be accompanied by an escort. I will look into this matter and get back to the member once I determine if this is true or not. I know that my officials are listening and I will look into this matter properly. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you to the minister. It is true that those patients definitely require escorts and caretakers. I know that some of them can speak a little bit of English, but many don't understand very much. Some are hard of hearing and a lot of them have a hard time understanding and speaking in English.

I strongly believe that these patients require caretakers and I would like to know if the minister could tell the House and the listeners if he feels the same way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to those patients who have to travel south for medical, many of them require escorts and

caretakers. When this is the case, they have to communicate and work with the medical travel staff at the hospital. If they would like to request an escort or caretaker, or if an escort is denied, they can complain to the Office of Patient Relations. I am encouraging people to do so and please let me know when things like that happen so that we can look into the matter.

Sometimes it's a matter of simple misunderstandings, but I urge you to file a complaint and also contact the minister's office, as there are so many individuals that require that assistance. There are some people who can actually speak a little bit of English, but then become so intimidated when they are down south that they properly communicate in English, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member from Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 1448 – 5(2): Water Treatment Plant for Whale Cove

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I was looking for a red light over there.

My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the future water treatment plant in Whale Cove.

Mr. Speaker, I do not need to say how badly this project is needed in Whale Cove. I have said it a number of times in this House, so I will keep my questions very short.

Can the minister please provide an update on this project? The latest information publicly available is that an architectural engineering services contract was awarded in June of this year. Can the minister provide an update as to how the project is proceeding?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm happy to tell the member that the project is underway and on schedule. As he stated, a contract has been awarded. The design of the project will be completed by December, with a completion date for next summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. That's very good news and I assure you that Whale Cove is very much looking forward to having a new water treatment plant.

Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned in her minister's statement today that moving to the design phase is planned for this fall. Can the minister confirm whether additional budget allocations will be required or if the approved budget for this project is enough to get it through the design phase and into construction? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can tell the member today that the preliminary budget for this project is \$15 million and through this exercise of the design for the project, we will know by then whether or not additional funding will be required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. My final question is regarding the construction phase of the project. The recently completed water treatment plant in Arviat, I know, was done with a modular approach. I believe that some of the water treatment plant modules were brought in prefabricated into the community. Can the minister indicate whether it will be a prefabricated approach to the water treatment plant in Whale Cove or whether it's simply too early to tell at this point? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Community and Government Services works diligently year-round to ensure that the drinking water in Whale Cove is safe for the community's water system. Right now the filter box plant is an interim solution to see no water quality changes with a permanent solution, as we stated earlier, for construction of a new plant. The system has been running since July of this summer and we will continue to use this filter box system until the new plant is constructed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Question 1449 – 5(2): Conservation Officer Vacancies

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good afternoon" to those who are following the proceedings in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, as well as my fellow MLAs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, I have previously asked questions on this issue that some communities don't have conservation officers. Perhaps the minister can indicate how many communities in Nunavut do not have a current conservation officer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the moment the communities that don't have conservation officers in Nunavut, starting in the Kivalliq, Arviat, one, and the (interpretation ends) regional manager (interpretation) is also vacant; in Baker Lake the supervisor is also not filled; and in the Kitikmeot, Kugluktuk, the supervisor will be on a (interpretation ends) manager trainee (interpretation) position; and in the Baffin region, here in Iqaluit, the officer III position is also open; and in Qikiqtarjuaq the conservation officer; in Igloolik, conservation officer; and Arctic Bay, conservation officer, including Pond Inlet (interpretation ends) regional manager (interpretation) are still open. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clarification. Mr. Speaker, as I said, I raised this issue on numerous occasions. Qikiqtarjuaq has not seen a conservation officer for a long time now, perhaps close to 15 years or more. The response has been that there is no staff housing. For that reason, Qikiqtarjuaq has not seen a conservation officer for many years now.

We have seen one or more temporary employees in our community being hired for the position, but at the moment I believe there is also a temporary employee who is perhaps on training. I don't know. Perhaps, again, the issue is no housing for the position which is why it is not being filled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the member is correct; there is no conservation officer in Qikiqtarjuaq due to lack of housing. It's difficult to get conservation officers in Nunavut due to lack of housing. When we hire a conservation officer, usually it's a person from the community or the assistant, also known in English as (interpretation ends) wildlife guardian (interpretation) that is trained, but the training is usually not delivered in the community. Once housing is available, the position would be open. We just have a guardian at the moment in Qikiqtarjuaq. The member is correct that the conservation officers from the region will go to the community and assume duties for a time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for a good answer. Mr. Speaker, this is a very important position in Qikiqtarjuaq, which has one of the highest polar bear populations in the region and just recently three bears were caught within the community boundaries. This is always a concern when you don't have a conservation officer. The required responsibilities with no conservation officer around are troublesome.

Qikiqtarjuaq sees a lot of bears and often I will go outside and there's a bear in the porch or underneath the stairs. That's how it is in our community. On occasion we have bears in the community daily and sometimes we have to be weary when going out, especially when days are shorter, and to be attentive with our children, check to see whether or not there is a bear, on their way to the school, store or on their way home. This is a constant reality in our community. When our children are going to be out for some time, we warn them to be careful and to watch out for bears.

As it is, without a conservation officer, it sometimes gets difficult to know who to report to. Perhaps the minister can clarify further as the lack of housing, as you said, is the barrier causing the problem, but we have many old government staff houses. Perhaps the government can look into these housing units, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, before I respond, let me first state that the conservation officers know that they will be chasing away bears as part of the job description. But if there is a bear in the developed area, call the regional office or perhaps call the local hamlet office for the bear to be chased away with the bylaw officers.

We have requested at the moment for staff housing for conservation officers. If a staff housing unit is available, we will make that request, but we have been told at the moment that the staff housing units are all filled, so again, lack of housing is the issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 1450 – 5(2): Supports for Nunavut's Most Vulnerable

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To our colleagues who have recently lost loved ones, you and your constituents are in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, my question relates to this advice that seems to fit this time as one sometimes goes through unanticipated circumstances or challenges. Our parents would advise us when we were younger on occasion, or as youth by our elders or grandparents that the mind is very strong and can overcome life itself due to mental stress and this is still being unfortunately faced today and will be faced tomorrow and the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, when it comes to mental health issues, everyone is affected. These days life is especially stressful with the pandemic affecting all people across the world.

Mr. Speaker, when people don't have the means to support themselves or when they have nowhere to go, the stress threatens to take over and the burdens of life seem heavier.

Can the minister describe what additional protocols have been put in place by her department, and specifically for income support workers and social workers, to help reduce the stress felt by the individuals and families who are already the most vulnerable in our society? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking that question. If I understood his question correctly, when people are struggling with mental health and when people go to our offices who are aggrieved or stressed out? On occasion, when it is clearly obvious, the mental health workers provide counselling as required and book appointments with mental health doctors, as they also do (interpretation ends) referrals (interpretation) and meetings via telehealth and phones. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As I mentioned in my preamble, everyone's life has been affected by this pandemic. Not only that but people often experience side effects from the stress they are feeling, small things that can get to a person and be damaging to their mental health.

Can the minister tell us how her departmental staff provide assistance and direction to clients for them to access programs to help reduce stress and deal with the additional burdens in their lives? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question. (interpretation ends) If you remember, our department, in restructuring and how to improve support for our clients, we have gone to "One Plan One Client" approach, but when it comes to mental health, Mr. Speaker, if I may, it's not just for vulnerable and those on income support who are struggling with mental health right now; even us, strong, stable incomes because of COVID have been challenged with our mental health. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I recognize that we are coming to the end of our term as regular MLAs and as ministers. However, the work of the government is ongoing and our people need the services the government provides.

Will the minister commit to relaying the message to all of her departmental staff that they must provide extra support for dealing with stress and pandemic-related worries to Nunavut's most vulnerable, and further, will she commit to doing this before the end of her term as a minister in Nunavut's Fifth Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking that question. Yes, of course, I commit to that. (interpretation ends) Some of the challenges when it comes to COVID, I know we had complaints of clients being outside waiting. Luckily it has been warm, but over the winter months we will have to figure out how to deal with... .

As an example, our staff still have to go into the office because they're frontline and clients who might be booked to come next have to wait outside because the staff have to have time to disinfect the station to prevent spread. Sometimes we will have to be a little bit patient to ensure our safety. When it comes to mental health, it may be just that as well. There may be protocols in place, so we need to be a little bit patient when we're trying to make sure that we support our clients the best we can. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 1451 – 5(2): Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link

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

As the minister is aware, the recent federal budget identified the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link as one of a number of important infrastructure projects to “provide clean power to Northern communities.”

Information published by the project's proponents indicates that it will “see 1,200km of high voltage and over 370km of lower voltage electricity transmission line built to link five communities, including Baker Lake, to the Manitoba electricity and fibreoptic grids.”

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this project and applaud the federal government for its involvement.

Can the minister clarify what role the Qulliq Energy Corporation is currently playing with respect to the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Qulliq Energy Corporation's role in the hydro-fibre link project is that the Qulliq Energy Corporation will be a customer once this hydro link project is complete. We would purchase the power from Nukik and, in turn, we would be the power distributor to the Kivalliq communities connected to the transmission of this from Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, she informed the House last Friday that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is planning to submit a general rate application in the year 2022 and that it will be recommending that Nunavut move to a "territorial rate for all communities."

Mr. Speaker, when the Kivalliq-Hydro-Fibre Link project goes ahead, 20 percent of Nunavut's communities will be connected to Manitoba's power grid. Can the minister clarify the extent to which this will impact the price of electricity for residents and businesses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can assure the member that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has been working diligently with the Kivalliq Inuit Association, including Nukik, who will be the distributor of this power. At this time Qulliq Energy Corporation senior staff will be meeting with officials and stakeholders with Nukik to come up with and have some high-level discussions on some very important topics, including this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her responses. Just for clarification, will she ensure that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is ready to take on this responsibility so that we can move forward with reduced power rates, hopefully, for our residents and businesses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) With support from my municipality, with support from my constituents, with support from this House, with support from my colleagues, hopefully I will be sitting back in this position and I will work to try to ensure that the Qulliq Energy Corporation finds the best renewable resources that we can use for our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

Question 1452 – 5(2): Training for Paramedics

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, the shortage of nurses in our community health centres is an ongoing problem across Nunavut. I do appreciate that the hiring of nursing staff is a very serious issue all across Canada.

I noted from the minister's July announcement on health centre closures that emergency responders or 'paramedics' were employed as part of her department's strategy to ensure health services would continue to be delivered at the community level in those cases where health centres lacked nursing staff.

Can the minister provide this House with some further information on the role of the paramedics who were hired, including where they came from, what training they have had, and in what type of circumstances they were called upon to provide services in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question, but the hiring of paramedics and regarding the nursing staff shortage falls under the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do realize now that some of these questions, in this case, two ministers kind of take responsibility, but I will continue to address the Minister of CGS. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for the services that emergency responders provide. I fully support the role of paramedics in ensuring that health services are delivered when they are needed.

In reviewing the *Hansard*, I note that my colleague from Netsilik raised this issue with the minister last Friday. This is for the Minister of Health; sorry. The minister stated that "paramedics are the medical professionals that we usually see responding in ambulances." Although some communities have ambulances, there are often no certified medics who can drive to an emergency and deliver urgent care.

Can the minister tell us what plans are in place to train community-based individuals as paramedics so they can provide full ambulance services?

Mr. Speaker, I think I confused you a little earlier. This question is still addressed to the Minister of CGS. I apologize. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his second question regarding ambulances. Under section 101 of the *Hamlets Act*, municipalities do provide some ambulance services within the communities. They either have a vehicle or through the fire department. I can assure the member that these individuals do not provide medical services within the ambulance itself, but a lot of them have first aid training and can help through the process from transportation from the site to the health centre, and then after they are taken to the health centre, they're administered by the health staff.

When it comes to training for ambulance services, it's usually administered by the municipalities. I know that in some communities the fire departments, usually the fire chief is the one who drives the ambulances and their team will assist to ensure that the best services are provided for that person, but Community and Government Services does not provide funding for ambulances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. Mr. Speaker, in the community of Kugluktuk, we have a bylaw officer who is only able to pick up the paramedics at the airport and drive them to the health centre where medevac staff take over the care of the patient.

It would be a valuable asset to the community if the bylaw officer or another hamlet employee could be trained and receive the certification to operate the ambulance to its full usage. Will the minister commit to directing his officials to plan for paramedic ambulance training in order that municipalities can have full ambulance service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the member that if a municipality requires specific kind of training, through the Municipal Training Organization, they can request this type of training for their community members. I can assure the member that fire rescue training is done through this Municipal Training Organization and any municipality can apply to them for special types of training. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

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Question 1453 – 5(2): Homelessness Outreach Workers

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and community of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the ministers of Family Services and the Nunavut Housing Corporation for Monday's announcement that Gjoa Haven will be receiving new housing units under the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's new funding program.

>>Applause

This is very good news.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 10, the Minister of Family Services announced three new homelessness outreach worker positions for Nunavut. We are all aware that homelessness is a serious issue all across the territory of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide further details on how these outreach workers will work with such individuals as income support workers, social workers, or hamlet staff to identify individuals who need support to address their homeless situations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Member of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking a question on this subject. I'm happy when you ask questions and this is very important when we're trying to move forward on a daily basis in our office. Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, when it comes to homelessness, it's not just income support within our department. We will also be working very closely with the Family Wellness Division as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Almost exactly one year ago, the *Nunavut Hidden Homelessness Survey* was tabled in this House and showed that Gjoa Haven was one of the communities most impacted by homelessness across Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I note that one of these new homelessness outreach positions will be based in Pond Inlet. I am confident my colleague from Tununiq is very happy about that. It is important to support our smaller and non-decentralized communities.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain why the new homelessness outreach position in the Kitikmeot will be based out of Cambridge Bay and not Gjoa Haven, which clearly needs significant support in this area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the department, through discussion and dialogue, felt that through support of Cambridge Bay and the staff, there would be a lot of support if you needed to do proposal writing as a community for such initiatives. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of homelessness is a serious one across all of Nunavut. I would even say that it too is a crisis situation in our territory. I certainly welcome all initiatives to address homelessness and hope that these new positions will have a positive impact in all our communities.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister indicate when she anticipates these new homelessness outreach positions will be filled and when we can expect to see the new staff members reaching out to our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking questions on this matter. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, to my understanding, they have all been hired.

Mr. Speaker, I'm actually very proud to be standing up here to say that during our Arnait Tulliningit women's forum, your new homeless outreach worker was a participant of the forum and, shortly thereafter the forum, actually emailed me as the minister responsible as a new employee. She was nervous and during the forum, I had said, "Don't ever be intimidated by me because I'm elected. I represent every one of you in this room."

As a young woman, she contacted me as minister responsible and I said, "You're on the right track by communicating." That's what you have to do is introduce yourself and tell everyone who you are and make notes as they tell the stories because those are critical information. This is a good start to introducing yourself as a homeless outreach worker. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Question 1454 – 5(2): Removal of Natural Fur in Canada Goose Products

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, it was yesterday I talked about the fact that Canada Goose will ban the usage of all fur products, or to buy them. I would like to ask questions to the Minister of Environment.

As the minister will recall, yesterday I expressed a deep personal conviction about the unacceptability of the decision of Canada Goose to remove natural fur from their products. Does the Minister of Environment share my position regarding this issue, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member that I don't agree with it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You clarified to me that eider duck was gathered in Sanikiluaq, so I appreciate that; not goose down.

I understand (interpretation) and recognize that the government does not have authority over how private companies conduct their businesses. However, I believe that we can take action to express our concerns. It impacts harvesters and women who sew.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that the Government of Nunavut does not purchase any Canada Goose products until such time as it reverses its decision and returns to the use of natural fur? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my knowledge, the government currently doesn't buy products from Canada Goose, but the people of Nunavut buy products from Canada Goose, such as parkas. I might be mistaken, but I don't think we buy any products from Canada Goose formally as a government.

Nonetheless, we fully support people who sell fur products, fur harvesters, and fox trappers and we support them. When it comes to foxes, the government buys fox furs, wolf furs, wolverines, and we send our polar bear hides, but polar bear hide prices are quite low along with grizzly bears. We fully support harvesters financially and non-financially. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Minister of Environment. It's obvious that our constituents are harvesters, hunters, and seamstresses.

I intend to write to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the three regional Inuit organizations to seek their support on this issue. I will also be personally writing directly to the Canada Goose Corporation, calling on the company to reverse its position on the use of natural fur products when they want to purchase fur products. Will the minister commit to joining me and writing on behalf of the government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Department of Environment should write a letter to Canada Goose in support of people who harvest animals with furs. We utilize them properly. We use fur from caribou and seals as well as using them for food. Yes, I support my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Honourable Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Question 1455 – 5(2): School Vaccination Clinics

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just as I had to really stand up.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health.

Now, at the beginning of this month on September 1, students were given vaccines. I would like the minister to clarify, compared to when the students were beginning to receive vaccinations against COVID-19 in Igloolik, Sanirajak and all of Amittuq, has the number of people receiving their second dose reached higher amounts? Are the numbers unchanged? What is the status of Amittuq residents that are 12 to 17 years old? Are the rates higher or have they not changed? That is my first question for the Minister of Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date we have reached more than ten communities with our student vaccination program. First of all, everyone who agreed to get vaccinated has received their first dose and will be eligible for their second dose very soon, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just recently, on September 14, the government provided numbers on the number of residents who have received their second jab, as it was announced that over half of eligible people have received it, or

numerically it states 73 percent of eligible Nunavummiut have received their second dose during this month.

I wonder if this is the case for the 12 to 17-year age bracket, what is the percentage? 73 percent is way above halfway, so I wonder since the beginning of this vaccination program as you stated that started on September 1, and the minister also stated that those with a first shot comprised this many people, however, in looking at the overall numbers for Nunavut for second vaccination jabs is 73 percent, since the vaccination program was first introduced.

That is why I asked specifically about the Amittuq region with the communities of Igloodik and Sanirajak, and if there is a percentage of people who have received the second round of vaccinations? Is it 73 percent which I mentioned or can the minister clearly outline the percentages or numbers of residents in the Amittuq who got that in Igloodik and Sanirajak? And how can we ensure that this protocol provides the benefits to my fellow residents of Amittuq? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I misunderstood my colleague. I thought we were talking about just the 12- to 17-year-olds. The percentage is an estimate and be aware of that in this House, but the actual numbers in the communities, we don't have all of the information yet. Some of the people who got vaccinated may not be from that particular community.

To answer part of my colleague's question, in Igloodik the number of vaccinations, looking at the eligible people, 48 percent of them have been vaccinated. This is one of the lowest numbers. In Sanirajak it is around 66 percent, but the numbers are slowly rising. People who want to get vaccinated can get vaccinated; they just have to notify their local health centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for clearly explaining that. Now, I hope that the minister does not misunderstand me again, so I'll try to speak in English.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I note that some communities have a significantly higher uptake of vaccinations than others. My colleague from Arviat North-Whale Cove has been vocal in mentioning the effectiveness of offering incentives to individuals who get vaccinated.

My question is: what is the minister's position on providing incentives for vaccinations and will he be considering this option for those communities which continue to have low vaccination rates? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date we have not offered any incentives to get the vaccine, but rather encouraging people to get vaccinated. I know that some communities have offered incentives for vaccinations and I know that this helped in getting people vaccinated. I know some organizations have done that as well and they get something from the organization, either a lottery ticket or something like that as an incentive and we are powerless to intervene.

However, as the government, we are not doing that, although we are looking to see how those people who have been not been vaccinated can be vaccinated and explain to them how safe it is and, if you get vaccinated, then you will be safer. That's the message that we're trying to convey. If you're not vaccinated, then others, your family, and your friends can be in a much safer environment if you get vaccinated.

We hear that, but it's a lot less scary or less dangerous after you get vaccinated and I do know this as I have also heard people contracting COVID-19 even when vaccinated. Yes, that is something we now hear, Mr. Speaker, but it is a lot less dangerous when you have the vaccination jabs as it lessens the impacts even when they contract the sickness. I hope that people get vaccinated while it's available out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 1456 – 5(2): Care Closer to Home

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and are regarding yesterday's minister's statement, care closer to home.

As the minister had indicated, the Department of Health is working towards bringing dialysis options to the territory and are currently undertaking a review to determine which forms of dialysis may be viable to be offered here in Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely grateful to hear this announcement. I know how difficult it is for Nunavummiut who are currently on dialysis and are required to either relocate or regularly fly out of the territory to receive this care.

The first question I would like to ask the minister is: can the minister elaborate further and explain what forms of dialysis are being considered by the Department of Health? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from my colleague. Although I cannot get into the details and any particulars on it, I could say that our department has been working very hard in the new year in trying to find ways to take care closer to home and, if not, at home. One of our priorities was dialysis. We have

people who have to live down south in order to be alive. That should not need to be now. We should be able to have dialysis at home.

Our Department of Health is working very closely with Ontario Health and their dialysis teams down there to see what kinds of dialysis could be done right at home or at least closer to home. As my colleague and Nunavummiut are aware, we have different levels of hospital and health care in our communities and right now we're looking at what kinds of dialysis, depending on the severity of the need, can be done right in the community itself or at least in one of the regional communities or regional centres. We're at that stage, but I would like to stress that we are getting there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response. With my limited medical knowledge, I am familiar that hemodialysis is the most common form and which typically is required to be utilized in a hospital or a doctor's office. My next question for the minister is: where will the Department of Health be placing this new dialysis machine? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My knowledge of these medical terms and whatnot are just as strong as my colleague's. Mr. Speaker, the dialysis machines and the dialysis work that we would like to introduce into Nunavut is very much at that stage. What kinds of machines do we require? Where do they need to be? What kinds of medical personnel do we need to have working on them? In some cases it's minor training; in some it's more detailed work. It will require training for nursing staff that would be administering those services. We are at that stage.

We are not quite at the stage yet where we are looking at putting infrastructure or equipment into communities. We are still looking at where we are on this, where do the people receiving dialysis down south reside, how could we best help them, what is their condition, and what kind of equipment do we need for them to be able to get that care at home. We're at that stage, Mr. Speaker. Once those are finalized, it will be a very fast walk towards implementing them and having care closer to home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister again for elaborating. For my final question, as the minister did indicate that the department is doing some preliminary work in looking at the current demands and that sort of information, for my last question, in the department's review, has it determined which region has the highest demand for dialysis? That's my final question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We probably do within the department, but in the briefings that I have been involved in, I have not asked where the highest demands are. At this point my goal and our department's goal are to bring this dialysis home. I could say, though, that we are consulting very closely with those individuals from Nunavut who are on dialysis down south and that our people who are working on this are in consultation with the patients and also their doctors to see how we can make it happen as smoothly and faster for Nunavummiut. I will keep my colleague abreast on those kinds of details. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Oral Questions. The Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 1457 – 5(2): Community Learning Centres

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I have questions for the Minister responsible for Arctic College concerning their report.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the college released this preliminary report on community learning centres by region in November 2020, and in the spring sitting, I raised concerns that the community learning centre in Arviat was mistakenly not included in the report, that another building owned or used by Nunavut Arctic College was included instead. That's my first question for the minister in terms of updating the report or filling in the blanks.

What has the college done to date in order to include Arviat's community learning centre in this preliminary report? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The Hon. Minister of Nunavut Arctic College, Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, the college understands that the community learning centre assessment report has garnered a high level of interest and we're excited about this work and trying to understand better on what the capital needs of the territory are as they relate to the college.

To date we had our capital planner visit Arviat this past summer to look at the community learning centre and, as the member stated, the report does not cover the full picture of Arviat's Arctic College facility, so this will be considered going forward and we will be providing a fuller picture of what the situation is and what the needs are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) The minister's message in the report on page 3 mentions that "Sharing this report is the first step," and then the minister's message goes on to elaborate in terms of what the next steps are and it mentions mapping its strategy for the replacement of facilities in all three regions.

I really look forward to that day when we will see serious investments into community learning centres, such as the one in Arviat. When is the college planning to take the next step and develop a strategy, a plan, or a list of which community learning centres need to be replaced? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This work is ongoing with our capital planner and we would like to maximize and partner with any organization or other institutions, whether it's even the private sector. To address some of our needs on the capital front, we have a partnership with Memorial University and the college has undertaken a 10-year strategic plan. At that time those details would start to roll out, but right now the work is still ongoing and I, too, look forward to seeing some progress on our capital needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I realize that we do not have many days left as MLAs and likewise for members of the Executive Council, but one concern I have about this report is that it does not include population numbers. Mr. Speaker, it looks at the condition of the facilities, but it's not clear whether the size of the community that the facility is located in will be included. Can the minister commit to raising this issue with his staff while he has an opportunity to ensure that the future priority listing does include consideration for the size of each given community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do believe that when any...and I'll use my other hat on education. We do take into account school population sizes and the population of the community, so I do believe that is factored in into our plans on future expansion of either regional campuses or community learning centres, but I can confirm with the member that I will bring it up with my officials and ensure that through this preliminary report and ongoing work that population sizes of communities are taken into account. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. I would like to remind members that the time allotted for question period has expired. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move and I seek unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for question period by an additional 30 minutes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay. We will move on to the orders of the day. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. The Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

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

Committee Report 046 – 5(2): Bill 75, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I will be seeking unanimous consent again, so I'll duck when I do that.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to report that Bill 75, *An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Uqaqtitsijii, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 68(6) and have Bill 75 immediately moved into Committee of the Whole. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The chair of the standing committee is seeking unanimous consent to have Bill 75 immediately referred to Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are none and Bill 75 is referred to Committee of the Whole.

>>*Applause*

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. The Hon. Minister of the Nunavut Development Corporation, Minister Akeeagok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 420 – 5(2): Nunavut Development Corporation 2019-2020 Annual Report

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the Nunavut Development Corporation's 2019-2020 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. The Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Kusugak.

Tabled Document 421 – 5(2): Chief Public Health Officer of Nunavut’s 2020-21 Report on COVID-19

Tabled Document 422 – 5(2): 2020-21 Annual Report on the Operations of the Medical Care Plan

Tabled Document 423 – 5(2): 2020 Public Health Act Annual Report

Tabled Document 424 – 5(2): Chief Public Health Officer’s 2020-21 Tobacco Control and Smoke-Free Places Act Annual Report

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table four documents:

- (interpretation ends) *The Chief Public Health Officer of Nunavut’s 2020-21 Report on COVID-19;*
- *The 2020-21 Annual Report on the Operations of the Medical Care Plan;*
- *The 2020 Public Health Act Annual Report;* and
- *The Chief Public Health Officer’s 2020-21 Tobacco Control and Smoke-Free Places Act Annual Report.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents.

Tabled Document 425 – 5(2): Report of Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the period of January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021

Tabled Document 426 – 5(2): Report of Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the period of April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021

Tabled Document 427 – 5(2): Report on the Payment of Indemnities, Allowances, Benefits, and Expenses to the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

I have three documents to table. The first document is the Report of Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the period of January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021.

The second document is the Report of Members' Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the period of April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021.

The third document is the Report on the Payment of Indemnities, Allowances, Benefits, and Expenses to the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. Thank you.

Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole. Bills 55 and 75 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:26 and Committee resumed at 16:00

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

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Thank you. Welcome to the committee, people listening and watching TV. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 55 and 75. What is the wish of the committee? Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, we wish to commence with the clause-by-clause review of Bill 55, followed by the clause-by-clause review of Bill 75. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Bill 55 – An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. We will now proceed to the review of Bill 55. I would now like to ask Minister Ehaloak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Ehaloak, please introduce your officials.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the members, I would like to introduce to my right, Mr. Kyle Seeley, who is the Deputy Minister of Community and

Government Services, and to my left is Mr. Thomas Ahlfors, who is with the legislative counsel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Yesterday we started off with general comments. We have done all the opening statements. Are there any more general comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister and officials. Welcome back to the House.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to have this opportunity to make some general comments as we begin consideration of Bill 55, which the Government of Nunavut introduced to provide for taxation for Inuit-owned lands in accordance with Article 22 of the *Nunavut Act*.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to reiterate that section 22 of the *Nunavut Act* states, "...Inuit Owned Lands outside of municipalities on which improvements have been made shall be subject to real property taxation under the laws of general application."

Mr. Chairman, further, as the minister and the government have repeatedly stated, general application means everyone is taxed equally with no exception.

As an elected Member of the Legislative Assembly, I have been proud to actively contribute to the legislative process over the past four years, and I am proud of the careful consideration that we have given to bills that have come before the House.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to express my appreciation to you and all of my colleagues for the work that went into our recent televised hearing on Bill 55. I believe that we provided a fair opportunity for different parties to publicly express their views on these proposed amendments to the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*.

I want to emphasize and point out that the right of an organization to be consulted does not mean that it has a veto over the laws of general application that are passed by our elected public government.

Mr. Chairman, I was disappointed at the news release that came out yesterday from the QIA. The Qikiqtani Inuit Association had the opportunity to appear in person before us at a recent televised hearing, but they chose not to do so. In its release, the organization repeats the claim that this bill constitutes an incorrect interpretation of the *Nunavut Agreement* and that it is an example of legislative overreach.

Mr. Chairman, I took the time to listen carefully to the testimony from the sponsoring minister and other witnesses at our televised hearing, and I took the time to review with care the detailed written submissions that were made. The interpretive legal disputes that NTI, Nunavut Tunngavik, and its lawyers have raised are just that, a dispute. Just because Nunavut Tunngavik claims that the bill is somehow illegal does not necessarily make it

so. I am satisfied that this bill is on solid ground and I believe that it is in everyone's best interest to move on.

Mr. Chairman, I'm a voting beneficiary, as are most of the Members of this House. I'm fulfilling my responsibilities in good faith on behalf of all my constituents and the territory as a whole. I cannot speak for all the Members of this House, but I for one have grown frustrated with the tone of accusation that we hear from certain organizations when their demands are not met immediately and completely met.

As a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I recognize the importance of raising adequate revenues from property taxes and other sources for the provision of public services to all 25 communities and all 40,000 Nunavut residents. However, I do understand the rationale behind the opposition from Inuit organizations. There remains one true point of contention: the fact that if a mine fails to pay its property taxes, the liability would fall on the designated Inuit organization.

Mr. Chairman, as a voting beneficiary, I am confident that our regional Inuit organizations are very capable of ensuring that their lease agreements with the mining companies are drafted in such a way to ensure that the risks and rewards of private land ownership are balanced.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, I would also like to point out that there are several operating mines in the territory that currently have operations on Inuit-owned lands and they have been paying their fair share; they have been paying their property taxes for the most part. The one remaining company that has yet to pay their property taxes has gone on the public record at our televised hearing indicating that they would be more than happy to pay their fair share once it is deemed appropriate.

Lastly, in closing, I do believe that the purpose behind this bill is in the best interest of the territory and I support the scope of the bill itself in general. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments? Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I often mention that Agnico Eagle wrote a letter about constructing a road that will be used by Baker Lake residents. I agree with that and it would be used and it is used today.

When the road in question is used, people have access to their traditional lands. Perhaps, the past 60 to 70 years have lapsed when elders have not visited their place of birth and now being able to visit those places. They can show their grandchildren and great-grandchildren where they once fished and where the good fishing spots are and show what dangers there are out there during springtime and where it is impassable.

That road has many uses during the winter. It can help us figure out which way we are heading. I have personally used that road in past winters while hunting caribou. I had

gotten lost, as I had been travelling in the wrong direction, but when I saw the road I was able to orient myself and realize that I had been heading in the wrong direction. It allowed me to see the proper direction and where to go in order to get back home.

(interpretation ends) The hamlet council of the day had an agreement in place with the mining company to use the road for traditional activities as long as the residents got off the way of the mining equipment, but the idea was overturned during the final Nunavut Impact Review Board hearings without any consultations with the residents of Baker Lake. We were also not consulted on whether or not we wanted to keep the road as part of a legacy. I am hopeful that before the closure of the mine we will have an agreement in place to keep the road for future personal use.

I wanted to mention these now to get it on record that more work is needed to clarify what some of the steps should be taken by future government. I am glad the minister committed her staff to revisit the idea of possibly one; that taxes should be collected on road liabilities so that maybe it does not occur during closure and reclamation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have many comments with respect to the bill before us. I will have a question when time is right and to ensure our interpreters understand what I'll be talking about, but I will have some questions. I agree with the first initial comments made on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Similarly in Article 22 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement as it was read by the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak. I won't read it over. However, it is correct as it is written; that Inuit lands outside of hamlets or municipalities on surface rights that taxes are applicable as per the agreement.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the money that are collected by the Government of Nunavut through property taxes are used for programs and services that Government of Nunavut provides to all Nunavummiut through budgeting process. For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I will be supporting this proposed Bill 55. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. Seeing none. We'll now go clause by clause through Bill 55 in your legislative binder. Bill 55. Waiting to see if everyone has it.

Okay. Bill 55, *An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned earlier, I will have questions. My first question on the first page referencing Article 22 under 30... the agreement, land claims agreement do I understand it correctly that the Bill before us that the mining company when they do their activities and the taxes they approve goes direct

or are intended to go directly to the Nunavut government? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank the member for his question. Currently before this Bill was presented, the mining companies pay their taxes directly to the Government of Nunavut.

What this Bill proposes to do is we send our invoice for the property taxes that have been assessed on Inuit-owned lands to the Inuit organizations and for the Inuit organizations to receive the money so that they can pay the Government of Nunavut, they in turn would send their invoice to the mining company. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it, as the minister stated that the arrears whether if it is a mining company or the invoices to given an Inuit organization and then in return they invoice the company and they are the ones that receive the funds from the company for payment? So Inuit organizations Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated do not pay from their own pockets, correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are clarifying that. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Inuit organization I do not think they pay one penny and they oppose this when they should not really be unfortunately. My next question, this morning when I chatted over the Internet with a constituent, they had some worries that many Inuit also have business and also non-Inuit who have made north their own home community. Will they be affected by this Bill 55? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The residents within the municipality would not be affected by this bill. It is only for Inuit-owned lands outside of municipalities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to take this opportunity to go on the record in respects to concerns that have been recently raised by the Iqaluit city council regarding the issue of the *Property Assessment Taxation Act*.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize that it is beyond the scope of Bill 55, but I would like to ask can the minister confirm that she is aware of the concerns that were raised by the City of Iqaluit in respects to taxation of mixed-use properties? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Community and Government Services is aware. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for providing that response and I'm glad to hear that your officials are aware of the situation.

I would like to ask: can the minister confirm whether or not the department will start the process of making further amendments to the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* for introduction in the next Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the department will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I only have a few questions (interpretation ends) for the minister. The Standing Committee on Legislation held televised hearings on this bill, but I know before the bill was put into the House or given first reading that the department started the work in terms of consulting on this bill much before that.

I wonder if the minister can summarize for the members when the department started consulting on this bill and if she can indicate who was consulted and what the results of those consultations were, whether any changes were made following consultation with Inuit organizations or mining interest. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Government of Nunavut first engaged with designated Inuit organizations, notifying them of our government's interest in amending the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* in the summer of 2018. Over the

following year and a half, government officials consulted Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated representatives on proposed amendments through in-person meetings, letter of correspondence, and teleconferences.

While developing and eventually drafting Bill 55, we incorporated part of the feedback from Inuit organizations. This consultation is evident in the final version of the bill before you today. One example of this provision that ensures that when the land owner only has surface rights, whether Inuit-owned lands or otherwise, they will not be liable on taxes on improvements related to mining activity.

Subject to approval of this bill, where Inuit organizations only own surface rights on their land, they will only be liable for the taxes on the land they own. They will not be liable for taxes on improvements owned by their lessee. Further to this, the lessee between the designated organization and the mining companies ensure that the mine owner must pay on property taxes on land improvements.

In a decision late last week, the Assessment Appeal Tribunal agreed with the Government of Nunavut's interpretation that Inuit-owned lands with improvements are subject to taxation under Article 22 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and rejected the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's arguments. Bill 55 is fully compatible with the decision of the tribunal.

If the member would like, I can give a breakdown of when these meetings were.

- August 15, 2018, letters were sent to the Department of Finance, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and designated Inuit organizations to notify them that what the objectives of Community and Government Services were to amend the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*;
- On December 10, 2018 the City of Iqaluit was also notified of Community and Government Services' objective to amend the Act;
- A summary of proposed changes were sent to Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the designated Inuit organizations on November 22 and 23, 2018;
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated responded on November 23, 2018, representing the designated Inuit organizations, by email to set up a meeting with Community and Government Services on December 27, 2018.

Those are some of the organizations and key stakeholders that we had been in contact with since the start of drafting Bill 55. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) When you're consulting on a piece of legislation like this, I would imagine that it's difficult to meet all of the requests or suggestions from those that you're consulting with. I'm interested in the minister's position on this. What is the minister's position on whether, particularly concerns from Inuit organizations, they have been fully

or properly taken into account when we look at the finished product, the bill itself? Does this bill represent the best balance between the different viewpoints or requests from those who were consulted? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that Community and Government Services, including myself as Minister of Community and Government Services, we did the best we possibly could to include all comments made by all stakeholders and drafted this piece of legislation that would address some of those members' concerns. This is Bill 55 as presented. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just have one final question. The mining industry is very important to the future of Nunavut, not just in terms of government taxation revenues and royalties that might flow to land owners, but in terms of employment potential for residents.

I was relieved to hear from the largest mining company currently operating in Nunavut, Agnico Eagle Mines, that they were not concerned that the proposed changes would significantly impact their operations.

In terms of what the department has heard from industry, is the minister satisfied that this bill will not negatively impact the future of the mining industry in Nunavut in terms of impeding development or driving away investment in terms of resource extraction? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes to the member's question. We feel that it will not impede on the mining companies that are working within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my riding of Tununig, there are a lot of Inuit-owned lands where cabins have been built, and they are utilized by hunters, by families and as a vacation spot. When we look at Bill 55, I am sure that some people are concerned about the possibility of having to pay property taxes on the Inuit-owned lands. I just want to clarify that this bill will not impact cabins built on Inuit-owned lands that are by hunters and families. Am I correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak, if you want to answer the question. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Cabins on Inuit-owned lands are considered for traditional purposes and they are not affected by this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister will recall, I have raised concerns on a number of occasions regarding the issue of public use of private roads in respect to the mines. This is a topic that Agnico Eagle Mines has raised. As the minister is aware, the residents of Baker Lake have expressed a strong desire to continue to benefit from infrastructure that is associated with the mines.

Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the minister and her department are prepared to review this matter and develop new regulations concerning this issue. I would be grateful if the minister could speak to this issue for the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In consultations with Bill 55, Community and Government Services has been working with the municipality and the mining company on what would happen if the mining company closes. We will continue to work with them to ensure that those issues and concerns are resolved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names. We're at Bill 55, *An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. Clause 1. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm not sure if I'm on the right clause, so if I'm not, please correct me.

In Agnico Eagle's supplemental submission to the Standing Committee on Legislation, they had proposed that underground equipment related to underground water, air and electricity be treated as non-taxable, similar to how underground shafts or tunnels and

their supporting framing are currently treated. They have a precedent to go on and I'm referring to page 16 of 18 of their supplemental submission.

The minister to the committee responded and in short, the conclusion states on page 3 of the minister's letter to the committee and it says, "The GN is of the opinion that underground improvements should not be treated differently than above ground improvements." I would like to request an explanation as to why or how the GN came to that conclusion, given that a precedent already exists where underground shafts and tunnels and their supportive framing are already being treated differently in terms of taxation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, I'll ask Mr. Seeley to give a detailed explanation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The differential treatment of underground versus above ground assessment is something that our team has looked at quite closely in composing this bill.

As the member has pointed out, roads on the surface are assessed whereas the roads underground, meaning the shafts, are not assessed. In that sense, the underground operations are already...there is a precedent and it is one that's in favour of the underground operations. Our assessment team's view on the differential treatment between these two types of operation is that they are in fact just different categories of assessment. The fact of the matter is that many mines are operated. The decision on how a mine will be operated below ground or as a pit mine is based on the feasibility on the most economical and practical means of extracting the resource. We have looked into it.

The notion of a hybrid operation, which is partially pit and partially shaft, makes the differentiation between the above ground and below ground assessment particularly difficult, particularly when we recognize that there are core pieces of infrastructure, including power generation and things like ventilation and treatment that are maintained in both above ground and below ground operations. Similarly, much of the equipment and materials used within either operation might be used selectively above ground or below ground. The differentiation from an assessment perspective is quite difficult and quite simply, the two different categories of operation have differing assessment needs.

We will continue to work with our partners and maintain most up-to-date assessment practices to make sure that they're aligned with the operational needs of our industrial partners, but that is our conclusion on the differential treatment of above ground and below ground assets. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Seeley. I support my colleague from Baker Lake in terms of his concerns around the future of using private roads, such as the one connecting Baker Lake and Meadowbank, in the future. I'm pleased that the department was open to future work in terms of looking at how this should be treated in regard to taxation, but I can't help but feel that this underground improvement issue is one that also needs further research.

Agnico Eagle is basing their request on a precedent and they state in their supplemental submission that they're not looking for non-taxable status for equipment that is used above ground and below ground, such as a crusher. They're looking for non-taxable status for the underground equipment that specifically constitutes additional extraordinary cost compared to open-pit operation.

Mr. Chairman, the question is in terms of this request: given that the department has stated their position and they do not agree with this proposal, is the door closed in terms of modifying the taxable or non-taxable status of this underground equipment or is there an opportunity in the future for this to be revisited? Perhaps it could be part of this work that's going to be done on the road issue at the same time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. No, the door is not closed. Community and Government Services will review further and take into consideration some of the concerns the mining companies have and we will work with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Is there a timeline for this work to happen? On the road issue for example, is there a timeline that the department has in mind to conduct research and what would be the venue or I guess the vehicle for doing this research? Would it be through some sort of a working group, or would it be internal to the department? I am curious where the research would happen. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be pending passing of this bill and it would also be for the Sixth Assembly to work on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you Minister. I don't have any further questions, I will just add on this issue. I think it is something that the future Assembly should keep an eye on in my opinion and it would be

appropriate for the department to report back to the Assembly specifically on these two issues in the future, in my opinion. No further questions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name, Mr. Qamaniq,

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman for recognizing me again. In the 1960s the road from Mary River to Milne Inlet was constructed, and when the mine extraction started they just made minor improvements to be able to utilize that road. Has this been recognized as a public road? If you can respond to that question I would like a response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Just one moment, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The road from Mary River to Milne Inlet is a tote road, so it is just used for hauling equipment back and forth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do I understand correctly, that the Qikiqtani Inuit Association will not need to pay taxes for the road, even when the mine closes? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, I will ask Mr. Seeley to answer the member's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Any of the roads that are developed on Inuit-owned lands are assessed a value. Currently we are, as the previous member explained, taking a look at how those roads are assessed and to what level. I think the minister has committed to working on how those properties; the roads on those Inuit-owned lands are going to be treated during their operational phase.

As per some of the earlier questions, roads that are open for public access are often not taxed in other jurisdictions and that is the nature of some of the considerations that the minister has asked us to look into.

The decommissioning of the roads and when they are being decommissioned, are on Inuit-owned lands so they are taxable until the reclamation and until the roads are closed down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That road is also used by people in my riding. Before the mining operation began, it was used by caribou hunters regularly. If the mine closes, I know that my constituents would like to keep the road open as it is very beneficial to them. I would like for that to be considered.

As my colleague from Baker Lake stated earlier, the road from Mary River to Milne Inlet should ideally be kept open even if the mine closes so that our constituents can continue to use it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated from member Simailak, that will have to be a discussion made between the stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a question and observation on the road. I think (interpretation) I believe that the classification and wording regarding the road can be changed the meaning, definition.

(interpretation ends) I think we can change the terminology of the roads to recreational roads once the mine is decommissioned. Once it becomes a recreational road then there could be no problem with no taxes on it. That's an observation. Just a comment, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Just a comment. I have no other names. On the bill, clause 4. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 14. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 15. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Clause 15 refers to time limits for submitting complaints and the board of revision. I know that there have been issues regarding operations of territorial board of revision and that this bill is attempting to address some of those operational issues to make sure that these boards of revision can function properly.

My question is regarding all these time limits that are listed in this clause. How did the department determine what would be an appropriate time limit for submitting these complaints? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, I will ask Mr. Ahlfors to answer the member's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ahlfors.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 45-day time limit that's in this clause is a pre-existing time limit from the existing *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. There was, however, an issue where the existing Act says that it's 45 days from the day that it is sent, but it's not always clear when it's sent because there was the question of is it when it leaves the office of the assessor? Is it when it's taken to the post office? Is it when there is a postmark put in the post office?

This became a dispute a few years ago before the board of revision that eventually went to the courts on what the proper timeline is and the courts were of the opinion that it was quite confusing and they actually at that point gave the benefit of the doubt to the taxpayer and said it's when they received it in their offices because they couldn't quite determine when it was sent.

This clarifies sort of when it is sent, so it's either the date that's on the document or if there's a postmark that's later, then it would be the date of the postmark that would also be used as evidence. It's to make sure that there is a clear date from where the 45 days is counted, but the 45-day time limit was one that already existed in the Act dating back to NWT times. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you. I just have one more question about the board of revision. I know there are a number of different issues with operating this body. How much of an issue has it been in the past to find people who want to serve as a member of the board of revision? How difficult is it for the department to find people who are living in Nunavut or people who have an interest in this kind of technical responsibility? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just like all other boards, Community and Government Services will seek out within Nunavut people who would be interested in sitting on the board of revision. Currently I can say that we have a full board minus one. Just like all other boards, we advertise and the recommendation is made to the minister and the recommendation is forwarded to cabinet and cabinet as a whole will decide whether or not to appoint certain members as recommended. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) With this section here, 15, by eliminating the Territorial Board of Revision and the legal counsel for the Department of Justice mentioned that it would take 45 days for a complainant to get a response, how do you think it is going to work, let's say, for the municipalities of Igloolik and Sanirajak if they want to submit a complaint once this bill is passed? Would

it be a negative impact? A positive impact? What would be the outcome? That would be my first question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, through you, I'll ask Mr. Ahlfors. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ahlfors.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clarify, the 45-day time limit is the time limit to complain. If you receive a notice of assessment for your property and you don't agree with the assessment, then you have 45 days to complain to the board of revision to start the process to get that assessment reviewed. That's what the 45 days comes from. Typically what we will end up with this bill is that you will either have as much time as you have now to make that complaint or you will have more time, depending on the situation. It's not going to have a negative impact on somebody's ability to complain to the board of revision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) *Qujannamiik* for that information. Now, by abolishing this board, will there be any appeal processes within the department if they wanted to appeal what the outcomes of their decision was and how long would it take? (interpretation) That's my last question for now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the beginning of the drafting of this bill, Community and Government Services wanted to abolish the Territorial Board of Revision, but from the recommendations made by standing committee, Community and Government Services decided that we will keep the board and the administrative part of that board will be reviewed by the next government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names. Clause 15. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 16. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 17. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 18. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 19. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 20. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 21. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 22. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 23. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 24. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 25. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 26. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 27. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 28. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 29. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 30. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 31. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Clause 31 deals with the setting of mill rates and the bill states that “Every calendar year, the Minister of Finance shall, by order, establish the following” and it goes on to say, “a general mill rate for each property class in the general taxation area” and “an education mill rate for all assessed property...”

I wonder if the minister can explain what the consultation process is, if any, for establishing mill rates. I would like to note that I believe that the most recent mill rate change was an increase of approximately 10 percent for homeowners. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, I’ll ask Mr. Seeley to answer the member’s question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. As the member has pointed out, the mill rates are actually established through the Department of Finance annually. The exercise for setting the mill rates is basically PATA assumes that the board of revision will make any decisions on assessments prior to the taxing authority issuing taxes for the particular year.

Prior to that, the mill rate needs to be established and that’s basically an exercise within the Department of Finance, compiling all of the information about each of the different properties and property classes per community and compiling their assessed value. With the model that they use, they take a look at different scenarios that might impact those mill rates, such as what the impact would be on residential property owners, including residential property owners. As such, it’s not quite a consultation as much as it is an assessment exercise based on establishing what the overall requirement for the GN within that particular taxation year will be.

To answer the member’s question, it is established annually. The consultation is not an external one; it’s more of an assessment of what the GN’s overall tax need would be in the year and that’s not atypical of that process elsewhere. I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, thank you, that does answer my question. When the mill rates are established or when they're changed, I'm just looking at the bill here, is there any requirement for this to be communicated in an accessible manner? I mean, I believe it's in the *Nunavut Gazette* where mill rate changes might be published, but if you want the public to know about something, the government would usually put out a news release or a communication. I'm just interested in whether the legislation specifies how this needs to be communicated within Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The recommendations do come from the Department of Finance and the mill rates are approved by the Financial Management Board, and it would be up to the Financial Management Board whether these mill rates will be... I mean, we do put them in the *Nunavut Gazette* and it's also on the Government of Nunavut's website. I'm sure that through Community and Government Services or the Department of Finance, we would be able to communicate this with the public members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 31. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 32. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 33. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 34. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 35. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 36. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 37. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 38. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 39. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 40. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 41. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 42. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 43. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 44. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 45. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 46. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 47. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 48. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Clause 48(10) states that “All property tax raised in the general taxation area under the previous Act

since April 1, 1999 is deemed to have been raised to fund local government services and improvements within the general taxation area.”

I know this came up during our televised hearing, but I need a bit of a refresher, I guess, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the minister can explain why the department included this specific language which refers to all property tax raised since the creation of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This clause was included to ensure that all revenues from property taxes will go back into the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The word “deemed,” I’m interpreting that it’s changing how things are viewed in a retroactive sense. Maybe if the minister can clarify if this specific clause will not mean that the government is going to go back in time and create new tax bills or new invoices that don’t already exist. I just wanted to get that clarified. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, I’ll ask Mr. Ahlfors to give a detailed explanation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Ahlfors, detailed information.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This clause will not create new assessments to be sent out or new tax bills to be sent out. It applies to the existing ones that, in most part, have already been paid. The purpose of this clause is really to clarify what the government has been using these funds for, as is required by the *Nunavut Agreement*. The tribunal’s decision from late last week also confirmed that that is what the government has been using these funds for and what taxes have been levied and what they have been used for and that this is the purpose. It’s there just to clarify that when... .

In clause 31, the mill rates clause that the member referenced earlier, that doesn’t really represent a change in how the government operates. It’s just to align with the wording of the *Nunavut Agreement* to make sure that the process that has been followed is the one that continues to be followed because that’s the one that’s required by the *Nunavut Agreement*. The monies will be going to local government services and improvements within the general taxation area, so that’s everywhere outside of Iqaluit because Iqaluit raises its own property taxes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We have more than one lawyer in the room right now, so I guess this is the part where we can get into an argument about the meaning of words.

In all seriousness, my question is regarding local government services. That term, “local government services,” is there like a universal, agreed-upon definition of what is a local government service or is that something that’s subject to debate? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, through you, I’ll ask Mr. Seeley to answer the member’s question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as the choice of that term, the local government is the division within Community and Government Services responsible for the administration of financial support to municipal corporations. That term is consistent within our programming and within the organization and our funding programs. The language, in addition to being aligned with the other legislative pieces that Mr. Ahlfors referenced earlier, it is used quite consistently.

As far as any differential use of that term, it does flow quite nicely from the federal, territorial down to the local level of government and speaks to the programs and services of that distinct level of governance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think this is my last question. This is where we connect or this phrase here connects the property tax being raised and then the services and improvements that the government delivers. My understanding is that if we look at how much the Government of Nunavut has spent since 1999 on local government services and improvements, property tax revenues are only a small part of that expenditure.

I’m just looking for a confirmation from the minister that far more funds have been expended for local government services and improvements than have been raised through property tax revenues. I’m just trying to compare the two, the revenue and the expenses, to each other. That’s my last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct; property taxes that the Government of Nunavut receives are a small part of funding our local government organizations, such as the municipalities, and the government itself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Clause 48. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 49. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 55 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 55 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to thank Community and Government Services staff and Department of Justice staff for all the hard work they have done since 2018, the drafting of this piece of legislation, and the members for the dialogue we had between standing committee and Community and Government Services to come to this piece of legislation. I applaud everyone who has been working diligently to make sure that everyone's concerns were addressed, and I just want to say "thank you." Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials out. I will ask members to sit while we set up our next one, Bill 75. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move to report progress.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker: Thank you. Welcome back, members. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 55 and would like to report that Bill 55 is immediately ready for third reading as amended. Mr.

Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Just a minor correction, he said “as amended,” and reprinted? Fair enough.

>>*Laughter*

Thank you. Okay. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. The Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Ehaloak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 55 – An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act – Third Reading

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 55, *An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, be read for the third time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 55 is ready for assent.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that there is a meeting of the Regular Caucus tomorrow morning at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom, followed by a meeting of all members in the Chamber at half past ten.

Orders of the Day for September 16:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions

5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 75
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, September 16, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:18*

