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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak

(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok

(Quttiktuq)

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

Hon. Joellie Kaernerik

(Amittuq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Karen Nutarak

(Tununiq)

Hon. Daniel Qavvik

(Hudson Bay)

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

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

Mary Killiktee

(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak

(Rankin Inlet South)

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

Joanna Quassa

(Aggu)

Bobby Anavilok

(Kugluktuk)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq

(Netsilik)

Janet Brewster

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Alexander Sammurtok

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Hon. Pamela Gross

(Cambridge Bay)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for Seniors

Hon. John Main

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Joe Savikataaq

(Arviat South)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

George Hickes

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Solomon Malliki

(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Craig Simailak

(Baker Lake)

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(Pangnirtung)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, October 30, 2023**

Members Present:

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

>> *House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>> *Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day, my colleagues. Now you can manage it better as we will be working hard again today.

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

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 310 – 6(2):
Nunavut Day at the Winnipeg Art
Gallery**

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good afternoon" to my fellow members and

Nunavummiut who are listening to the proceedings this afternoon.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this year I had the privilege to spend Nunavut Day at Qaumajuq at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The new museum is home to the largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art in the world.

Nunavut, especially our Kivalliq region, is closely tied to Manitoba. It was an outstanding experience to spend our territorial holiday in Winnipeg on July 9. I had travelled there to attend an annual meeting of Canada's premiers.

Mr. Speaker, it was fitting to attend and speak at the signing ceremony for a Memorandum of Understanding between the Manitoba Inuit Association and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. This partnership is allowing new initiatives, including gallery tours in Inuktitut, community gatherings for Inuit in Manitoba, and knowledge sharing. It will also allow for employed mentorship opportunities for Inuit and closer collaboration with the Manitoba Inuit Association's Inuit Student Mentorship Program.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the association and the gallery for hosting us for their events on July 9. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Kaerner.

**Minister's Statement 311 – 6(2):
Nunavut Artist in Residence
Program – Winnipeg Art Gallery -
Qaumajuq**

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

My statement is also regarding the
Winnipeg Art Gallery.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am
pleased to announce that my department,
in collaboration with Nunavut
Tunngavik Incorporated, is launching a
Nunavut Artist in Residence Program at
the Winnipeg Art Gallery - Qaumajuq
starting January 2024. This program will
give selected Inuit artists, one from each
region, the opportunity to produce work
and promote the Winnipeg Art Gallery
and Qaumajuq.

Mr. Speaker, this residency will be a
four-weeklong post and the selected
artists will receive a \$10,000 artist fee,
which consists of per diems and
accommodations within walking
distance to the gallery. They will also
have daily access to a studio space at
Winnipeg Art Gallery - Qaumajuq and to
the gallery's media arts equipment and
facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce
that out of 19 applicants, the following
are the selected artists for this upcoming
artist residency:

- Aghalingiak Ohokannoak from
Ikaluktutiak;
- Eva Qirniq Noah from Baker Lake;
and

- Dayle Kubluitok from Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of
Nunavut's Fine Art collection is
currently housed at the Winnipeg Art
Gallery on a five-year loan. Hosting the
Artist in Residency at the Winnipeg Art
Gallery will allow the artists to enhance
their skills and visit the Government of
Nunavut's Fine Art Collection which is
also accessible to the public virtually on
the Winnipeg Art Gallery Qaumajuq
website. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon.
Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Minister's Statement 312 – 6(2):
Wildlife Diseases Monitoring -
Caribou**

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr.
Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the
House and Nunavummiut of the
prevalence of disease reported by
Kitikmeot and Kivalliq caribou hunters
this fall.

Mr. Speaker, my department continues
to monitor the situation surrounding an
above-average reporting of diseased
caribou within the Kitikmeot and
Kivalliq barren-ground caribou herds.

Mr. Speaker, to date, my department has
sent three samples of diseased tissue for
diagnostic testing, two from the
Kitikmeot region and one from the
Kivalliq region.

Mr. Speaker, the Kitikmeot sample
confirmed parasitic disease. These

suspected parasites are causing inflammation/swelling of muscles and connective tissues. Further analysis will confirm the type of parasite.

Mr. Speaker, my department is still awaiting the diagnostic results from the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) for the Kivalliq sample. Results from this sample will be shared.

Mr. Speaker, my department will continue to work with wildlife and other disease experts and the regional environmental health officers to coordinate further response.

Mr. Speaker, we ask hunters to bring in samples when safe to do so and continue reporting any abnormalities in caribou herds. Only when harvesters, wildlife officers, co-management partners, and biologists work together to monitor the health of caribou herds can we seek effective solutions to improving their long-term health and viability. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 313 – 6(2):
Inuktitut Training and Partnerships**

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight some of the training and partnership initiatives in my department. As language is core to indigenous people's identity and culture, my department is

committed to ensuring Inuktitut as a more functional part of our operations as we serve Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that three Nunavut Inuit employees and ten non-Inuit employees from my department enrolled in a Pirurvik Inuktitut training course this past year. This initiative promotes the use of Inuktitut in the workplace, strengthens the self-esteem of employees, and helps develop healthier relationships in support of *Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq*; development of skills through observation, mentoring, practise, and effort.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the value of a memorandum of understanding in place with the University of Manitoba. This agreement supports a work placement for students to complete their studies in a technical field, drawing connections between postsecondary education, training, and the jobs available in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, this memorandum of understanding contributes to higher rates of post-secondary education and employment following graduation. Annually, four or more upper year engineering students from the University of Manitoba are placed within my department. Additionally, this past summer, the Nunavut Housing Corporation utilized the agreement, placing students within their organization.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share the work my department has completed towards these important initiatives. I want to draw attention to the value they

bring to strengthening the Government of Nunavut by promoting language and increasing post-secondary educational successes for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 314 – 6(2): New Appointments to the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my fellow members and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to share with my colleagues that two new members were recently appointed to the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council.

Mr. Speaker, after careful consideration, I am pleased to announce that Joanne Taptuna of Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay's Clarissa Koblogina were appointed to Qullit for three-year terms. Both women have contributed extensively to the well-being of women in their communities and are actively involved in supporting and empowering women and girls. I'm very happy to have increased representation from western Nunavut as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Ms. Taptuna and Ms. Koblogina on their appointments. I thank all applicants for their dedication to the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 315 – 6(2): World Mental Health Day

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the time to recognize World Mental Health Day, which took place on October 10, 2023. As the Minister of Health, I urge all Nunavummiut to take time to learn, converse, and connect with family, friends, elders, and youth about mental health and wellness. Engaging in these discussions can create a supportive environment, providing those around us with more freedom and confidence to express themselves and openly talk about mental wellness issues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we are strengthening Nunavut mental health care and services with the expansion of the Healing by Talking Program. The virtual mental health counselling service continues to see strong client uptake and positive outcomes. We're working to promote the program territory-wide, and Health will be piloting new in-territory intensive group counselling in various communities through the program as well.

Health is also working to develop a psychiatry program in Nunavut. In response to the need for specialized mental health services and to support implementation of the Nunavut *Mental Health Act*, Health is planning to increase and diversify access to in-

person and virtual psychiatry services in all communities. We are also working to expand the scope of mental health services in the Qikiqtani General Hospital, Akausisarvik, and Cambridge Bay Mental Health Facility.

(interpretation) I want to emphasize to Nunavummiut that if you or someone you know is struggling, you are not alone.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. John Main (interpretation): It is okay to ask for help. Confidential support resources can be found on the Department of Health website or by visiting your local health centre or public health unit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, if you or someone you know needs support, reach out to a trusted friend, family member, teacher, counsellor, or elder. The Government of Nunavut offers community-based, regional and out-of-territory mental health and addiction services. Different types of therapy can provide help and healing. For confidential support, you can contact the Healing by Talking Program at 1-888-648-0070. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 316 – 6(2): New Wage Scale - Licensed Child Care Centres

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to everybody here with us today and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, we know that staff in licensed child care centres across our territory are essential to the development and well-being of our youngest Nunavummiut. We also know that to recruit, develop, and retain qualified staff who become a part of the building blocks of our children's education, they must be paid fairly for that foundational work.

Under the Canada-Nunavut Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, the Department of Education, in partnership with the federal government, is investing more than \$10 million over the next three years to increase wages for licensed child care centre staff working with children between infancy and six years old.

Mr. Speaker, our government's new wage scale includes wage levels for licensed child care centre staff in four categories: management, early childhood educator, program support, and centre support. The wage levels for these categories increase according to staff responsibilities and years of experience. For the management and early childhood educator categories, wages also increase with the level of early childhood education certification completed by staff. These new wage levels were developed following extensive data collection and analysis of current child care positions in Nunavut.

Our wage scale came into effect on October 1, 2023. We believe it will go a long way to recognizing the critical work

of licensed child care centre staff, ensuring centres can recruit and retain the staff needed to support young Nunavummiut, while promoting professional development and growth. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3. Members' Statements.
Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 422 – 6(2): Recognizing Amanda Curley

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and the people of Nunavut and Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that, as we all know, there are always people in the communities who really care for others. I would like to recognize and speak about a person who really helps her fellow residents.

We know that some people have a hard time asking for help or food because they are intimidated. There is no place in Igloolik where people can just go and get food. People generally turn to one person who helps on her own initiative. Whenever she gets the opportunity, she would deliver food to people who need it.

I wish to celebrate and express my pride in this individual who is very considerate to other people and following her heart, without any pay, she does it on her own so that her fellow Inuit and community members can have food to eat. I would like to ask everyone to join me in thanking Amanda Curley, who does

things on her own and helps feed her fellow Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Member's Statement 423 – 6(2): Celebrating Initiatives to Address Homelessness

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honour and acknowledge the Hamlet of Kugaaruk for taking steps to address the issue of homelessness.

On October 13, 2023 the hamlet modified a sea can shipping container into a home for a constituent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the mayor and councillors, the administrators, and the individuals who built the shelter: Ronald Inutinaq, Kenneth Akkak, and Etienne Kakkianium.

Mr. Speaker, my constituent had no shelter, no public housing, and survived the whole of last winter in a tent. The hamlet helped to secure the sea can which has now been modified into a living shelter with the installation of a wooden floor and a proper ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, these efforts were made in appreciation of my constituent who has contributed greatly as a community volunteer with the local search and rescue organization. This individual has volunteered countless hours to ensure that our hunters get home safely when the hunters have gone out hunting and are overdue coming home.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more homeless individuals in my constituency, including a couple that live outside of the community. In fact, we are all aware that the issue of homelessness is a big concern in most of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage our government to look into alternative options and initiatives that address the need for shelter for the many homeless in our communities.

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

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Member's Statement 424 – 6(2): Safe Fall Hunting

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my constituents and my fellow members.

I would like to remind hunters that fall is here and there will be many more dangers now whenever you're travelling anywhere. There are always accidents that can happen. To the people going hunting, make sure you make other people aware of where you're going because it becomes very hard when we have to search for someone. We all want to help, but then there is only so much we can do when we're searching for people.

Let people know where you're going and also be aware of the dangers. The lakes are dangerous now too as the ice is

forming and that's when the sea ice and lake ice are very dangerous. I just wanted to remind everyone and all the hunters about that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 425 – 6(2): High School Graduates of Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Baker Lake, I hope you have a wonderful day.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize young people in Baker Lake who just graduated from high school. We held a graduation ceremony on August 18, a Friday, at the high school in Baker Lake. I'll speak English.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we had a wonderful day on Friday, August 18, celebrating high school graduates of Baker Lake. I'll quickly mention their names:

- My BFF, Haley Hachey
- Richard Iyago
- Sydney Kataluk
- Kassidy Klinger
- Aaron (Paani) Niego
- Mackenzie Putumiraqtuq, "Tupiq"
- Kimberley Ukpatiku

Mr. Speaker, this group of young people, the latest graduates of high school in Baker Lake, I consider them to be the latest group people for younger people to look up to as they finish the school system in Baker Lake.

I'm sure some of them will be our next future leaders and I look forward to working with them as well.

I ask my colleagues to help me congratulate this latest group of high school graduates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 426 – 6(2):
Recognizing Rosie Anablak Kagak
of Kugluktuk**

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Kugluktuk and Nunavummiut, as well as my fellow members.

It is hard to lose a family member. We have experienced such loss in Kugluktuk as we have lost a loved one and we send condolences to the family members.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send condolences to the family and members of late Rosie Anablak Kagak of Kugluktuk.

Late Rosie had worked with the community and helped in many ways to better the lives of the community of Kugluktuk for years. You will be missed. Rest in peace. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister responsible for

the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

**Return to Oral Question 597 – 6(2):
Cost of Construction**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Return to Oral Question 597 – 6(2), asked by the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk on October 27, 2023, concerning the housing construction costs.

Mr. Speaker, this return is quite detailed. I have filed it with the Clerk for transcribing into the *Hansard* for the public record and for distribution to all members.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide supplemental information to the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk. On October 27, 2023 the member specifically asked for detailed information on “the housing construction costs over the past three years relative to cost per square foot, cost per unit, and cost per bedroom.”

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table this response which provides the detailed breakdown on historical costs. As discussed many times in this House, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has experienced incredible cost increases over the past three years. In 2019-2020 new units were costing approximately \$595 per square foot and the average cost per unit was approximately \$673,000. In 2023-24 we saw RFP and tender prices escalate to approximately \$1,400 per square foot or approximately \$1.4 million per unit. That is an increase of approximately 110 percent over four years.

*See Appendix for full text of Return to Oral Question 597 – 6(2).

Mr. Speaker, we have said numerous times in this House that we are in a housing crisis and approximately 3,000 to 4,000 houses are needed today. Thousands of our people are in desperate overcrowding situations, leading to negative social outcomes. We need to find new and innovative approaches to deliver significantly more housing units. We cannot afford to pay \$1,400 per square foot or \$1.4 million for a housing unit. We know there are much more affordable approaches to build housing units and we hope we can find such solutions with interested entities in the housing sector in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Today I would like to recognize some staff that have been quite busy and are quite vital in the city.

I would like to first recognize Sherri Robertson, Executive Director of YWCA Agvik. Under her guidance for the last four and a half years, Ms. Robertson has significantly grown the organization from Qimaavik, a 26-bed family violence shelter in Apex to include 12 beds in a homeless shelter, eight transitional housing apartments, and a shared housing unit for young working people.

Joining Ms. Robertson today is Alicia Pudlat, Crisis Intake Worker; Napatchie

Lyta, Program Manager; Diane Savoie, Sivummut and Transitional Housing Supervisor; and Pearl Flores, Client Services Director.

Please join me in welcoming this team to the House and their commitment to Inuit and the community of Iqaluit is something to celebrate. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 600 – 6(2): Diseased Wildlife Levels

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it’s not often that I get to go first. My questions are for the Minister of Environment on the minister’s statement.

Mr. Speaker, the minister stated, “My department continues to monitor the situation surrounding an above-average reporting of diseased caribou within the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq barren-ground caribou.”

Mr. Speaker, my first question is: what number of diseased caribou is normal and what number is above average?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. To be honest, I have no complete knowledge to the member's question. I'll get back to the member with more detailed information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to going to that because when the minister states that it is above average, they should be able to quantify what above average means. Were there normally 10 diseased animal samples and this year there are 20? There should be a scale, but I'll move on.

In the same statement, it says, "Mr. Speaker, to date, my department has sent three samples of diseased tissue for diagnostic testing," two from the Kitikmeot and one from the Kivalliq. How many samples were turned in that weren't sent out for sampling up to date? Three samples seem fairly low for above-average reporting of diseased caribou. How many samples were turned in to the conservation officers in total? We know three were sent out. How many in total were turned in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On September 8, 11, 12, 13, and 19, seven hunters came to the Kugluktuk wildlife office to report sick

bluenose-east caribou herd. Ten caribou, four males and six females, were reported sick in total. The hunters did not provide samples to environmental exam, but the Department of Environment staff located the carcasses on September 14 and collected samples for further analysis. A hunter also brought in samples on September 19, 2023.

For the Rankin Inlet hunters, on September 19, 2023, a Rankin Inlet hunter reported harvesting of four diseased caribou near Chesterfield Inlet. The four caribou within a group of nine were reported to have been in poor condition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hunters for reporting the diseased caribou because it is important that we know the health of our caribou populations as they are vital for all of us to harvest and enjoy eating.

Mr. Speaker, the minister didn't answer my question. What I want to know is how many samples were brought in to be shipped out. The minister reports of hunters reporting, which is good, but I still would like to know how many samples were turned in to the wildlife offices to be sent out to get diagnosed or what was wrong with the disease.

Is it just the three samples that were shipped out for diagnostic testing or were there more samples that were turned in to be reported of diseased caribou but were not sent out? Can the minister please enlighten us on how

many samples were turned in for sampling? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not provided with the numbers of the diseased caribou that were identified and I'll get back to the member with more details in that area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 601 – 6(2): Homelessness

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Homelessness.

Mr. Speaker, I believe every community in Nunavut has a number of individuals who have no place to call home. They may stay with family or friends for periods of time or they may try to keep warm and safe in a shack or tent.

Can the minister provide an update on how many homeless people are currently estimated to be living in Nunavut's communities and clarify whether she has detailed information on the number of homeless individuals in each community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. I can't give you the exact number of homeless individuals in Iqaluit. We are currently looking to see how many homeless individuals there are in the communities. Usually it's hard to count because they move from one location to another and there are also couch surfers who sleep in people's homes. I don't have the information right now, but I will give detailed information once I have it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The issue of homelessness is a growing concern. It always becomes more critical as the winter approaches. Rankin Inlet is no different from Chesterfield Inlet when it comes to people living in overcrowded homes or people without homes living in shacks. I do recognize that some people are homeless because they have had past difficulties in managing a home or they have other issues that impact their ability to manage a home.

Can the minister describe what initiatives are currently underway to monitor the well-being of homeless people in every community and to ensure that no one is left without a shelter, especially during the coldest, darkest time of the year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. Homelessness is quite hard, especially in the middle of winter, where the homeless people don't have any place to go to. In larger communities like Iqaluit, we have a very visible homeless population and we try to take care of the people.

For example, there are four communities that are looking at interim shelters with the help of the Nunavut government. The Department of Family Services provides financial support through agreements with shelters, especially here in Iqaluit, as there is a large population that stay in these shelters. We have different agreements through the Department of Family Services and these agreements can be made with the hamlet councils. That's where we provide funds for those services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I appreciate the current lack of housing in our communities is a serious issue that will take some time to fully address. Smaller communities generally have much less infrastructure to access for homeless shelters or transient housing.

Can the minister describe how she works with her cabinet colleagues to find housing options, whether they are temporary or transitional, for the homeless population in Nunavut's smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. Further to what I said, the Department of Family Services was approved this past year to provide more funds for transitional homes or shelters. This is a pilot project for three years. We've had requests for contributions.

The Nunavut government has also recognized the need to provide further support to the communities. We have different arrangements in place. From what I understand, we usually work with the hamlet councils when it comes to the smaller communities, but the Department of Health and the housing organizations also help in addressing this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Question 602 – 6(2): Alcohol Education Committees

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I got confused there for a moment.

>> *Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission.

As the minister will recall from our sitting last Thursday, I tabled our recent exchange of correspondence concerning the important role of alcohol education

committees and I thank the minister for his comprehensive reply to me.

As the minister is aware, only two residents of Pond Inlet submitted declarations of candidacy to serve on the committee's alcohol education committee. I thank both residents for their commitment.

Can the minister clarify how the vacant seats on the committee will be filled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We weren't able to fill all seats on the alcohol education committees, but we will be having discussions to see if we can fill the vacant positions by way of appointments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is very important that the members of alcohol education committees receive appropriate orientation and training on their roles and responsibilities.

In his reply to my recent correspondence, the minister indicated that his department is planning a training conference for all alcohol education committees to be held in 2024. This is a good initiative, and I thank the minister for taking action. Can he indicate when and where the training event will be held? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once we have completed the call-out for and have filled the vacant positions within the alcohol education committees across Nunavut, at that time, we will decide where is best to hold that training. Mr. Speaker, I would assume it might be here in the city, but we will confirm that once we have the number of required members on the boards completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and minister. (interpretation ends) In response to questions asked by my colleague representing Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, the minister confirmed that his department is currently reviewing the *Liquor Act*. Can he describe what specific changes to the roles and responsibilities of alcohol education committees are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are no real major policy changes towards the liquor education committee's roles and responsibilities that we foresee at this time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 603 – 6(2): Consumer Protection

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions concern the high cost of food. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, whose department is responsible for the government's *Consumer Protection Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I frequently hear concerns from my constituents in Kugluktuk about the high cost of food and other necessities in our community's stores.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the government does not dictate the prices that private businesses charge for their goods and services.

Can the minister confirm what role, if any, his department plays in regulating the price of food in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, through the *Consumer Protection Act*, my department's focus is on increasing protection to customers and to improve clarity within the legislation. We are anticipating and we would like to make amendments to this Act, but we do also try to engage and provide public education materials around consumers' rights as they pertain to the market.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage Nunavummiut to be informed and know what is within your rights when purchasing, and given

that the cost of living has increased substantially in different parts of the world, this is a matter that I think a lot of people are paying attention to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there have been many concerns expressed about the federal Nutrition North Canada Program. In order to improve the program, we must have accurate and up-to-date information.

Can the minister clarify the extent to which his department works with the federal Department of Northern Affairs to undertake such work as food price surveys in Nunavut stores? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do believe the Government of Nunavut, through the government liaison offices and other interested parties, does keep tabs on the price of groceries and main staple items within stores in Nunavut. We do work with other departments around where the prices are at.

Mr. Speaker, my Consumer Affairs Division, on occasion, if there are concerns around these, they can bring them forward to our office, but also, again, notify through the government liaison offices that these things are things that we try to keep on top of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) For Kugluktuk members, I would have some forms available if there are any constituents that might have complaints.

From time to time, my constituents tell me that they have disputes with private businesses regarding the status of their accounts or other issues.

Can the minister confirm the process by which his department's Consumer Affairs Division reviews and resolves complaints that are submitted by individual residents? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Consumer Affairs does deal with different matters around if there's a complaint being put forward regarding a certain business. We do have a complaint form and there's an information sheet as well. These are all based on our website. Mr. Speaker, again, I implore Nunavummiut, if they wish to bring these matters up, to contact our Consumer Affairs Division. I'll put in a plug for the toll-free telephone line; it is 1-866-223-8139. Mr. Speaker, again, there's a lot of good information through our Consumer Affairs Division, and I encourage Nunavummiut and members to look them up and keep informed on your consumer rights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 604 – 6(2): Country Food Initiatives

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

As the minister is aware, his department is responsible for administering the government's Country Food Distribution Program, which provides funding for community freezers and other initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, the department's Country Food Distribution Policy sunsetted in March 2020, over three years ago, and the minister has not tabled an annual report on the administration of the program since March 2021, over two years ago.

Can the minister confirm when he will be updating the Country Food Distribution Program Policy and can he confirm when he will be tabling the outstanding annual reports on the administration of this important program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the policy update, it was done recently and I understand that it's probably not posted on our website yet for this wonderful program that is delivered.

For the tabling of the reports, I don't have a schedule with me, but I'm still committed to providing it. These are tabled on an annual basis, so I'll commit to tabling the report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is likely aware, there is a facility in Igloolik that serves as a community freezer.

Schedule B of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation's Country Food Distribution Policy provides funding for activities related to community freezers and other harvesting infrastructure.

Can the minister confirm if funding from this program can assist municipalities with paying for the cost of electricity to operate their community freezers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the intent of the program is to help with those costs. From my understanding, it's the Hamlet of Igloolik that administers the freezer. I would encourage them to send an application under this program and the application form is available on our website. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased with that response. Thank you.

(interpretation ends) The community of Igloolik has expressed interest in expanding the current freezer facility to allow for large-scale processing of country foods.

As the minister is aware, he is also responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

In his 2022-23 Letter of Expectation to the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Development Corporation, the minister made reference to "new projects and investments in our commercial fishery and harvesting sectors that will lead to enhanced employment and income earning opportunities for Nunavut hunters, fishermen and processing plant workers."

Can the minister describe what steps the Municipality of Igloolik needs to take to work with the department and the Nunavut Development Corporation to expand the current facility?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department is very easy to work with when it comes to these types of projects, and I'm really happy with your line of questioning on this. Those projects are much needed in the communities. I am confident that our staff can work and develop a plan with the community for the expansion and for

the country food sales. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 605 – 6(2): Budget 2024
Priorities**

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, the 2024 territorial budget is just around the corner, and I am confident that the minister's number-crunchers in his department have been hard at work in preparing next year's budget package for the consideration of this House during our upcoming winter sitting.

Mr. Speaker, I am also confident that the minister himself has been giving careful thought to what will be the focus of his next Budget Address, so my questions today will focus on the cost-of-living crisis in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, his 2023 Budget Address stated that the government would be increasing the amount allocated for the Income Assistance Program by \$7 million in order to "provide some relief against inflation and the increased price of food, which is the largest daily living cost of income assistance clients."

Can the minister update the House today on how the government is working to measure the effectiveness of this investment and can he confirm that he is not ruling out further increases to the program in his upcoming budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The cost of living is increasing and it is a real serious challenge in Nunavut. Large families and even smaller families with not many kids are trying their best to survive with limited funds to pay for the high cost of food and heating fuel.

We made the decision to increase the funding support this winter and these amounts are now paid, although we are still dealing with increasing costs and it is hard to say exactly what benefits that may have helped our clients. We will continue to monitor the funds and increases to the cost of living by relooking at the amounts, in the months we are at, and if additional improvements can be done after further review of the scale. We anticipate having a report in the spring sitting. We are currently investigating potential benefits to see if we can find more funds or other ways to assist our income support clients, especially with the cost of living.

We also spoke about the other supplementary benefit to decrease the overall costs for heating fuel, which will be offered to private homeowners that I mentioned on Thursday. There are other programs that will provide benefits to ease the cost of living here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I meant to also welcome our very important visitors to the gallery whose

really hard work and important work does impact the very people that I'm speaking about today. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Speaker, there has been extensive discussion across the nation in recent months regarding the high cost of food. Hearings have been held in the Parliament of Canada at which senior executives from the major southern grocery chains have answered questions about inflation and high food prices.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Nutrition North Canada Program has been criticized for having what many believe to be structural failings insofar that the subsidies which are intended to make food more affordable for families are actually going toward the bottom line profitability of the major retailers.

Mr. Speaker, I fully appreciate, recognize, and understand that we can't just push a button and solve this complex issue. However, we do have some leverage over the behaviour of for-profit corporations.

Can the minister confirm that he is not ruling out changes to corporate income tax rates in Nunavut that would impact major southern-based food retailers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were several guests earlier that deal with cost of living, so we also thank them too in the House. Thank you for the constant hard work that you are helping to fight poverty.

>> *Applause*

We also thank those who are watching these proceedings who work in this field.

What my colleague mentioned is that many people find food is too expensive, including the cost of living in the north. She asked me about groceries becoming more expensive. Yes, the items and programs she mentioned are part of our overall fight in trying to make this more accessible through, for example, using income tax to lower the cost of food so Nunavummiut can survive with the cost of living and the base income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I asked questions last week to the Minister of Community and Government Services during which I highlighted the struggles that many of our territory's residents go through when trying to scrape together funds to attend funerals in other communities for loved ones or provide some extra help for an ailing relative who is far from home and receiving medical treatment.

Can the minister indicate if he is open to exploring the feasibility of introducing some form of tax credit or other measure that will help lower income Nunavummiut with respect to the high cost of airfare to attend compassionate events such as funerals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is indeed becoming more of an issue as people are moving all across our territory and spreading out. When you lose a loved one, the flights are very expensive to try to buy your own tickets to visit or attend a funeral. Even to a community that is fairly close, it can be very expensive.

Let me first thank the regional Inuit associations and NTI for providing travel assistance to relatives that want to come and attend the funerals or to visit the family that lost a loved one or to visit a sick relative that the doctors can no longer medically treat. I thank you for your travel assistance program and we appreciate this assistance.

As a government, we can also look at ways to support our residents, not just for those who lose loved ones, as sometimes the travel costs are too high to visit their far-flung relatives who may be on the verge of death. They want to see their loved ones, so we must not forget them and we should try to accommodate that as well. I totally agree that there must be a comprehensive review on this issue, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 606 – 6(2): Initiatives to Address Homelessness

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister responsible for Homelessness.

Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement, I spoke of a wonderful initiative by the Hamlet of Kugaaruk to modify a sea can

shipping container into a temporary home for a homeless individual.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an overview of what types of support are available to Nunavummiut in those smaller communities, such as the communities that I represent that do not have a homeless shelter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. I am grateful to speak to this issue as to how the Department of Family Services supports homelessness initiatives. We provide funding through the Department of Family Services for the issue of homelessness. The funding totals over \$6 million that is divided.

Looking at the Kitikmeot, Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, and Gjoa Haven have received funding, and Kugaaruk also has funding for a women's shelter. There are different pots of funding, but they're mostly for operations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that individuals can move from one community to another community that has a homeless shelter. However, I believe that many people would prefer to stay close to their home community and would do so if there was adequate shelter available.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what consideration has been given to follow the example set by the Hamlet of Kugaaruk and building shelters out of such readily available structures as sea can shipping containers at least to provide temporary shelter until such a time as public housing is available? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. As I mentioned, a hamlet or non-profit organization can request to sign an agreement to start a partnership, which is a longer term arrangement.

However, in terms of emergency situations where homeless individuals or those who have fled domestic violence have no other place to stay, then we have outreach workers in communities who were hired recently. They assist in emergency situations within our communities in Nunavut for clients that require emergency assistance to find a place to stay before or in transition. The outreach workers provide this indispensable work, especially in finding hotel rooms if needed, prior to the client being moved or in transition. The outreach workers search for places in our communities that can support us in this area. These are varied tasks, but this is the newest program currently.

We have hired workers to deal with this important aspect, as some people have no idea who to turn to for advice or complaints. Our departmental employees can be approached to get more information, especially if the client

needs to be sent to another community or if there is a homeless shelter. If they need to be sent to a shelter, then the Department of Family Services prefers to be notified. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I firmly believe in helping my constituents and I fully support their wish to stay in their home community. Indeed, all Nunavummiut deserve to be supported by our government services at home and should have the option not to leave their communities just to go to communities that have shelters.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to looking into what options are available to build shelters that could be temporarily available to homeless people in our communities at least until adequate public housing is built? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Homelessness, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. I don't think the Department of Family Services has stopped looking for ways to further support homeless people, especially in emergency situations. At times, we aren't aware or informed of these situations and so the outreach workers in the communities can support other communities in emergency situations.

The Department of Family Services will continue to look for ways to support individuals and to look further to work

with the hamlet or through funds that are available for non-profit organizations. The hamlets are the real base that we rely on as they are aware of the community and we will certainly work with them through the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 607 – 6(2): College Degree Programs

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question today to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

My first question is: what degree-granting programs are available and how many years of study does it take to complete that Nunavut Arctic College currently offers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: My apologies; my hearing piece was not on. Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. There are three bachelor degree programs that are offered within Nunavut. The Nunavut Teacher Education Program is offered through four years, I believe; the Bachelor of Science in Arctic Nursing is a four-year degree program; and also the Bachelor of Social Work program is a four-year degree program.

The Nunavut Teacher Education Program has 150 credits required to complete the Nunavut Teacher Education Program. To confirm, the

Nunavut Teacher Education Program can be four to five years to complete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I do recall correctly, I believe the Nursing Program was recently extended to five years as well.

Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that have come up over the years is this tracking of graduates, and I know the issue has been raised numerous times by many of my colleagues here. I would like to ask the minister what methods are in place to track graduate employment within the field of study that they studied for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, Nunavut Arctic College is working to develop an alumni outreach. Ultimately the students will come forward to be a part of the alumni network. After graduation, Nunavut Arctic College does not track the employment numbers of those that graduated within the degree programs. This sort of information is confirmed through graduates' disclosure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm hoping that the minister is still riding high from his Oilers winning the second Heritage Classic yesterday. I

know they lost the first one 20 years ago to some team from Quebec that I can't remember the name of, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, it has been stated in many forums that people who graduated from some of these programs are not working in the field of study and are taking other jobs, such as the Government of Nunavut, or other positions that require basically any degree.

Mr. Speaker, each of the programs that the minister mentioned is being provided to fill a specific need and is not inexpensive from funding from the associated departments that are sponsoring those programs. Mr. Speaker, each of those programs is a minimum four [years], if not five [years].

Mr. Speaker, why is Nunavut Arctic College not exploring a Bachelor of Arts degree? Many universities across the country have three-year programs that would fill an obvious gap, alleviate pressures, and allow more students to participate in industry-specific education programs where they wouldn't need to through a Bachelor of Arts degree. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's go Oilers.

>> *Applause*

They won a game last night against the Calgary Flames.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for suggesting that arts degree program. Our Nunavut Arctic College is always looking to expand programs within the territory, and I'll bring that suggestion to bring that forward to my staff and have further discussions on the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 608 – 6(2): Search and Rescue

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the important issue of search and rescue.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue during the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I noted that the department's Community-Based Search and Rescue Contributions Policy expired in April 2022.

Can the minister provide an update today on when the new policy will be approved and can he indicate what changes to the policy are being made? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. I, too, would like to commend the member for bringing this up time and again in support of our local search and rescue frontline workers.

Mr. Speaker, the Community-Based Search and Rescue Contributions Policy is still under review. I am anticipating amendments to come through for March 31, 2024 and this is in line with our budget cycle. As for what details will be amended in the policy, I can't say, so I can't provide any details yet, but once those details are ready to be shared, I'll be more than happy to bring it forward to my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. I will be expecting that information on your amendments.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, I have spoken on a number of occasions about the importance of improving search and rescue infrastructure in the north, including the permanent stations of search and rescue aircraft in our region.

During last Wednesday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the Premier made a statement in which he indicated that the topic of arctic security and sovereignty had been discussed at the recent meeting of the Council of the Federation.

Can the minister indicate what progress has been made in discussions with federal authorities concerning the year-round stationing of search and rescue aircraft in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department is working alongside many different stakeholders on emergency management. We do try to look at ways where, within Nunavut, and part of the policy review of our government is looking at the feasibility around air support on search and rescue having a station located within Nunavut. That's part of the work that we're looking at what would be the most strategically situated. Those types of questions are being discussed at different tables.

Mr. Speaker, arctic security has been quite a big topic of interest globally and my department continues to work with all levels of government regarding this. Actually, I wanted to make the point to state that I think we have some competing interests now that one of our colleagues from Amittuq used to question me on this very topic. He is now unable to do so at this point, but we are looking at this and how we can move forward in light of arctic security, search and rescue, and all those emergency measures in and around the territory. This is an ongoing topic, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to hear that work is being done by our government on this very important matter. When we need to do a search, it's very difficult for everyone in Nunavut, especially in the winter.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue during the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I

also noted that discussions have been underway with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities concerning the creation of a new search and rescue association in Nunavut. Can the minister provide an update to today on the status of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department continues to work with Nunavut municipalities on not just this topic but others. Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to joining mayors across Nunavut at their annual general meeting coming up and I expect that this will be one of the topics of interest. I'm looking forward to discussing this as well as other things.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to also point out that just this past summer, there was a very large arctic security working group that was posted here in Iqaluit. It had policymakers from different levels of government and even representatives from the United States and other areas that had a very fulsome discussion around advocating for more supports and funding towards search and rescue and arctic security. Again, I think it creates a lot of exposure for Nunavut but also the Arctic as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 609 – 6(2): Emergency Preparedness

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): That's great. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask

questions to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

I would like to ask the minister if we can go back in time. I'm asking about emergency services and emergency situations in the community that have been experienced. Now, we know that it has been almost two years since there were a number of difficult situations in Clyde River.

Winter is on its way and because of that, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) as the minister will recall, the community of Clyde River experienced a number of serious situations in recent years due to snowfalls, inadequate mobile equipment, fuel problems, and other issues that led to the declaration of a local state of emergency.

That said, Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what lessons were learned from this experience and can he indicate how his department has been working with the Municipality of Clyde River to provide community emergency response plan training? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question. Mr. Speaker, going back in time gives us an opportunity to review what we went through with our government and my department.

My department is always trying to learn from what it goes through as we serve the communities and hamlets. Certain services are made available to the

hamlets and we work with the hamlet staff to deal with problematic issues before they turn into an emergency.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to deal with training and determining the prerequisite knowledge for maintaining local assets. We anticipate visiting ten communities in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Nevertheless, the hamlets and our government can work harder to try to understand each other's positions and to determine asset management in order to make it more efficient, even by pre-ordering parts that need constant replacement. This event helped us, for example, to better understand the issues and it helps make us plan better for the future in case this happens again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, but I didn't quite understand whether any training was provided to the municipal workers or if there be future training for five communities, so I would like clarification on this later.

Mr. Speaker, during my recent constituency visit to Clyde River, I heard many concerns about the events that led to the community not having the correct type of fuel available to run its fleet, as we came to an understanding later of the extenuating circumstances where the heating fuel and heavy equipment fuel were inadequate, and the fuel was expended due to the continual blizzards and heavy snowfall.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm what actions been taken by the Petroleum Products Division over the

past year to ensure that the situation is not repeated, not only in the hamlet but also in the other communities? I'm asking that for clarification, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 2022-23 fiscal year, the following communities were visited for emergency preparedness training locally: Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, Kugaaruk, and Kugluktuk. As well, within the fiscal year 2023-24, we have planned to conduct further training in ten communities.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, the issue around the fuel was investigated in Clyde River, with a full inspection of the fuel tank farm and started undertaking some corrective action and it has been completed. During the summer, before the sealift of 2022, the fuel tank was repaired. Actually, it was during the summer sealift of 2023 where the required fuel was shipped up to the community and it came on time. Everything is now repaired and different types of fuel are again available in Clyde River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for that explanation. That work has improved the situation.

Clyde River is a very small and very isolated community with very limited

resources. During my recent visit, I heard concerns that the municipality incurred significant costs during the state of local emergency that have not been recovered. They were working 24 hours a day in the community.

With that being the case, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) can the minister confirm what financial assistance his department is providing to the Municipality of Clyde River to help with the costs that it incurred? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department, I think we will have to revisit this issue around funding for unforeseen circumstances. Mr. Speaker, my department tries to work with each hamlet to allow for using the municipal funding formula, the annual funding they receive, and try to use it within certain conditions. Mr. Speaker, I think I'll have to bring this up with my officials and commit to bringing back some further details to our colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 610 – 6(2): CanNor Funding for Skilled Workplace Development

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, with regard to Nunavut Arctic College and

the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, this agency has recently issued a call for expressions of interest for projects that address its business and community economic development priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to quickly mention that this agency will now be run by no stranger to Nunavut, Jimi Onalik. Congratulations, Jimi. I look forward to working with you.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us whether Nunavut Arctic College will be submitting a proposal for any single or multi-year projects under this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, I do not have full details in front of me. I can get back directly to the member with more detailed information, and I will be more than happy to share with the House as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his commitment to get back to me with more details on whether or not they're submitting a proposal.

Mr. Speaker, one of the priorities under the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's Pan-Territorial Growth Strategy is the development of

“Skilled Workforce.” According to its expression of interest callout, priority will be given to projects which increase the availability and quality of pre-employment and targeted job skills training based on industry demand, through support for curriculum development, equipment and infrastructure investments. Some of these things would be greatly used in my community of Baker Lake with the mining activity that has been happening there for over a decade now.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister agree that projects of this nature would be extremely beneficial to Nunavut to enhance our labour force potential and increase employment opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I fully agree with the member’s request. This project’s goal does align with the college’s effort to provide mining training across the territory. Nunavut Arctic College has identified the need for specialized training that is dedicated to the mining and transportation trades within Nunavut for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m very happy that the minister is in agreement.

Mr. Speaker, eligible businesses and organizations have until Wednesday, November 20, to submit an expression

of interest for financial support under CanNor’s funding program.

I’m wondering: will the minister commit to working with Nunavut Arctic College representatives, in collaboration with industry partners, especially the partners in Baker Lake, I’m talking about the private sector businesses that are working there, providing service for the mining and Agnico Eagle Mines, to put together a proposal and take advantage of this opportunity and, if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Yes, I can commit to looking into the member’s question further. The college is aware of the timelines, but at the same time, the proposals are done in line with the timelines and time to further review will be required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 611 – 6(2): Municipal Borrowing

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, who is responsible for both the *Hamlets Act* and the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year I had the honour of participating in the Nunavut 3000 housing forum that was held here in Iqaluit. A specific issue that was raised at this forum concerns the extent

to which municipalities are able to borrow from commercial lenders in order to fund land development and other initiatives to address our housing crisis.

I would like to ask: can the minister describe what discussions he and his officials have had with the City of Iqaluit and the Nunavut Association of Municipalities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, the *Hamlets Act* as well as the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* lay the foundational documents for municipalities in Nunavut. These pieces of legislation have been topics of interest, I think, in the last year or two. From my understanding, the stakeholders, including my department and the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, have had internal discussions around or preliminary discussions on providing feedback into the process of reviewing the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, these would be major legislative initiatives and so a comprehensive multi-year plan would be required to ensure that a fulsome consultation takes place to develop and propose amendments, but I think we're starting the process and it will take some time and effort, including all the stakeholders involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response. As the minister is aware, cities across Canada are able to borrow reasonable amounts without requiring costly plebiscites or ministerial approval or exemption, which is explicitly stated in the current legislation that the minister referenced.

I would like to ask the minister, in the preliminary discussions, whether or not this specific issue has come up or, if not, if the minister will consider incorporating such amendments to the legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Act, as currently stated, as it's currently written, I mean, I would say that the total amount that it is allowable for municipal corporations to borrow, but at any time, it shouldn't exceed 75 percent of the estimated revenues as set out in the budget for that fiscal year. There are parameters that municipalities can borrow within.

I'll further state that the city, as a tax-based municipality, can borrow for a longer term period, whereas non-tax-based municipalities, for a temporary basis, can borrow for a period not exceeding one year at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response. I guess I wasn't clear enough in my question. I do recognize that

municipalities are eligible to borrow funds from lenders, but the city must go through a costly plebiscite process. I was just highlighting that across Canada, other cities do not require costly plebiscites or ministerial exemption for such lending.

Moving on to my last question, Mr. Speaker, under the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, it also allows for municipalities to borrow directly from the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, at a very recent televised public hearing on the Public Accounts, I did note that the Government of Nunavut has provided the Qulliq Energy Corporation with an interest-free loan and another amount borrowed from the Government of Nunavut at a very low rate.

Mr. Speaker, given the high rates of inflation triggering increased cost of borrowing, I would like to ask: can the minister indicate if his department has or will consider providing interest-free or low-interest loans to the City of Iqaluit to expedite the development of land? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just had a question regarding emergency funds for hamlets and whether or not that can be something that my department can further provide, but if we're looking at having my department set aside funds for land or municipal development, we will have to talk to the bank in this case and have a discussion with the Minister of Finance and we will have to consider that.

It's something that we will have to mull over and discuss the pros and cons. At this time, it's something that I don't think we can get in place in short order, but it's something that we will consider. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I seek unanimous consent to extend oral questions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay.

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. I recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

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

**Committee Report 017 – 6(2): Bill 26,
Miscellaneous Statutes
Amendment Act, 2023**

**Committee Report 018 – 6(2): Bill 27,
An Act to Repeal the Area
Development Act**

**Committee Report 019 – 6(2): Bill 28,
Opioid Damages and Health Care
Cost Recovery Act**

**Committee Report 020 – 6(2): Bill 29,
An Act to Amend the Engineers
and Geoscientists Act**

**Committee Report 021 – 6(2): Bill 30,
An Act to Amend the Revolving
Funds Act**

**Committee Report 022 – 6(2): Bill 34,
Write-off of Assets and Debts Act,
2022-2023**

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*, Bill 27, *An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*, Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Cost Recovery Act*, Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*, Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Fund Act*, and Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*, have been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and the bills are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole, and this might be a record for the number of bills on one statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you and all six bills will be placed on the order paper for Wednesday, November 1.

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

**Motion 027 – 6(2): Referral of Tabled
Document 176 – 6(2) to Committee
of the Whole – Notice**

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday November 1, 2023, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Tabled Document 174 – 6(2) be referred to the Committee of the Whole for concurrent consideration with Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), and 163 – 6(2).

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

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

Item 16: Motions

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

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

Motion 027 – 6(2): Referral of Tabled Document 176 – 6(2) to Committee of the Whole

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for consenting.

WHEREAS Motion 26 – 6(2) was introduced, considered, and adopted unanimously at the Legislative Assembly's sitting of October 20, 2023;

AND WHEREAS Tabled Document 174 – 6(2), *Updated Ministerial Mandate Letters*, was tabled at the Legislative Assembly's sitting of October 26, 2023;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Tabled Document 174 – 6(2) be referred to the Committee of the Whole for concurrent consideration with Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), and 163 – 6(2);

AND FURTHER I MOVE that Tabled Document 73 – 6(2) be withdrawn from consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 31, 32, and 33 and Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), 163 – 6(2), and 174 – 6(2) with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

Before we proceed with the committee, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:25 and Committee resumed at 15:49

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

Chairman (Mr. Hickes): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 31, 32, and 33 and Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), 163 – 6(2), and 174 – 6(2). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 31 and continue with the review of the 2024-25 capital appropriation for the Department of Education and, if time permits, the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 31?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 31 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2024-2025 – Education – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross, do you have officials that you would like to accompany you at the witness table? Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to allow the witnesses to appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please.

Thank you. Just for the record, minister, can you please introduce your officials to the committee?

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. To my left, we have Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu, and to my right, we have Manager of Capital Projects Barry Cornthwaite. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you and welcome. Where we left off on Friday, we had Mr. Simailak in a line of questioning and we will continue. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day, minister and your officials. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon.

I've got just a few more questions, I think, Mr. Chairman. I'm just kind of gathering my notes here. Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Will the Department of Education look at purchasing existing infrastructure in communities to use as daycares instead of buying modular units? If not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Education does include with all of our new builds

such as new schools or renovations to schools the inclusion of daycare space into our capital project when they're going through the capital process. In terms of acquiring spaces for public use, such as for daycares, we leave that into the responsibility of the society that oversees the daycare, for example, in the community to purchase and acquire the building. We do have funds available for the start-up of those types of spaces if there are any interested societies that want to start the creation of a daycare, for example. We do have start-up funding for that creation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry if I wasn't too clear. I believe that the department is looking at buying modular units and transporting them to communities to use as daycares. Instead of buying modular units, has the department looked at each community to see if there is any existing infrastructure that they could acquire, which could in fact actually save the department some money? Have they looked at that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to the member for that question. The modular units that the Department of Education will be purchasing are to support the full-day kindergarten. The schools that require extra space for full-day kindergarten, that's what that's for. It's not to move the kindergarten classrooms into there. It's to use for the senior classes because

they're already integrated into the schools. We want our kindergarten students to feel included in terms of welcome and oriented for their first years in the school setting, so, we'll be using the modular classrooms that are being purchased for the temporary use while the school is being renovated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I do remind members and witnesses to please fully mute your phone, even on vibrate, it still does come across the microphone quite distinctly. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for clarifying that the modular units that will be purchased will be used temporarily. Once they are no longer needed to be used temporarily, what will happen to these modular units that they've transported to communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chair. *Quana* to the member for that question. Once the portable units are no longer needed for the school, they will be surplus and given back and determined at a later date for their further use. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the department look at buying existing infrastructure in communities instead of buying modular units? It could save time; it could save money. If not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to pass that detailed question over to Barry Cornthwaite. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite, please go ahead.

Mr. Cornthwaite: I'm always too fast, I apologize. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. Basically, when we're doing the outlay of the full-day kindergarten program, we looked at all options. I'm not saying that's not an option, but we will review all options for sure. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does that mean the department has already looked at communities that will be getting modular units, whether or not there is existing infrastructure that can be acquired from the private sector or from anywhere in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. The department is currently looking into the details of the next phase, the next year for full-day kindergarten, and we're researching that information to see what is available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Just if the witnesses might maybe move your electronics just a little bit further away from the microphones, there is some kind of feedback that is coming in a little

bit that a couple members have mentioned. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. Staying on the subject of modular units that are looking to be purchased, what is the landed cost of these modular units being purchased? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to the member for that question. I believe it was asked before you had come back on Friday from your trip, but those units are roughly \$2 million for a modular portable, and that includes shipping fees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: \$2 million a unit, that's a lot of money, whereas, if I remember correctly in Nunavut Housing Corporation was buying modular units at \$500,000 per unit at 1,000 square feet. Why didn't the Department of Education follow Nunavut Housing Corporation's lead on this? Why did they not emulate the Nunavut Housing Corporation? It was only \$500,000 for modular units instead of \$2 million a unit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to the member for that question. I would like to refer that question, through you, Mr. Chairman, to Barry Cornthwaite. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. The modular classrooms that we've used in the past in the communities of Nauyasat and Gjoa Haven were purchased through a competitive tendering process designed by a consultant. When the competitive tendering process revealed the costs, that's how the costs came out, as the amount we've provided to the floor. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it a done deal that if this is approved, you will be spending \$2 million a modular unit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Through you, Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct that question to Mr. Cornthwaite. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As indicated earlier, we look at all options before we rollout these type of programs, and at that time, if it reveals that there is a different option or a better approach to take, the department will definitely take the better approach. Thank you very much.

Chairman: If I may interject for a moment here, I think there might be something lost in the translation, no pun intended with the same language being

English, but we're looking at, from the way I understand it, two totally different types of modular units. Mr. Cornthwaite, maybe you could elaborate a little bit on what type of modular unit is anticipated to be used for these overflow classes. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically, the modular classrooms are actual 70 square metre classrooms. They have their own boiler systems, they have their own sewer tank, and they have their own heating system, like a boiler system. They have all the things of a regular classroom, with a mudroom when the students walk in where they hang their jackets, and there's an actual classroom with whiteboards, smart projectors, and those types of things. It is an actual 70 square metre classroom with all the infrastructure to support it. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you. Just for the record, you don't need to press the button; I have somebody that's administrating that on our behalf. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Cornthwaite for the clarification. Moving on, I think it's going to be my last question, we'll see.

The department is looking at information technology devices. In the opening comments, on page 3, it reads that there is an additional need to replace internet-capable devices such as computers.

Mr. Chairman, I do know in Baker Lake, there have been internet-capable devices that were funded by the federal

government to be used by Baker Lake students, but these devices have never seen the light of day. They are still in the cases. The teachers and students have repeatedly asked for access to these internet-capable devices to help them with their schooling at home.

Here we are today, the department is asking for more money for internet-capable devices when there are already internet capable devices on site. Why aren't these devices being used? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. So those school devices, there were 10,000 school devices that were bought through external funds given to the department to purchase during the COVID-19 response to learning from a distance. Those devices are accessible to our schools, and it's up to the district education authorities to determine how best to use them within the school. I know that there was communication to myself from the member on those devices in his constituency.

We do encourage them to be used as they are there and available, and the funds that are being asked for, the specific one is that we do need to have software and hardware upgrades to our applications, and that will mainly support that function that we need to have things updated and be used with the most compatible software. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for getting that out in the public. Encouraging is one thing and a clear directive is another. It would be nice if the minister would give a clear directive to her offices for these Internet-capable devices to be used. That's just a statement. I don't have any more questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I will pass it on to Minister Gross for comment because I think this is very important. The member, through his discussions with people in the community, has come to the realization that these devices are available. I think it is very important to know in other communities if there is a similar situation where the district education authorities are sitting on these devices and not handing them out to the students. I think it would be an important aspect that all of us would like to know. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that comment. There was a directive sent out to the schools on these devices and it is up to them to choose what they do want to use them for. We have left that availability and function into their hands to address that and, if they are not being used, we have asked for them to be shipped back to the department so that we can send them to other schools that have more demand for them to be used in their schools or from home. We will remind the schools again, though, to address the devices if they haven't done so and to come up with a plan to use them in the schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. If I could get one more clarification before I go to the next name on my list, earlier you had mentioned that it is the district education authority that had the responsibility of distributing those pieces of electronics, and just now you mentioned that there was a directive to the school to utilize. I would just like to get clarification on who received that directive. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask Deputy Minister Hainnu to respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the question in regard to electronic devices. When we had COVID, we received \$1.5 million from the federal government for educational purposes in higher grades if the schools were to close and that they would be busy during that time. They are expensive and online use is expensive. Internet use in some communities is more expensive. There were issues with funding. We are working with schools and teachers if there is a positive benefit for the use of the equipment, and if the DEA is in support, we can work with the school for these Internet-capable devices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two questions in regard to school buses. (interpretation ends) Which communities are currently requesting new school buses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. We do have buses that were purchased this past year, 2022-23, and they arrived on this year's sealift. They were for the communities of Kimmirut and Clyde River.

Purchased for 2023-24 that will arrive on next year's sealift are Pangnirtung, Sanirajak, Igloolik, and Sanikiluaq. For early 2024, we will be viewing the requests from Chesterfield Inlet, Arviat, and Nauyasat and that is for the age of the existing buses to determine our next purchases for 2024-25. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtook.

Mr. Sammurtook: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the winters are very harsh, it is hard on the buses and most of the smaller communities don't have shelters for the buses that they get. Will these buses come in with shelters? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. No, the buses do not come with a shelter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtook.

Mr. Sammurtook: In the future, or working with CGS, is the Department of Education looking into buying or leasing? You can't lease in the smaller communities; they don't have places.

For the smaller communities, are you guys working with the Department of Community and Government Services to buy shelters for these buses? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. That is something that the department is exploring. At this point, I can't comment any further, but we have taken that into consideration and are discussing with our fellow counterpart department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtook.

Mr. Sammurtook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department has been working to develop design standards for the schools. Does the department have standards for school buses with respect to such features as seatbelts, cameras, and auto-start technology? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. There is a Canada-wide standard for school buses and we do follow that Canada-wide standard. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtook.

Mr. Sammurtook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Can you reconfirm when Chesterfield Inlet will be getting their new school

bus? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We will be reviewing the requests from Chesterfield Inlet, Arviat, and Nauyasat this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa: (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome you.

(interpretation ends) My questions are under small capital. The 2024-25 budget for small capital includes \$1 million in funding for unplanned facility maintenance and equipment replacement. How much of this funding is used to address vandalism-related damage? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. Under this particular line item, there is no relation to vandalism. We have a special pot of funding for vandalism that we have on preventing any arson and vandalism in our schools. We work with Community and Government Services to address any type of work that occurs in response to maintenance or anything related to vandalism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that answer. The department has indicated that \$500,000 of small capital funds have been set aside for an emergency repair budget to be administered by the Department of Community and Government Services. How often are emergency repairs required for Nunavut schools during the school year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. That budget is needed almost daily, but we use it on an as-needed basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the answer. At the amount of \$500,000 and everyday needed for certain things, it certainly feels like it's a bit too small to do repairs in different communities.

Recent stories in the media indicate that in 2022 there were close to 4,000 service requests for repairs in Nunavut schools. Why were there so many maintenance requests last year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Quassa. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member again for that question. Although 4,000 do seem like a high number, it is a normal amount of requests for the department to

see for maintenance repairs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that. Have any specific small capital projects been identified for 2022-25 and, if so, what are they and what will they cost? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. That is just a pot of money that is there that when we do get the request, we use it. We don't know exactly what maintenance issues those funds will be allocated for, but they are there as a buffer and a backup to any types of maintenance issues that arise. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for that response. (interpretation ends) This is my last question. Funding requested for IT infrastructure also includes security systems and intrusion alarms. How many Nunavut schools currently do not have functioning intrusion alarm systems and how do they address the security issues in the absence of such automated systems? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: We want to be careful of naming communities here, but Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We will get back to the member with the details of that and we can get back to all the members here on that answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Is that satisfactory for you? Thank you. I will go to the next name I have on my list: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't have many questions here. The first one is the three schools in Arviat, the elementary, middle school, and high school, what capacity are they at? I know that once you hit 80 percent capacity, it kicks in that they start the process of either expanding or a new school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. For the community of Arviat, the three schools' utilization, for the John Arnalukjuak School, the utilization is at 74 percent, the Levi Angmak School is at 92 percent, and the Qitiqliq Middle School is at 116 percent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister tell me what state the two schools are at now? They should be either expanding or replacing the school at 92 percent and especially at 116 percent. Can we get an update on what stage of either renovation/expansion or a new school for the community is at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to answer the technicalities to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. The Government of Nunavut adopted a preplanning process several years back, so our department submits projects through the substantiation sheets through this process. Currently, they have not picked any of our schools to go to preplanning. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When were the projects for preplanning submitted? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Is it the projects specifically for Arviat? Thank you. I just noted that the member nodded his head yes. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. They are submitted every year. However, through you again, Mr. Chairman, I'll get Mr. Cornthwaite to further elaborate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Each year, the department looks at our portfolio, we look at the

schools in worst condition and we submit three of those, and we look at the schools that are the most crowded conditions that we submit those. Typically, we try to put forward three in poor condition and three that are overcrowded each year. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Either I'm not making myself clear or if there is misunderstanding here. I asked: when were they submitted? When was the Levi Angmak submitted, if it was at all, for expansion or replacement? When was the Qitiqliq school submitted? It's at 116 percent. When was it submitted, if at all? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. As it's related to the first question, I'll go directly to Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The schools that are submitted that we spoke about earlier and all the way going back to '19-20, the Arviat middle school was presented in 2021, the same school was presented in '22-23, and the same school was presented in '23-24. Unfortunately, the last couple years, no school has been put into preplanning. Thank you.

Chairman: Just for the record, I believe Mr. Cornthwaite meant 2020 and not a hundred years ago.

>> *Laughter*

It's a long time that you have been waiting, Mr. Savikataaq. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to comment because Arviat became a town in 1924.

>> *Laughter*

Okay, but seriously, if you have a policy where, at 80 percent capacity, you start the process to either expand or build a new school, but if this policy is dependent on getting approval for preplanning studies, what's the recourse if you're submitting every year and you're not getting any preplanning money? In the meantime, the school capacity is going up and up and up because 116 [percent] is pretty high. That is 36 percent above the threshold where you start the preplanning studies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question and insight. I would also, again, like to direct this back over, through you, Mr. Chairman, to Mr. Cornthwaite. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department recognizes the issue and understands the issue, and what we have done this fiscal year is we have identified schools to do building condition assessments using our own funds. We actually get a consultant hired through CGS and they do a building condition assessment of the school to help with the preplanning process so that when it does get into preplanning, it doesn't have to be done. We're trying to

be proactive and still move some projects along. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has that been done to the two schools in Arviat, the Levi Angmak and the Qitiqliq school? Has that been done? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, it hasn't. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Cornthwaite, you said that it is done. Can we get an explanation as to why it's not done when one of the schools is at 116 percent capacity? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you again, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to speak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are going forward doing BCAs. Basically they cost approximately \$150,000 each, so we do not have sufficient funds to do BCAs on all schools that require it. We're doing two this year and we will do as many as we can each year so that we can get a school into preplanning. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. I would just like to acknowledge, members, to try to not use acronyms. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the schools in Arviat, the Levi Angmak and the Qitiqliq, have been entered for preplanning requests since 2020, when is either one of them going to get the money that is spent to do condition ratings on them? They do two a year. Okay, when is Arviat slotted for, for the one that's more over capacity, the Qitiqliq school? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We can look to do that next fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. Is that a commitment? There's a difference between going to do it and looking to do it. Is that a commitment to do the condition rating in the Arviat school in the next fiscal year? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's a commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. Persistence pays off sometimes, eh?

My next question is Mr. Simailak was asking about the full-day kindergarten modular classrooms. Just so I have a

better picture, are these stand-alone or are they stand-alone but attached to the school? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. They are stand-alone, portable buildings on the school grounds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister stated that these portable classrooms will be used until they are not needed and then they will be surplus and dealt with through the government disposal process, but are there plans to expand these schools then? If they are needed now and full-day kindergarten keeps going, I can't see them not needing these classrooms. Can we get an explanation? Thank you.

Chairman: At least until they build your new school anyway. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. They are going to be used as a temporary place for students to use as classrooms, temporary being that the school will be under a renovation for the full-day kindergarten to be implemented into further expanding the school to suit the needs of that expansion, but I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to further elaborate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The best example I would

like to refer to is in Naujaat. We had to purchase two portable classrooms because the school is very crowded. When the new high school was built in Naujaat, we surplused the two portable classrooms. Once the needs are addressed in the community, either through expansion or additional school, then the portables are surplused. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that fully, that once a school is expanded, then they don't need them. My next question will be: how many schools are going to need an expansion for full-day kindergarten when it's fully implemented, if it will be? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We are still working on all of the expansion or renovation technicalities to hosting full-day kindergarten across our schools as it will be a phased approach. We do know that we will need to expand a lot of our schools.

I expect that the amount that will come before this House should this pilot project proceed that we will need additional funds for some major renovations and, in some communities, new schools to accommodate the full-day kindergarten and to ensure that we have the adequate and appropriate classroom space for the full-day kindergarten.

I can't fully say how many at this point, but we do have a large population under the age of 25 and our territory is growing. We do know that a lot of our schools do need some major classroom space to meet the need for full-day kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It brings me back to a point here. The minister stated that they're going to have to do lots of renovations, expansions, or new schools in order to implement full-day kindergarten across. I would assume that you need preplanning studies to expand a school.

The Levi Angmak School is an elementary school in Arviat, it's at 92 percent, and they can't get any preplanning studies to expand it because it's over capacity. The Qitiqliq school is at 116 percent and they can't get any preplanning money to expand it.

How do they expect to get any preplanning studies for most of the schools so that they can implement full-day kindergarten? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. They are two completely different topics in terms of preplanning. We are anticipating preplanning already for full-day kindergarten and are looking to see what needs are out there for the schools to meet the need of having and hosting full-day kindergarten. There is a different type of planning process for that that's being undertaken and then we have the expansion of this program that

is also going to be a phased approach, so it won't happen within a few years.

I imagine, with all of our schools in each of our communities, going forward, if we do, with full-day kindergarten, this will take a significant amount of capital and also a significant amount of years to roll this whole program out. There are possibly eight schools right now that can meet full-day kindergarten immediately and for the remaining schools, we will have to look into what other types of work might be needed, like a new school for the community.

I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to further discuss on the capital side for the preplanning and the full-day kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We started investigating the full-day kindergarten program in 2017, 2-0-1-7.

>> *Laughter*

At that time, we looked at several different schools and what needs to be expanded and wait at something that can't be done fast. Like the minister said, it's very expensive to expand schools and build new schools. What we did and we're doing the least expensive ones first in-house, so we have a little bit of a learning curve and then we can roll out to the larger schools.

I was in discussions with the Arviat DEA and the Arviat principal earlier today and on Friday with respect to what has happened to Levi Angmak. We're

getting some valuable input from the current school leader as well as the DEA on how they're suggesting best steps forward. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you. Timely discussions. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The discussions on the Levi Angmak School, which is the elementary school in Arviat, there are discussions to expand it or bring in a portable for full-day kindergarten but not for just a regular expansion. Is that correct? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. We know that Arviat's birthrate is growing. We noticed that when we went to the community. We were informed that there is a large population and we can anticipate that in five years' time there will be a large number of students entering the school system. We are having the discussion to see what plans we can make for the community to reflect birthrates.

It's not just in Arviat, but there are other communities where we have to look into the situation and are working closely with the Department of Health to first of all gather those numbers for our schools because if we do know that their demographic is growing and the population is growing, we need to work together to meet the needs for the community and Arviat is one that we have raised by visiting the community.

At this point, I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite again to further elaborate, if

he can indulge in some of the plans that he has for Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The discussions with the Arviat people basically involve the expansion of Levi Angmak, the elementary school in Arviat, as well as addressing other conditions in the school itself. CGS is working through a proposal at this time for replacing the siding on the school to upgrade the existing school and as well, we're looking at expanding for the full-day kindergarten. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be just a comment and then I'm done. The minister stated that they know Arviat has a high birth rate, and they're anticipating lots of students coming in there in the next five years, so I would say that there are a lot of students there right now as we speak; at Levi Angmak School being 92 percent and Qitiliq school being at 116 percent. We can't wait for the next five years. It has to be dealt with right now. I'm glad that they're in discussions with the DEA, but I think everyone knows that.

Hopefully these discussions are fruitful because the overcrowding in the schools should be addressed now, so that we can encourage students to want to go to school, not be in an overcrowded school, and to have a good environment in which to learn. Young students are just like a sponge; they absorb a lot of information if the conditions are right. I

encourage the department to deal with over capacity of the two schools in Arviat now, not wait for the next five years. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross, did you want to comment on the comment?

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. Yes, noting that we, after visiting the community of Arviat and being informed that their birth rate was growing in the next five years more than, I think, doubles what they have normally seen in their typical years.

We did take that into consideration, and I have asked the department to look into the specifics of how we can meet the needs for the growing population. With that, we are working with the community to ensure that those needs are met. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. The next name I have on my list, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure it's not in line in regard to capital, but I'd like to ask a question in regard to transportation, like busing services for schools. (interpretation ends) This has to do with other leases beside buses. Would that be okay for me to ask a question? Okay? *Qujannamiik*.

As your department has been working to develop design standards for the schools, I have a question that relates to the infrastructure that is attached to the public school.

For some communities, there are lease agreements that are signed by your department to lease out a gymnasium, and my question is, (interpretation) when we are leasing a school gymnasium, even though it does not belong to your department; if this gym is attached to the school, and looking at the plans, have you considered this or have you been concerned about this, and what's your status on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. *Mamianaq*. Thank the member for that question. If any of our schools have any lease agreements for the use of a gymnasium, those agreements go through the district education authority. If there are any fees associated with that agreement, those fees go back into the district education authority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your response. Nonetheless, the reason why I bring up this issue is due to my other constituency community, actually where I reside, Qikiqtarjuaq. There was a previous agreement when the Inuksuit School, that the funding for construction of the new school was used for the addition and renovation of the school, and due to the limited funds, as a hamlet council, I was the mayor at that time.

Now, a concern arose as parents did not want their children to have to walk quite a long distance from the only building available as a gymnasium is the community hall in our community. The

worry was the potential for safety issues and the community started brainstorming ways as we want our school to have a gymnasium.

Now, an agreement was reached after numerous meetings as we wanted the school to have a gymnasium located in the school. An agreement was reached, to reiterate as our children deserve a place to play sports as our community felt strongly, and no space.

Due to these issues, I wonder if that agreement is still in effect, and if your department is preparing or planning a new gymnasium in the school? What have you negotiated in regard to the use of the gymnasium in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to the member for the question. For the particular details for Qikiqtarjuaq, that's a detail I would like Mr. Cornthwaite to answer because I'm not quite familiar with the school gymnasium policy and who the gymnasium is owned by. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. There are a few unique communities in Nunavut where the gymnasiums are actually a hamlet asset, one being Kimmirut and one being Qikiqtarjuaq. The hamlet owns the gymnasium in Qikiqtarjuaq.

There were major renovations done to the school in 2008, where they did put a new gymnasium floor in and did repairs to the gymnasium at that time. We haven't had any requests from the district education authority for anything required in the school right now, but I'll certainly reach out to them and see if there's anything they're looking at. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

Chairman: Thank you. Just acknowledge Chair at the end, Mr. Cornthwaite, so they know when to switch off the microphone. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this because I wanted to ask that, and I needed help with that. I want to go ahead and talk about this because it's been quite some time since they've signed the lease agreement. The hamlet council is responsible for the maintenance of the building. For that reason, I believe that the agreement was signed by the DEA and by the Hamlet Council of Qikiqtarjuaq. I'm urging your department to look into that, consider it, and review it because it's getting ancient.

Thank you for allowing me opportunity to ask questions in regard to this issue. I'm just making a comment at this time. I don't have any further questions, but in regard to this issue, for the future, I believe you need to start planning ahead to make sure that the school has its own gymnasium because it's very dangerous in the evenings in our communities because it was used every day. The place has to be clean enough for the children to use at the school. I'm just making a

comment to make sure that we get a gymnasium in our school attached to it. I don't have any questions. I just wanted to make a comment so that the department may be aware of it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to the member for that comment. We will take that into consideration, and the officials have noted what the member had suggested. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be asking questions about the status of the school renovation for the Netsilik School in Taloyoak. It is to my understanding the documentation regarding the department's ongoing lifecycle budget indicates that renovations to Taloyoak's elementary school have been deferred to 2024-25. What is the reason for the Netsilik School to be deferred to 2024-25? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for the question. The simple answer is money. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the department be asking for funding any time soon for the renovation of Netsilik School? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. For any renovations to Netsilik School, that will go and come through the ongoing lifecycle. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the ongoing lifecycle budget, when do you guys plan to get the funding available to renovate the Taloyoak's Netsilik School? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for that question. Should this go forward, the funding would come on April 1, 2024. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the department receives the funding after April 1, when should my constituent community of Taloyoak see the renovation to the Taloyoak's Netsilik School? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for that question. That work would occur after sealift 2024. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for answering my questions, and my constituent community of Taloyoak is looking forward to the renovation of Taloyoak's Netsilik School. I'm looking forward to it and we hope to see it next year. It's just a comment. I'll be following up with this in the 2024-25 budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross, you wanted to respond?

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for that question. We can give updates to the member when they do come in and provide those updates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, minister and your officials. I would just like to go back to a couple of questions asked earlier by Ms. Quassa.

I wasn't really clear about whether or not, minister, when Ms. Quassa asked about funding vandalism repairs, minister mentioned that there is a small or special pot of funding for vandalism, and I'm not really clear on whether or not that the special pot of funding is actually the \$500,000 that's allocated for emergency repairs. If I can get some clarity on that, I'd appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. I can knock that one off my follow-up list

now. Minister Main. Minister Gross. My apologies.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. For the vandalism funds that are available, that does come from the initial \$500,000 pot of funding, however, I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to elaborate on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for the question. Basically, a few years back, the start of the emergency school fund instrument of delegation. If there is various vandalism in any of our schools, CGS does not have to wait to get the work done. They immediately repair the windows that are broken by vandalism, door locks or whatever has been affected.

The pot starts off at \$500,000. Currently, it's at \$1.25 million because we increase the pot as the need increases when vandalism is happening at our schools. We have to increase the pot. We've been transferring money from our ongoing lifecycle to increase the pot to \$1.2 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to be clear, so is that \$500,000 for emergency repairs being added to that \$1.2 million of the instrument of delegation fund? I'm not sure if that's what is called, but those were the words that were used. Are we contributing every year to this fund, and

does it stay within the Department of Education, and just continue to grow as it isn't fully expended? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. The pot starts at \$500,000, and we do add from the ongoing lifecycle to get to that \$1.2 million.

The question was: if the pot has unused funds, does it go back? We always overspend from that pot of funding, so we've never had an instance where the money has to go back somewhere. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm still really not clear on if there is a pot of over \$1.25 million and why an additional \$500,000 is being asked of us to approve this year. I sense that I might be misunderstanding this.

>> *Laughter*

If I can get a little bit more clarity for my edification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. If I may, I think where some of the confusion is coming from is that there is the emergency repair budget that's administered by Community and Government Services, the \$500,000 that was alluded to earlier, and then there's an outstanding balance or a surplus right now of \$1.25 million the Department of Education has available to it. I think there's some confusion on where the source of that \$1.25 million that is available started

and where it continues to receive money from. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, to the member for that question. I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to elaborate on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go into a little bit of a process to schools. When they have repairs that are required, they complete a service request to Community and Government Services, so the service request immediately uses the money if it's vandalism.

At the beginning of each year, April 1, we load \$500,000 from our small capital budget to a fund that's called emergency school pot. As the pot's used up, we realize through looking at FreeBalance, the accounting system the government uses, that when the balance starts to get close to \$500,000, we know we have to add more to it.

We're not asking for an extra \$500,000. We additionally load up \$500,000 April 1, with the allegation authority for CGS to spend it, and that's given to all regional O&M offices of CGS, so immediately, when a service request is done by the principal if it's vandalism. Vandalism is not covered by O&M, it becomes a capital cost, and that's when they do a JV to the Department of Education taking money out of that money, the pot that's been set aside for school emergencies. I hope that helps. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Cornthwaite. I understood the acronyms there, but just in the future, you might want to lay them out a little bit. The journal voucher is the main one that people may not be familiar with, it's a financial term. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. I have another follow-up question. In one of the responses, it was mentioned that three schools that are in poor condition and three schools that are overcrowded are selected for processing for the development of new schools or renovations, I believe. What I'm not sure about is whether or not we had the question of how many schools are currently overcrowded with utilization rates over 85 percent, I may have missed that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for that question. I believe we have 15 schools that are over the rate.

By region, we can go over 80 percent. We have in the Kitikmeot; we have 6 schools out of 8 that are over 80 percent.

In the Kivalliq region, over 80 percent, we have 8 schools.

In the Qikiqtaaluk, we have 8 schools as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for statistical purposes, the minister gave a comparative data of six out of eight schools in the Kitikmeot,

and then mentioned eight in both the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk. However, she didn't mention how many schools there are in total of each of those regions. Can I get that, please? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. For the Kivalliq, we have 13 schools, and for the Qikiqtaaluk, we have 23 schools. For the Kitikmeot, we have eight schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm definitely interested in all schools in Nunavut. However, just for my purposes, are any of the schools listed in Qikiqtaaluk, of those eight schools, are any of those schools located in Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. Currently, in Iqaluit, Joamie School is at 95 percent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Where is Joamie School on the list for putting forward for either renovation or addition? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the

question. I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to get into the details of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. Currently, in Iqaluit, the only school listed in preplanning is Nakasuk School, but because we had situations in Joamie School and other elementary schools, we have been asked to redo the substantiation sheet for the Nakasuk project so that it includes all elementary schools in Iqaluit. The preplanning will involve every school in Iqaluit as well as Apex to see what the best steps forward for the department are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just strayed a little bit from my follow-up question, so I'm going to leave that for now.

I can say that having been to Nakasuk School as a child and having had all of my children go through Nakasuk School, it is good to hear that it is in the preplanning stage. I hope that we come to a point where we discuss that and approve that and I hope the windows are bigger.

>> *Laughter*

We talked about eight schools are in line for the new kindergarten program and we also talked about the schools that are overcrowded, and I'm curious about how the utilization rates of the schools that do receive the kindergarten program will be

impacted by opening up to full kindergarten programs.

A major part of the reason that I ask that is because we know that there are chronically underserved communities, and perhaps I can be corrected, it sounded to me like those eight schools were chosen because their utilization rate was in fact amongst the lower end, so it could actually take more students in.

As an observer it might seem that those underserved communities and schools are in fact being even more underserved because they're not being given the opportunity to have full-day kindergarten because of the utilization rates, because the schools aren't big enough, or because there are more community needs.

Back to my original question, how will those utilization rates be impacted once the full-day kindergarten opens up and is there a plan to ensure that those underserved communities thus far don't get further down the list because the communities that have the space are getting those kindergarten spaces? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question and for pointing that out. We will be very mindful of the issues brought forward by the member in terms of expansion and utilization.

At this point, we are working to ensure that our full-day kindergarten classrooms will be accommodated in the schools that have a low utilization so that the

school can expand, as the cost right now will be lower for our schools to either gain additional classroom space or grow in terms of using the space to build an adequate bathroom for the students that's required or any needs that are required for renovating the school.

In terms of the utilization and expanding to all of our schools, if they do have a high utilization, it would trigger, probably, an expansion of a school or a new school. We have indicated, some of our communities will need new schools. The situations will all be different for each community. This is just in the pilot phase of the project, but we do want it to be met in the House that it is hopeful that we will get out of the pilot phase in the future and expand the services for full-day kindergarten to all of our communities and that we will have the program in every school.

We look forward to working on this project and the eight schools that are identified for potential full-day kindergarten space right now meet the need for us to expand immediately. That's what we're going forward with is that we do have the capability in those eight schools should this project go forward and we have them identified for areas that require low renovation needs to the school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to talk about infant mortality rates right now just because when the minister earlier stated that the birthrates are taken into account when deciding where new schools need to be built or where schools need to be expanded. Nunavut is an outlier in infant

mortality in Canada and actually in the world, and in 2016, which were around the newest stats that I could find, 18 out of 1,000 live births ended in infant mortality.

I know that it can be a little bit disheartening to discuss mortality rates when we're looking at growth. I think it's really important to take that into account and I wonder whether or not there is that level of statistical information by community in order to aid these decisions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. In terms of infant mortality rate, it isn't a statistic that our department currently has or uses at this point in time. We have just begun working with the Department of Health over the past year to work on statistics such as birthrates. In terms of infant mortality rate, we never want to hear about people passing, especially our youngest populations. Anyone passing is always hard to hear, but for infant mortality, that type of impact to our communities is always hard. We can note that comment and question and see what we can do with our further discussions with the Department of Health and with our communities as we do talk about the preplanning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wholeheartedly agree that nobody ever wants to talk about things like that. However, it is information that

can inform decision-making and I think it's important.

The other question I had about the full-day kindergarten decision is whether or not they really talk about the portables that are being budgeted for, whether or not any surplus of those portables once they are no longer being used for a school, whether or not there has been any discussion about surplus of them to Head Start programs and whether or not the Head Start programs at the community level are able to access Education's buildings. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. I note that as a very positive question because I have too asked about that specific question in terms of our earlier years of learning and to see if, once these portables are going to be surplus, if they can go to those foundational years. I would note that there is the Government of Nunavut surplus policy and the policy states that they will be asked for the government departments first if they can be utilized and, if not, then to the hamlet. Depending on the community, if they do go to the hamlet and the hamlet does run a Head Start, for example, or a daycare, then they can be used if the hamlet council decides to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The last name I have on my list is not in the room at the moment. We're at Corporate Services. Department of Education. Page G-3. \$30,900,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go back to page G-2. Total Department. Detail of Expenditures. \$30,900,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree that we have concluded with the Department of Education?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, you and your officials can leave. I'll ask members to remain in their seats. We will proceed immediately with the Department of Health in about one or two minutes. Thank you.

I knew I was skipping something. Minister, if you have some brief closing comments.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all the members for the opportunity for the Department of Education to appear before you. We all know how valuable education is and thank you all for working to secure next year's operating budget for the Department of Education.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank all those working within the Department of Education. I thank them for all of their hard work and service to our communities and for working with our students, and that's what we're here for, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Now you and your officials can leave the

witness table and, like I said, we will just take a one- or two-minute break and get ready for the Department of Health. Please remain in your seats. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 17:19 and resumed at 17:21

Bill 31 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2024-2025 – Health – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. I would like to ask Minister Main: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee with you? Minister Main.

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

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to allow the witnesses to appear before the committee with the minister?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you. Just for the record, if you can introduce your officials and dive right into your opening comments, minister.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Committee members, good evening. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to take this opportunity today to present the 2024-25 Capital Estimates for the Department of Health.

I would like to introduce my officials from the department, firstly, Deputy

Minister Megan Hunt to my right and to my left is Greg Babstock, Executive Director of Corporate Services.

(interpretation ends) The 2024-25 Capital Estimates for the Department of Health will demonstrate significant advancement on multiple large capital projects, exciting initiatives that will have significant impacts on the lives of the most vulnerable Nunavummiut. Fiscal year '24-25 will further see the long-awaited renewal of the departmental plans for community health centre replacement, as well as increased investments in ongoing lifecycle resources to address the increasing maintenance needs of aging health facilities across the territory.

For fiscal year '24-25, Health is requesting an additional \$21,720,000 for seven identified capital projects.

Iksivautaaq amma katimajit, Health continues to make progress towards addressing the long-term care needs of Nunavummiut. It has been a key ongoing priority of the department to build long-term care bed capacity in Nunavut to support all levels of care for the elder population.

As part of the first phase of expanding long-term care in Nunavut, the Rankin Inlet Long-Term Care Facility is currently in the final stages of construction. Substantial completion is now expected in January 2024. Subsequently, following that milestone, the occupancy of the first cohort of Nunavut elders in their new home is expected to take place in spring of 2024. This new facility will allow the provision of high-quality and culturally appropriate services for all levels of care

for Nunavummiut elders within the territory and closer to home.

In examining options to achieve our stated goals creatively, efficiently, and sustainably for long-term care, work continues on the planning of territorial long-term care facilities for both the Qikiqtaaluk and Kitikmeot regions. To best facilitate the continuing advancement of these two significant projects, Health is requesting the appropriations in the current year via separate capital supplementary appropriations to commence both the required planning activities and detailed design phase for each building. We are further proposing capital estimates appropriations in '24-25 and beyond to complete detailed design phase of capital development project. Enabling development of class "B" detailed design estimates will permit Health's return to the Legislative Assembly with accurate and reliable information on forecasted construction expense for the consideration of members.

Health, along with other Government of Nunavut partnering departments, remains fully committed to the development of long-term care facilities that keep elders closer to their home communities and within the territory. The department has further taken steps to prioritize the renovation and expansion of the existing long-term care facilities in Arviat, Igloolik, and Gjoa Haven for consideration as planning projects. Health will continue to advocate for the ongoing renewal and enhancement of existing long-term care capacity within communities.

This past August, a "tundra turning" ceremony was held in Iqaluit to mark the

commencement of the construction phase for Aqqusariaq, formerly known as the Nunavut Recovery Centre. This facility will offer in-territory addictions and trauma treatment based on Inuit language and culture. The project is a trilateral partnership of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Indigenous Services Canada, and the Government of Nunavut Department of Health.

Aqqusariaq was the name chosen by the Cultural and Lived Experience Advisory Committee, the Aqqusariaq Development Team, as well as elders and other experts from across the territory. The name describes a trail or pathway used to reach a destination and is highly symbolic of a recovery journey. The continuing tripartite investments and commitments being made to the development of Aqqusariaq represents the strengthening of in-territory mental wellness and substance abuse resources, part of an Inuit-designed, delivered and administrated addictions and trauma treatment system.

The replacement of aging community health centre facilities continues to be a critical priority for the Department of Health. With the planning phase completed several years ago, the replacement of the Qikiqtarjuaq Community Health Centre has been the leading priority put forward by the department.

While the design and construction phase of the Qikiqtarjuaq facility replacement was approved to commence in 2025-26 as part of last year's capital estimates process, the Department of Community and Government Services is recommending that this appropriation be advanced by one year to support the

commencement of the detailed design process in fiscal year '24-25. This will permit the start of construction in the summer of 2026 and substantial completion in the winter of 2028. Health supports this accelerated approach to meeting health infrastructure needs in Qikiqtarjuaq.

Baker Lake is next community health centre that Health has identified for replacement and is proposed as a planning project for the coming fiscal year.

In fiscal year '24-25, the department is requesting \$5.00 million, an increase of \$1.50 million, to the annual appropriation for ongoing lifecycle capital projects and maintenance of Health's fixed assets. This yearly allocation is dedicated to minor renovations, repairs, modifications, and upgrades of departmental facilities territory-wide and is essential to ensure effective lifecycle management of Health's assets. The additional resources being requested will be used on a priority basis to help address the mounting deferred capital liabilities that have grown year over year as health facilities age and require betterments to building systems and structural components.

The department is also requesting its annual budget allocation of \$1.5 million for small capital procurements. The small capital appropriation is for the procurement and replacement of the department's medical equipment, vehicles, furniture, and other essential apparatus used within communities and health facilities across the territory.

In closing, *Iksivautaaq*, the department is focused on strengthening health infrastructure in Nunavut on multiple fronts. We are working towards being able to provide long-term elder care across all levels of need in territory. Also, the need for in-territory addictions and trauma treatment infrastructure is being addressed in a meaningful, Inuit-focused and collaborative manner. We're also moving forward on new health centres, which are essential to providing health care for Nunavummiut. I am also pleased to be proposing increased capacity to maintain our aging health care facilities.

(interpretation) I thank you all for your support on these important projects, and I welcome questions and comments from members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Main. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do. I am happy to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of the proposed 2024-25 Capital Estimates of the Department of Health.

Mr. Chairman, when the minister appeared before the standing committee to present his draft capital budget for 2024-25, it included funding for the long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet, the Nunavut Recovery Centre in Iqaluit, Aqquariaq, and a new project for the replacement of the Qikiqtarjuaq Community Health Centre. The 2024-25 budget also includes funding for ongoing lifecycle repairs and small capital

purchases to address ongoing maintenance, upgrades, and emergency repair needs.

The Department of Health's proposed budget for 2024-25 now includes two additional projects for long-term care facilities in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Chairman, elder care continues to be an important issue for members, many of whom have been calling for infrastructure investments to be made in establishing community-based residential elder care homes. It cannot be stressed enough that many elders and their families would appreciate greater levels of support that would enable them to age in place in their home communities and be near their loved ones for as long as possible.

While the standing committee supports the funding request for the final stages of work on the long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet, it has been noted that there is still much uncertainty over which entity will be operating the facility when it opens in 2024. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that some elders may still be placed outside of the territory depending on the availability of beds or the level and type of care they require. Committee members support the Department of Health in its efforts to make families aware of how decisions are made with respect to where elders are placed so that they can receive the level of care they need.

Mr. Chairman, members are still waiting for the government to bring forward its comprehensive Elders Strategy and table it in this House. The training and certification of Nunavut-based caregivers will be a key component to

ensuring that elders can receive care and support in a culturally relevant manner in Nunavut-based care facilities.

Members continue to urge the government in its efforts to recruit, train, and certify Nunavummiut to work as health care staff in such facilities.

Mr. Chairman, the 2024-25 funding request for the Nunavut Recovery Centre includes close to \$6 million for the next phase of work. While the federal government has committed over \$42 million towards the total cost of the facility, members were given to understand that Health has submitted a proposal for additional federal funding towards the project and look forward to updates in this area. During the minister's November 2022 appearance in Committee of the Whole to address his department's 2023-24 budget, he indicated that the \$5 million in funding committed by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated towards this project had been redirected back to that entity for internal use. Members continue to look forward to information on how that decision has impacted the government's budgeting process for this project.

The issue of housing for staff of the Nunavut Recovery Centre has also been raised as a concern and members look forward to any updates on the department's discussions with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to ensure that the lack of housing is not a barrier to recruiting and hiring staff for the facility.

Members also look forward to further information on what service delivery model will be implemented at the facility once it is open. In particular, members had a number of questions on what service options will be available to help

manage symptoms of withdrawal for clients with heavy addictions.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of aging community health centres across Nunavut that require replacement or extensive renovations. The committee was happy to note that the 2024-25 includes funding for the initial phase of the replacement health centre project for the community of Qikiqtarjuaq. However, no other health centre projects are included in the government's five-year capital plan.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Health's proposed capital estimates include two blocks of funding for ongoing lifecycle and small capital projects. Members appreciated receiving details on expenditures that have been identified under these line items to date.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2024-25 Capital Estimates of the Department of Health. I am confident that individual members will have a number of comments and questions as we proceed.

Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. There is a motion to report progress on the floor and it's not subject to debate. All those in favour. Thank you. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Minister and your officials, we will see you tomorrow.

Speaker: Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 31 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

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

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

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

Orders of the Day for October 31:

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 31
- Bill 32
- Bill 33
- Tabled Document 1 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 120 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 163 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 174 – 6(2)

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 31, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House adjourned at 17:42*

Appendix – October 30, 2023

	Construction Cost per Square Foot (PSF)	Construction Cost per Unit
-		
RFP/Tender Awarded for 2020/21 new construction	\$595	\$673,000
RFP/Tender Awarded for 2021/22 new construction	\$817	\$923,000
% increase from prior year		(+37%)
RFP/Tender Recieved for 2022/23 new construction (see Note1)	\$962	\$1,034,000
% increase from prior year		(+16%)
RFP/Tender Recieved for 2023/24 new construction (See Note1)	\$1,396	\$1,414,600
% increase from prior year		(+41%)
NCCD Contract 150 units (2023/24)	\$602	\$675,500
% change from 2022/23		(-35%)
% change from 2023/24 RFP values		(-52%)

Note 1 - RFP/Tender values from 2022/23 and 2023/24 were based upon the lowest cost bid amounts - please note that NHC did not award any of those RFPs/tenders in 2022/23 or 2023/24

Note 2 - NHC does not track or measure cost per bedroom as the builds vary each year between community depending on the need for 1/2/3/4 bedroom units. We also note that cost per bedroom is not a strong benchmark as we know that when building a one bedroom versus a three bedroom that the cost per bedroom will obviously be significantly higher for a one bedroom. However, we also recognize that the need for one bedrooms is high as is the need for 2 bedrooms.