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Tuesday, March 8, 2022

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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

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Minister responsible for Labour*

Hon. P.J. Akeegok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

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

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

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

George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

Hon. David Joanasie
(South Baffin)

*Minister of Community and Government
Services*

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
*Government House Leader; Minister
of Economic Development and
Transportation; Minister of Energy;
Minister responsible for the Nunavut
Housing Corporation*

Hon. Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)
*Minister of Finance, Chair of the
Financial Management Board;
Minister of Human Resources;
Minister responsible for the Workers'
Safety and Compensation
Commission*

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
*Minister of Health; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention*

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)
*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
Whole*

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

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

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Hon. Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)
*Minister of Culture and Heritage;
Minister of Languages; Minister
responsible for the Qulliq Energy
Corporation; Minister responsible for
Seniors*

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
Inlet)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 8, 2022**

Members Present:

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

>>House commenced at 13:31

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak): Can I ask Mr. Simailak to say the opening prayer.

>>Prayer

Speaker: Thank you. I would like to welcome all the viewers and people listening to the radio. Welcome to the sitting.

Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of the Status of Women, Ms. Nakashuk.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 009 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

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

Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Good day and good afternoon, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, March 8 marks International Women's Day. This annual event is an opportunity to honour the cultural, social, political and economic achievements of women in Nunavut and around the world.

As Minister responsible for Status of Women, I would like to thank the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council for championing this important work and providing a platform to highlight the diversity of women's achievements across the territory.

(interpretation ends) Qullit's theme for March 2022 International Women's Day is Ikajuqatigiiniq, Helping One Another. This recognizes the importance of community and the individual community members who foster care, love, and resources in a time of need.

The diversity of women's leadership, including our leadership styles and inspiring achievements, continues to positively impact and strengthen the voice of women and girls in Nunavut, and creates further opportunities to build the foundation for greater action on gender equality and social change.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services partnered with Qullit, YWCA Agvik Nunavut, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, and the Law Society of Nunavut to distribute purple sealskin patches, postcards, and posters across Nunavut to bring awareness to International Women's Day.

(interpretation ends) Nunavummiut are invited to celebrate International Women's Day by participating in community walks and gatherings to share knowledge and expertise, and to inspire each other to continue this important and shared responsibility. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Just before we go on, I want to remind the members that you do need to turn on your own microphones in order to speak and turn it off when you have finished speaking. It appears that the red light does not come on as expected. We're just having a little bit of a technical difficulty that we have to deal with today.

Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Minister's Statement 010 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Good day. Can you hear me?

Thank you. I rise today to celebrate International Women's Day. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, while this day commemorates the social, political and economic achievements of women across the globe, it also highlights the ongoing work towards gender equality; to the need to break the gender biases in our society, and to the fight to stop violence and abuse towards women and girls.

On this day, I would like to recognize the strong, resilient, successful women in Nunavut who have made and continue to make huge strides.

I want to begin with our Commissioner, Eva Ariak. Ms. Ariak has had a distinguished career in politics serving as a trailblazer for not only Inuit women but for all Canadian women. She was elected as Nunavut's second Premier in 2008, helping to shape our territory in its early days. Ms. Ariak was the fifth woman in Canada to take on this challenging role. She's an inspirational leader.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also acknowledge Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, the third Commissioner of Nunavut, who served our territory from 2005 to 2010. Throughout her career, Ms. Hanson has been a civil servant, broadcaster, journalist, and author. Above all, she has been a lifelong champion of Inuktitut. In 2003 she was awarded the Order of Canada for her efforts towards the preservation of Inuit heritage.

I want to also acknowledge the first female Member of Parliament for Nunavut and the Eastern Arctic, Nancy Karetak-Lindell. Ms. Karetak-Lindell was elected to this distinguished position in 1997 and re-elected in 2000, 2004, and 2006. She has had a long distinguished political career, holding various leadership positions, including president of the ICC. Her many accomplishments include being a key player in the negotiations to establish Nunavut as a political jurisdiction in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other women I can name today: our Governor General, her Excellency Mary Simon, our current Member of Parliament Lori Idlout, as well as the President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Aluki Kotierk. I can also add all the women

who sit on our cabinet and as well as the Assembly here today.

Mr. Speaker, our territory is no stranger to the multigenerational and intergenerational trauma affecting all Nunavummiut, particularly women and girls. We must do better. We must speak up against gender-based discrimination and violence, and together create a place where women and girls can thrive.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements.
Minister for Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

**Minister's Statement 011 – 6(1):
International Women's Day –
Ilitaqsiniq Programming**

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recognition of International Women's Day, I would like to start my statement with some inspirational words from the International Women's Day website:

(interpretation ends) "Imagine a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality."

Mr. Speaker, these are important values to aspire to and live by.

(interpretation) In recognition of International Women's Day, I would like to highlight amazing women specific programs that provide opportunities for Inuit women in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, this past year Ilitaqsiniq ran the Qamusiurniq program for women in both Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet where women were taught how to build their own qamutiik. Ilitaqsiniq also ran a weeklong toolmaking program for women in Iqaluit where women had the opportunity to learn about and make various tools used for skinning and processing different skins and furs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is by practising Piliriatigiinniq in our communities that these types of programs are being delivered in Nunavut. I am proud that the Department of Culture and Heritage provided funding to Ilitaqsiniq to carry out these empowering programs for women.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues to join me to celebrate the women that participated in this program and to thank Ilitaqsiniq for their amazing work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements.
Minister for Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

**Minister's Statement 012 – 6(1):
International Women's Day –
March 8, 2022**

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand up today to recognize the women in our lives, in Nunavut and in the Government of Nunavut on this International Women's Day. We have so many strong women who show us perseverance and strength every day, especially our elders.

International Women's Day is dedicated to recognizing the social, economic and political achievements of women. It is a call to action to support women's rights and advance gender equality.

Mr. Speaker, women make up about 65 percent of the Government of Nunavut's workforce. They are our doctors, nurses, teachers, and other professionals. They are women who are capable, knowledgeable, and supportive of us all.

Women are the glue that binds Nunavut together and we owe them our gratitude by showing our respect every day.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut supports women in our workforce to advance their careers through various programs and courses, including the following:

- Women's Leadership Training Course
- Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program
- Hivuliqtikhanut Leadership Development Program
- Amaaqtaarniq Education Program
- Career Broadening Program, and
- Policy Skills Development Program

I would like to commend all women for their commitment to making Nunavut a better place.

By advancing career and skills of women in the Government of Nunavut and across the territory, we advance the territory.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, please join me in recognizing the daily positive impact Nunavut women make and the important role they play in the

government and the territory.
(interpretation) Thank you.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 013 – 6(1): Women in Health Care

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that today is International Women's Day. Today is a day to imagine a gender equal world, a world free of bias, (interpretation ends) stereotypes, (interpretation) and discrimination, a day to celebrate, reflect and acknowledge the contributions, persistence, and strength of women.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the 2022 International Women's Day campaign theme is "Break the Bias" and the Department of Health is committed to equality and recognizes the tremendous talent, skill, and history women bring to the health care workforce.

Uqaqtitsijii, women make up 78 percent of the workforce within the Department of Health. Additionally, 80 percent of our senior managers are women. I would like to celebrate our high number of women in the workforce and the number of senior leaders we have working diligently every day to guide and enhance the quality of care we offer.

Uqaqtitsijii, I think all members can recognize that we must all take the time to understand the issues of inequality, to discuss them and to move forward together. I believe we can all work harder to ensure fairness in our departments and our communities.

Uqaqtitsijii, we are working hard to make real and lasting change for women in the Department of Health. I ask that my fellow members join me in acknowledging the many contributions and inspiration of women that work in the health care profession across Nunavut.

Together we can forge women's equality and collectively we can all "Break the Bias." (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements.
Minister for Nunavut Arctic College,
Ms. Gross.

**Minister's Statement 014 – 6(1):
Recognition of Sue Ball**

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to recognize the outgoing Chair of the Nunavut Arctic College Board of Governors, Sue Ball of Arviat. Ms. Ball joined the board in 2016, was selected as the chair in November 2017, and completed her second term on the college's board of governors this past February.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Ms. Ball's commitment to the college with her consistent and enthusiastic leadership. Ms. Ball encouraged the students she met and

expressed her appreciation to the Nunavut Arctic College staff. During her tenure she also advocated for a strong, inclusive college and continuously recognized the strength of our communities. Notably, she led the college's strategic plan after consultations across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, the board is made up of strong, diverse and passionate voices that are committed to making positive improvements for Nunavummiut. Ms. Ball, on behalf of the Nunavut Arctic College Board of Governors, the staff, and the students, *quana* for your leadership.

In closing, I would like to recognize the newly appointed Chair of the Nunavut Arctic Colleges Board of Governors, Helen Klengenberg of Kugluktuk. I wish you much success in your role. Mr. Speaker on International Women's Day, it is an honour to recognize both of these amazing women and their leadership. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements.
Minister for Family Services, Ms.
Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 015 – 6(1):
Arnat Qimaavik Opening**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share exceptional news about an event in which I was honoured to be included, the recent opening of Arnat Qimaavik Women's Shelter in Cambridge Bay last year. Iqaluktuuttiaq elder Eva Kakolak joined

a ribbon-cutting ceremony by lighting the qulliq.

(interpretation ends) Arnat Qimaavik is a recently renovated 12-bed secure facility in Cambridge Bay. It also provides four beds for women and children experiencing homelessness and one transitional unit for a family.

The Kitikmeot Friendship Society, which runs the shelter, will offer services to residents in Cambridge Bay and other communities in the Kitikmeot region. The shelter will provide 24-hour emergency-based, culturally relevant crisis support and community-based advocacy to address the complex needs for women and children whose lives were impacted by family violence or homelessness.

Family Services has spent over \$400,000 on the shelter this year and plans to spend more than \$800,000 this coming fiscal year.

The wraparound approach will be offered, working with community stakeholders, including Family Services, RCMP, and mental health to ensure women have access to all the supports available to them and are aware of their rights as survivors of violence. The program will enable women and children to become self-reliant, to support themselves, their families and contribute to their community so that they can live their lives with dignity, free from the threat of violence.

(interpretation) Nunavut now has five communities with shelters, including Cambridge Bay, Iqaluit, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, and Rankin Inlet, and with plans to open additional shelters in

Baker Lake, Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, and Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. I have no more names for ministers' statements. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 031 – 6(1): Michael and Calvin Irngaut of Igloolik

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, residents of Amittuq and Nunavummiut, as well as all women in Nunavut and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my pride in two of my constituents I represent. Last weekend two Igloolik residents, Michael Irngaut and his nephew, Calvin Irngaut, went fishing quite far away and had loads of fish on two *qamutiik* and were able to provide food for the community of Igloolik. I would like to acknowledge my pride in Michael Irngaut and his nephew Calvin Irngaut, who were able to successfully fish a distance of about 100 kilometres away, and they were able to feed the community of Igloolik.

Also, Mr. Speaker, while I was coming here from Sanirajak, there was a youth who caught his first polar bear in our community and everyone was really proud. This young man no longer has parents. His name is Peter Issigaitok, and I was really proud of him for having caught his first polar bear. I urge young people to try to strive for their best to

keep our culture strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I congratulate them.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Member's Statement 032 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so proud to be standing with so many amazing women here today. As we know, it is International Women's Day and we're coming on two years in June since the final report of the MMIWG inquiry, and I look forward to the government's plan of action to implement the over 200 calls for justice in helping Inuit women and all women in Nunavut to reach substantive equity and towards breaking the cycle of trauma. I think shelters are really important and programs are really important and what we need to do is break the cycle so that we don't need those shelters.

I'm really proud to say that Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada has named one of my constituents, Naomi Tatty, as the Inuk Woman of the Year. She was born and raised in Iqaluit and is a strong supporter of elders, not only in words but in practice, as she tirelessly supports elders, her family, and especially her father. Naomi's words really rung with me; she says, "Always give a helping hand and treat people with respect." That's what we want as women everywhere. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Uqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

**Member's Statement 033 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you. Good day, my constituents in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. I say "good day" to you all.

I also rise today firstly because I want to thank and recognize people since I have not yet expressed my gratitude to the residents of Iqaluit since I became an MLA. They have always been very welcoming and have provided us a safe place. Iqalumiut are very generous people and I really thank the people of Iqaluit.

>> *Applause*

I also wanted to say that today being International Women's Day, I would also like to acknowledge and mention here in the House two very good role models and to mention their names here. The following individuals have always been in my thoughts growing up and to this day. I am very proud of Lena Evic, Mary Simon, Eva Aariak, Aluki Kotierk, Lori Idlout, Joanna Awa, Rassie Nashalik, and many others. In particular, my fellow MLAs, the women members, I am proud of you.

Lastly, for hamlet council members, I would like to acknowledge the following hamlet council members whom I am very proud of in Qikiqtarjuaq: Geela Qiyuqtaq, Jukepa Aulaqiaq, Daisy Arnaquq, who is the deputy mayor, Jeannie Kooneeliusie, Jenny Mosesie, Maryann Qiyuqtaq, Leese Natsiapik.

My goodness; quite a number of women are incredibly capable. These are the council members in Qikiqtarjuaq. In Clyde River the names were not given to me earlier, but I'm also very proud of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

**Member's Statement 034 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On International Women's Day, as a very proud father of three beautiful girls, I would be remiss if I didn't stand and acknowledge the opportunities that women do have and need to further have across our territory and across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I often tell my girls and one of the biggest pieces of advice that I give them is when you're dating somebody or being with somebody, look at how they treat their mother. To me that's always a very good indication of how a strong, positive male role model should be. Treat your mother properly, treat your partners properly, and treat your family properly.

Mr. Speaker, one of the strongest women in my life, I have named many in this House over the years, Jenny Pinwatha Tootoo, my *anaanaatsiaq*. She raised a very large family with the majority of boys, so you can imagine how strong that tiny little woman was. I miss her every day. I have a picture of her in my office and I use that to help guide me in my work in this House, Mr. Speaker, and in life.

I just want to take this moment to offer the best wishes and to thank my wife for jointly raising three beautiful girls, and I look forward to all that they're going to accomplish in their lifetime. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Rankin Inlet-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Member's Statement 035 – 6(1): The
Need for Medical Boarding Home
Services**

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to encourage our government to establish medical boarding home services in the community of Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, Rankin Inlet is the hub of the Kivalliq region. A large number of medical clients travel to Rankin Inlet for doctor's appointments. Many of them would benefit from having a medical boarding home to stay in while they wait to return home.

In addition, the regional health centre often gets calls from medical travellers asking if they can stay there when there is a long delay in their flight home. Unfortunately they are refused due to the Department of Health's current policy regarding stays at the health centre.

Mr. Speaker, for some flights to Kivalliq communities, the stopover is longer than two hours. Occasionally the delays become an overnight stay. Many medical travellers do not feel comfortable staying at the airport for such a long period of

time. They would prefer to stay and wait at the health centre. Our elders in particular need a comfortable place to rest.

Mr. Speaker, at one time the Department of Health provided a hotel room to medical travellers with long layovers in Rankin Inlet. It is not clear whether this is still the case.

Mr. Speaker, as our population grows and more patients travel through the Kivalliq hub of Rankin Inlet on their way to receive medical care, the Department of Health must ensure that they have appropriate accommodations while they wait.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking questions on this issue. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 036 – 6(1):
Housing Needs in Netsilik**

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about the need for new housing in my constituency of Netsilik.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, all communities in Nunavut need housing and the communities of Kugaaruk and Taloyoak are no exception.

Mr. Speaker, homelessness and overcrowding are major issues in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, the need to maintain existing units and address such problems as mould infestation is also important.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Taloyoak were very disappointed to learn last year that the planned new units for the community had been delayed.

Mr. Speaker, too many communities in Nunavut wait for too many years for new housing.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that the Nunavut Housing Corporation does not have unlimited resources, and I understand and recognize that it needs to allocate new units as fairly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that the Nunavut Housing Corporation should take a look at the current point rating system that local housing organizations use to review applications in order to ensure that it is as fair as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I will have some questions for the minister on these issues at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 037 – 6(1):
Recognizing Liza Ningiuk**

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today being International Women's Day, I would like to recognize Liza Ningiuk of Grise Fiord. Living up in the High Arctic, she always tries to work hard for her community and for Nunavut. She is always working; she never stops. When there is sickness in the community or there are mental health issues, she always goes to help. She volunteers

during Christmas games. She never stops.

Today she is a board member of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. She has been a mayor and hamlet councillor, and there are too many of various boards she has been on to list. Liza is a very strong woman and she works very hard all the time.

Mr. Speaker, when we go through hardship, we ask for Liza's help and she provides help without worrying about getting payment for anything. With that being the case, at this time I would like to help her and I want people to help her. Her relatives are going through hard times right now. Though that is the case, she continues to try to help others.

If we all know Liza, currently she is taking care of her husband and both her brother and her younger sister are in the hospital, and I hope that she is getting the help she needs from the nurses. Today, please remember her in your prayers with the Ningiuk and Pijamini families and include them in your prayers while they're going through hardship, especially Liza, because she never stops helping others. I wholeheartedly say "thank you" to Liza and I want you to join me in showing our appreciation to her for her work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 038 – 6(1): International Women's Day

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. On International Women's Day, it's an honour to share and acknowledge news that Cambridge Bay has recently reopened two shelters, the Arnat Qimaavik Women's Shelter along with the reopening of the youth shelter.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to give credit to the Department of Family Services, and I would like to thank our colleague, Minister Nakashuk, for providing operational funding for these facilities and all of the effort put in to opening these spaces.

I would also like to acknowledge the staff and organizations that run these shelters to ensure that service and space is available for our community members.

Mr. Speaker, today we recognize women's achievements while also acknowledging challenges that women and girls face. During times of vulnerability, our women and girls deserve to have space to overcome challenges and thrive to become who they want to be without constraints.

Mr. Speaker, today I acknowledge all of our fearless women, girls, non-binary, LGBTQ+, who are trailblazers, change-makers, and who strive to embrace their authentic self.

I particularly would like to acknowledge our elders for sharing our language and culture. I would also like to recognize our seamstresses, carvers, hunters, throat singers, drum dancers, and knowledge-holders who are sharing and passing on our culture and language.

On International Women's Day, I send my best wishes to women, girls, non-binary, and LGBTQ+ in Iqaluktuuttiaq and across our territory. My message to all of you is: keep smiling, shining, thriving, and know that you make life worth living. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

**Member's Statement 039 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise on International Women's Day and I would like to recognize the women who have helped me a lot and helped me stand up. I would like to start with my mother, Anne, my mother-in-law Towaga, and my wife, Parn, and our daughter Jasmine, and my grandmothers. Even though they have passed on, I would like to thank them too; they're always in our thoughts.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, on this special day, I would like to congratulate a dear friend and a constituent, Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, on winning the prestigious 2021 Sobey Art Award.

>> *Applause*

Ms. Williamson Bathory is a world-renowned performance artist, a poet, an actor, a storyteller, and a writer. She is

known to many here for her performances with Uaajeerreq, a Greenlandic mask dance that involves storytelling. The performance is typically centred around three elements: fear, humour, and sexuality.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Williamson Bathory is a true role model, especially to many young women in the arts. Please help me celebrate this incredible achievement. I know her work and accolades continue to be a beacon of hope for the next generation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Apologies to Mr. Akeeagok, and I say "hello" to Pauloosie Keyootak.

>> *Laughter*

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

**Member's Statement 040 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On International Women's Day, I would like to make a statement. My mother grew up on the land and she lived on the land as a child. When they moved to Baker Lake as adults, she helped the nurses. She even accompanied the nurses by small airplane to visit the people living on the land.

My mother lived in Churchill, working at the hospital as an interpreter and she was an (interpretation ends) ambulance driver (interpretation) there. When she finally moved to Baker Lake, she was a teacher for many years and within Baker Lake, she was on the hamlet council, for

example, and she would work in the church for many years.

My mother is a mother, grandmother and last month she had a great-grandchild. My niece had a daughter. Many people are proud of my mother. I love you, mom, and have a good day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Kusugak.

**Member's Statement 041 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to rise today to recognize the women of Rankin Inlet. They are very strong. Rankin Inlet is directly connected to the abilities of the women. They are not just sitting there and I'm proud of all of them. I also had a mother; we all used to have mothers. I am proud of all the mothers, daughters, and granddaughters. I also have a granddaughter. Let's be proud of the women in Nunavut. Women are trailblazers in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) It wasn't that long ago when boys would be playing hockey and they would be told, "You play hockey like a girl." Well, that would be a huge compliment today because our Canadian women's hockey team won gold, unlike the men.

>> *Applause*

I am proud of every one of them, but I would like to take this opportunity to take a special shout-out to one of many

incredible women we have in Nunavut and in Rankin Inlet likewise. We have super teachers, nurses, doctors, plumbers, and carpenters; name it, we have it in Rankin Inlet and they're all incredible, but I would like to take a special shout-out to Victoria Kakuktinniq, an incredible seamstress and her work is spreading very quickly throughout the world. Congratulations to you and many other successful women like you across Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements.
Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

**Member's Statement 042 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Can you hear me now? Is that good? Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) What an act to follow.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, on International Women's Day, I would also like to recognize, just as my colleagues here have been recognizing, all the women in their lives; their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, step-sisters, sisters-in-law, daughters, and granddaughters.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) I would also like to recognize the women in South Baffin, those who are here with us today and those who have left us. They have kept our communities healthy and progressing through their immense compassion, love, and by putting in extra work to ensure that they raise their

children properly, while also taking care of their husbands.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and say “thank you” to the people who have touched me in my life and to the people who work with me here in the Assembly, both elected and non-elected officials. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize and thank the employees in both of my constituency offices and I send my greetings and wish them a great day.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I would like to recognize my wife. I would not have been here standing in front of you if it was not for my wife. Mr. Speaker, her name is Arnainnuk and today is the day to recognize her and every woman, who are all beautiful. I would like to wish a happy International Women’s Day to women in Nunavut and around the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members’ Statements.
Member for Arviat [North]-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

**Member’s Statement 043 – 6(1):
International Women’s Day**

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As one that is very close to my heart, I also want to recognize my mother. (interpretation ends) Mom, I love you. (interpretation) I love you, Martha Main. I believe that everyone knows my mother.

Also, to my wife, Amanda, who is my pillar of strength, I love you.

There is also my daughter who is not even one yet. Before she was born, I became a Member of the Legislative Assembly and experienced my own personal growth. We were blessed with a daughter last year in April, and for the information of the members here, she started walking last Saturday.

Our daughter is ten and half months old and she has already started walking. We will see where she goes as she travels in her future walks of life. I don’t know where she will end up, but I do know that I love her very much and I am very proud of my daughter; she matured me a lot, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members’ Statements.
Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

**Member’s Statement 044 – 6(1):
International Women’s Day**

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleagues, I would also like to express my gratitude on International Women’s Day. There are many talented, hard-working women in Pond Inlet. Those that are elders continue to work hard, continuously teaching skills to our children. They also hold child-rearing and sewing classes in the evenings.

I would also like to recognize the hamlet councillors. Joanna Innualuk-Kunnuk is the deputy mayor and the other women on the council are Nina Kautuq, Sharon Ootook, and others.

Mr. Speaker, a large percentage of women go to the adult learning centre and when they graduate, they usually

find work. I am so proud of these women who have given themselves the independence and the capability to join the workforce.

I would also like to thank my mother-in-law, Joanna Nutarak. She is always there to give me advice on any subject.

Of course there is my mom, Apphea Killiktee, who I am incredibly proud of. She started working at the health centre when she was 14 years old because her parents refused to send her out of town to further her education. Instead, she joined the workforce and has occupied many roles. I am so grateful to her because she has taught all of her children the importance of helping other people and giving solid advice.

I have three daughters and I would like to recognize them as well. Their names are: Sula Nutarak, Crystal Nutarak, and Katherine Nutarak. I am very proud of my children. They are now adults and have become very capable women who contribute to their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 045 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to be left out on International Women's Day.

>> *Laughter*

I was raised by my grandmother and I am forever grateful for her.

There is also my biological mother, Leetia Qaunaq, who I am very proud of. Since she did not have a husband, she used to hunt on her own. She was a bylaw officer, a heavy equipment operator, and she was a very talented seamstress. I thank her today for helping me.

Additionally, there are some other women that I would like to recognize that are in the film industry: Susan Avingaq, Madeline Ivalu, and Carol Kunnuk. They are all very talented independent filmmakers, which I am very proud of.

I am also very proud of single mothers who are raising their children alone.

I would also like to recognize my daughters in particular, Lynn Irene and Valerie, who are my big helpers. I am very grateful for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

>> *No audio*

**Member's Statement 046 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize all women, especially my wife and my daughter, who are the ones that are always encouraging and helping me to do what I want to do, as well as helping me recognize how I can best make a contribution to my community.

I would also like to recognize (interpretation ends) my mother and my mother-in-law, (interpretation) and we extend our condolences to all of the widowed women. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 047 – 6(1):
International Women's Day**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to make a few comments and recognize many different women.

There are a large number of women all across Nunavut who are members on a board of directors, and many of them have to balance their jobs with many other duties, such as taking care of their children, providing food for family members, or being home caregivers, all which are jobs on their own. You have to be strong to be able to take on that level of responsibility.

On International Women's Day, I would like to recognize the women of Pangnirtung who contribute to the preservation of their Inuktitut language, who are teaching traditional sewing, who are hamlet council members, hunters and trappers organization members, and those who work in the various departments and organizations.

I would like to recognize my late mother and my grandmother, Annie Okalik, Qattuuq, who was my great-grandmother and her mother, Ashevak, who were said to be strong women and pillars of their community. I'm sure it runs in my blood as well.

My daughter, Natasha, I wish her a great day today. I'm so proud of her, my only daughter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker's Statement

Speaker: I do have a statement for myself.

(interpretation) I am grateful to all the women across Nunavut for the tremendous support that they provide and for keeping their families together.

I would also like to thank my wife, Annie Akoak, for taking proper care of our children and grandchildren. I am very grateful to her and I love you.

Also, Helen Tungilik, (interpretation ends) my sister, (interpretation) I am very grateful to her as well for taking good care of her daughter-in-law. Women are talented seamstresses. My sister made what I am wearing today. I very much thank you all. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation ends) We will go on to the next item. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**Return to Oral Question 005 – 6(1):
Appointment of Deputy Ministers****Return to Oral Question 006 – 6(1):
Appointment of Deputy Ministers**

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): I guess I'm finally an Akeeagok now.

>> *Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. Yesterday there were questions asked by the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk and the MLA for Arviat South, No. 5 – 6(1) and 6 – 6(1), and the questions were about the appointment of deputy ministers.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to supplement my response to the oral questions from MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluk as well as the MLA for Arviat South.

It is now my understanding that the members were referring to a situation that had occurred over five days in December 2021. Due to privacy issues, we cannot discuss the specific individuals involved.

The process for assigning an acting assignment while a deputy minister is on leave usually begins with the deputy minister. The deputy will usually recommend a qualified person to act in their place and in some cases this acting position is considered and signed off by the relevant minister, and in some cases this is a matter that is handled by the department, but the minister is always made aware of the acting assignment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that the Premier does not usually sign off on acting deputy minister positions unless it involves their portfolio. This practice has been in place in previous governments.

In reviewing the situation in question, I would like to share with the members that the acting position took place from December 16 to 20, 2021, a Thursday to a Monday. I would like to confirm that I did not endorse the acting assignment in question. When I learned of the potential appearance of conflict of interest, I took steps to ensure that the acting assignment was retracted and another staff member assumed day-to-day responsibilities on Tuesday, December 21, 2021.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my colleagues that I will be bringing this matter forward to the Integrity Commissioner for their review and will seek advice on further action.

In addition, we will take immediate steps to eliminate any gaps in the policies around the deputy minister acting assignments that may have been in place. We have had this ambiguity for many years and I am very thankful for the work of my colleagues for bringing this to the Legislative Assembly's attention.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the work that this government has undertaken to date and of this House's intention to provide positive, transformative changes to Nunavummiut. We will conduct this work with openness and transparency, and I look forward to working with each of you to make a real difference in the

lives of our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I understand that we... We will go to the next item. No. 5. As we are closed to the public, there is no recognition of visitors in the gallery. Next item. Oral Questions. I'll just be going down the list this afternoon. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaerner.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 012 – 6(1): Isolation Protocols

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. Yesterday I was trying to ask questions to the Minister of Health requesting statistics. I will direct my question to the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. It's regarding my constituency, which is Sanirajak and part of Igloolik.

I asked the question: are there any statistics available about my constituents? I asked for numbers and so I'm asking the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs: do you have any figures as to how many people are on the waiting list? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services...oh, sorry. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for asking that important question. Before I respond, I would like to thank all of our workers, all the doctors, nurses, and communications staff. We did not expect COVID-19, but

our workers have done an excellent job in responding to it, so I thank them.

All those people who are asked to stay home for a while and isolate, the rules are made by Dr. Patterson and we have introduced all sorts of things, especially with the mutation of COVID-19. We didn't expect that, but as of today for the people in Igloolik, we have helped 127 households and the total number of Inuit we have helped is 847, and in Sanirajak we have helped 40 households with approximately 220 people living in them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for providing that information that I requested the other day. My reasoning was that many of my constituents send emails and they don't get a response and when they try to call, they never get a call back or get answers.

During the Fifth Assembly, I used to raise questions like if you can make sure that people are available to answer the phones in government offices. That still continues to be a problem.

With COVID-19, how else can the Department of Community and Government Services set up other things to deal with having no one available to answer the phone and making people wait? When can all of this be corrected and made better? Will you be able to correct this during the life of this Assembly? Will you be able to make any improvements so that when Nunavummiut try to call the government

offices, they will get an answer right away? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank my colleague. We didn't expect COVID-19 would have this much of an effect, especially with the omicron variant coming into Nunavut. We have never seen any real statistics, but we're still going through COVID-19. We're very grateful for assistance with food that people have been receiving.

We know that things need to be improved in the area of services, for example, the phone number. Many people were using that phone number and we added more lines to it for those people who have questions about travel, getting food, and making sure they don't have COVID-19. We have made some changes and updated some procedures.

I would like to recognize the organizations that have helped in the matter and we have been able to partner with them to keep the communities safe, and I can say that we're always looking at COVID-19 and also following the developments and spread to other communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister just made a commitment that the phones will be answered now.

What about people in isolation such as when the whole family has to isolate and

nobody is allowed to visit? We had to help a family to go shopping for them because they weren't allowed to go outside. We had to do this on an emergency basis. It was because of the (interpretation ends) public health order (interpretation) from March 17 and I had to help a family like that. That's why I wanted to see statistics.

There are probably still many people waiting for help in Nunavut who are in isolation. Can the minister make a commitment to make changes that will happen sooner so that people will not have to wait so long? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again to my colleague for asking that question. We're always looking at the calls that are being made and we're checking to see if they are increasing. I'm grateful to the MLA for helping his constituents and going to buy food. We listen to the people who call and they were saying that they had to wait too long, so we made some changes so that their family can go and shop for them. We're making changes like that as needed, following the types of phone calls that we have been getting, but I will check to make sure that things are not being delayed so long with that phone line. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 013 – 6(1): Housing Needs in Netsilik

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

As the minister is aware, both Taloyoak and Kugaaruk are in urgent need of new housing.

Mr. Speaker, during the Legislative Assembly's sitting of June 2, 2021, MLAs were informed that construction of the planned new units for Taloyoak would be postponed because the contractor was unable to secure insurance.

Can the minister update the House today on what actions have been taken to ensure that construction of these new units will go ahead during the upcoming 2022-23 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's unfortunate that the houses that were going to be constructed last year in his constituency were delayed, but for the summer, we don't have any more delays. We have been informed that they are going to go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 4, 2022 the federal Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

announced that a number of new affordable housing units are planned for a number of Nunavut communities, including Kugaaruk. The funding is being provided under the federal Rapid Housing Initiative. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the units in Kugaaruk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The houses that my colleague is referring to should be completed in November 2022, if construction can go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I noted in my member's statement, many communities in Nunavut wait for many years until they are allocated new units. I understand and recognize that the Nunavut Housing Corporation needs to allocate new units as fairly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, last year the Nunavut Housing Corporation commissioned an independent review of its construction methods and allocations. Can the minister clarify what changes, if any, the Nunavut Housing Corporation is considering making to its community allocation methodology? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I stated before and I have said it more than once, the way that housing has been managed and the way we feel it should be managed is under review right now. There are occasions where some communities wait a very long time for new allocations of housing, while other communities are always getting new housing.

Part of the situation is that some communities wait a very long time and meanwhile there are people waiting for housing. We're looking at all those and once we complete the review, I will check with my colleagues to see how we can move this forward. We have to keep reviewing it to see new allocations for Nunavut and how they are managed and how that management can be improved.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes it costs almost one million dollars to build (interpretation ends) one unit. (interpretation) That's too much now. Many of us have entered these houses that have tiny rooms and it costs million dollars to build. If it's a six-plex, it can be \$6 million for little one-bedroom units. (interpretation ends) One million dollars per unit of a six-plex, so if you do the math, it's \$6 million, maybe, for a six-plex, for a one-bedroom unit.

We really need to take a look at how we deal with housing and where we want to go with that because, at that rate, we will never make housing affordable. We are taking a look at that; one of many things we are looking at in the housing envelope, and I look forward to tackling that issue with my colleagues. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 014 – 6(1): The Need for Medical Boarding Home Services

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement earlier, I noted the lack of medical boarding home services in the community of Rankin Inlet.

Can the minister describe what steps his department currently takes to ensure that medical travellers who have layovers longer than two hours do not have to wait at the airport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I was waiting for the red light to come on.

(interpretation) I thank my colleague for asking that question. As the Department of Health, when medical clients need to travel outside of their communities, we work to ensure their safety, make their travel less tiresome, and recognize their specific health needs.

With respect to his question, when there are clients travelling through Rankin Inlet, yes... (interpretation ends) I'll switch to English, Mr. Speaker. The department does offer day rooms for travellers with stays longer than two hours. However, during the

extraordinary times that we have been going through over the past few months during the omicron wave, the department has had some issues with that day room service.

It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that those issues may have been related to the hotel operator in terms of that operator wanting to follow public health guidance. I can't offer too much in terms of additional detail as to what the issue was, but currently we are working to re-establish the day room service for travellers through Rankin Inlet to make sure that they have a comfortable trip to wherever they're going. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently Rankin Inlet lacks adequate boarding home facilities for medical clients travelling through the community. Can the minister tell us what plans are in place to provide adequate boarding home services in the community of Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that question. (interpretation ends) Currently the approach in Rankin Inlet is to use commercial accommodations and private billets for medical travellers. There are a number of options in Rankin Inlet.

Being the regional centre, there are a number of hotels that the Department of Health books travellers into. Currently

we would place a preference on a hotel that has an attached restaurant. Again, because we want the medical travellers to be comfortable, to have their needs met, that's why we place a priority on the hotels with restaurants.

That is our current approach to medical traveller accommodations and there is no boarding home in Rankin Inlet currently. However, Indigenous Services Canada supports the Government of Nunavut pursuing the option of establishing a boarding home in the Kivalliq region, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the regional health centre in Rankin Inlet is a busy place. However, when there are medical clients travelling through Rankin Inlet, they need a place to go. The current policy does not permit them to stay and wait at the health centre.

Will the minister commit to reviewing the health centre's policies so that medical clients are able to wait in that facility instead of at the airport, at least until adequate boarding home services are provided in Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can commit in a general sense to look into the issue because there are a number of different moving parts here.

I believe the concern is around the waiting time for travellers who are in

transit and so I mentioned earlier the option of day rooms at the commercial accommodations, one of the local hotels, that being one of the moving pieces. There are also waiting areas at the airport, which I recognize is small and quite uncomfortable. There is also another waiting area in proximity to the airport, is my understanding.

I can commit to look into this issue generally. I can't commit to allowing travellers to wait in the lobby of the health centre, for example, or rooms at the health centre at this time, but I'll look into the issue and get back to the member. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 015 – 6(1): Inuktitut-speaking Mental Health Workers

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, having good mental health is as important as being in good physical health. Sometimes we need some extra support to reach a state of well-being. I would like to thank mental health workers across the territory for the support that they provide to those who need it.

Can the minister provide an update on how his department recruits and trains mental health workers in Nunavut?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that question. Yes, mental health is a very important issue. When we hurt physically, we know how it hurts and likewise mentally. It's something that is being recognized more and talked about more. It's more common now to talk about it, which pleases me.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health is working to ensure that coverage is provided to all communities, either by a mental health nurse or a mental health consultant. As well, the Department of Health is committed to developing community mental health and addictions teams in which Nunavummiut can progress through a ladder professional development program. That's, in a general sense, how we approach the human resources piece for mental health. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It is good to know that efforts are being made to fill mental health worker positions across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, mental health counselling and support is much more effective when it is provided in our mother tongue language that people are most comfortable speaking and in a culturally relevant manner.

Can the minister describe what steps are taken to ensure that mental health workers in Nunavut can speak Inuktitut and are culturally aware of northern

communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking that question. I agree with him, yes. The ability to speak Inuktitut is a big thing, particularly when you look at mental health workers, and they have to know a person who is in need and the support needed. When they have a good rapport and the person is not intimidated to seek help, it's the most positive thing and I have experienced that myself as to the importance of the issue.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in terms of allowing for care in the Inuktitut language, one of the most promising projects the department is working on is the paraprofessional project and that's where the project is aiming to increase the number of Inuit in the mental health workplace by providing the opportunity for training, growth, and advanced employment through career laddering.

This would see paraprofessionals working in roles, such as mental health assistants, youth program facilitators, mental health outreach workers, and mental health program supervisors. Those are some of the different positions that we are trying to ladder more Inuktitut-speaking Nunavummiut into those positions within mental health and I agree that it's very important. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It is

my understanding that mental health training is available in Nunavut, [Ilisqsiq], and that different training modules focus on Inuit cultural approaches to health and wellness. Will the minister commit to supporting more Nunavummiut in accessing this Nunavut-based training and hiring more Inuktitut-speaking mental health workers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I just realized I left my mic on, so I don't have to turn it on again.

(interpretation) I thank my colleague for that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of training for the staff, yes, that's very important. In terms of the paraprofessional project, that is a big part of what the department is trying to do. We have an extensive orientation and training plan that's included as part of that program. The training includes foundational skills-based courses specific to mental health, addictions counselling, and community program development.

Mr. Speaker, to date, the department has hired 19 paraprofessionals across the territory, but that's just the beginning. We are aiming to increase those numbers and I look forward to reporting on the success of this project in the coming months because it is a very important service and the language component, I agree, is also very important. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 016 – 6(1): Kivalliq
Intercommunity Road Initiative**

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

As the minister is very much aware, I have been a strong supporter of the proposed Kivalliq intercommunity road initiative, and I was very pleased to help advocate for the continued inclusion of Baker Lake in the scope of this project.

Earlier this month the minister's department issued a request for proposals for a major study to "confirm the sustainability and viability" of the Kivalliq intercommunity road initiative. The request for proposals closes at the end of this month, and I look forward to a timely evaluation process.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that all Members of the Legislative Assembly have the opportunity to review the findings and recommendations from this major study. Will the minister commit to ensuring that they are tabled in the Legislative Assembly at the earliest opportunity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report that will be done is to take a look at the possibility of creating an all-weather road system within the Kivalliq region. I'm sure that the report will be very interesting to read and go over, and I will be seeking input from those parties that are interested and we will take a look at it at that time. I'm

not going to commit to tabling any documents at this point, Mr. Speaker. We will see what kind of stuff comes out of that report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, the federal Department of Transport announced \$4.5 million in funding in the month of August 2019 to "study and design an all-season road that will improve connectivity for the communities in the Kivalliq region." It's a very important initiative. Can the minister confirm how much of this funding has been spent to date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the particular details in terms of how much has been spent to date, Mr. Speaker. The study will be starting this summer and it will conclude by next year and we will have a better idea by that time how much money has been spent. Mr. Speaker, my colleague just, in the previous question, talked about the study that is going to be done. We will have a better understanding of how much expense has been done after that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response. The request for proposals for the Kivalliq intercommunity road initiative

indicates that “Planning for the development of this inter-community road network must address Government of Nunavut priorities for service to the population and industry, impact on the communities served, environmental impact, and other potential projects, such as the proposed Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project...the successful consultant will engage with the Kivalliq Inuit Association, representing the major landowner in the region, and to assess the potential mutual benefits of integration of this project with the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project, should the two projects proceed on a similar timeframe.”

Can the minister clarify which department of the Government of Nunavut has the lead responsibility in communicating with the Kivalliq Inuit Association in respect to the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m sure there’s going to be more than one department working on this project.

It is a three-phased project. In phase 1 they will be reviewing the assessment of the background materials, assess technical viability and proposed corridor; in the second phase they will consult with community and industry stakeholders; and then finally in phase 3 they will conduct the geotechnical investigations and complete 30 percent of the design, prepare cost estimates for roadway development and class “C”

estimates, prepare order of magnitude cost projections, administration of road, environmental impact, and so on.

There will be different departments working on this at any given time and those departments will be closely communicating their roles and responsibilities with the Inuit associations and other people and organizations that will be affected by this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Question 017 – 6(1): Air Service to Sanikiluaq

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good day, my colleagues. (interpretation ends) Happy international day (interpretation) to all Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. We’re sort of picking on you today, Mr. Kusugak.

As the minister is aware, one of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the community of Sanikiluaq has been a decrease in the amount of air service to the community.

In 2021 the government awarded a contract for a pilot project to provide two flights a week between Sanikiluaq and Iqaluit. On February 3 of this year the government announced that the pilot project will be extended until July 5, 2022. Can the minister clarify how this date was determined? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You are picking on me; no more charters for you.

>> *Laughter*

I'm just kidding, Mr. Speaker. We have been working closely with the community and the airlines and my colleague is correct in that we did a six-month trial that started in July and ended six months later. Upon that completion, we decided that we should carry on because of the need to transport people in and out of Sanikiluaq. We felt it was important to carry on until July of this year, so they will have had service for one whole year with contracting that airline, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response. It was a pleasure to fly only two hours rather than in the past where you had to spend the night down south coming up north.

Last week's announcement from the Government of Nunavut indicated that the number of passengers flying between Sanikiluaq and Iqaluit has been steadily increasing and that the government is "hopeful that this air service will become commercially viable and offered in the long term." Can the minister clarify what specific benchmarks need to be met in order for the service to become commercially viable? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the Government of Nunavut is doing in this very special circumstance for the community of Sanikiluaq is to provide an airline service between Nunavut and Sanikiluaq, especially with what was happening with the pandemic. It was near impossible to fly government employees and Sanikiluarmit in and out of the community without first having to go south. This charter service and contracting this company allowed us to transport people back and forth without having to go outside our jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, what we are hopeful is that at the end of this term of the contract by July that the industry itself will find that there is a need for this and that they could run a viable business. Mr. Speaker, that's for the industry and for the airlines to decide whether they want to run a scheduled service from there. It's not up to us to say, "Okay, it's profitable. Start a company." We are there to "gap tail" at this point, if I may use the term loosely, and we are hopeful that the airline companies out there will find that there is a business case for the company to operate in and out of Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the clarification. Can the minister clarify what communications, if any, his department has had with Air Inuit in respect to the airline restarting the

scheduled service that it provided to the community prior to the pandemic?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of any conversation with any other airline in terms of what will happen after the end of June. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

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

Question 018 – 6(1): Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm in Nunavut

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to meet with the members of Pond Inlet's alcohol education committee, and I am pleased to take this opportunity to thank them for their dedication and commitment.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, one of the priorities contained in the Government of Nunavut's strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm is to "empower and support community Alcohol Education Committees by...equipping committees with the training and resources to educate community members about making healthy and informed choices around alcohol use."

Can the minister clarify what new initiatives his department is undertaking

to provide training and resources to alcohol education committees?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. This is definitely a very important topic. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance and the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission understand the importance of community decision-making regarding alcohol and the support efforts of alcohol education committees to reduce alcohol harms in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, the department provides advice and support to 12 alcohol education committees by sharing information on responsible drinking, developing training packages, providing honoraria, and holding alcohol education committee training conferences every two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) During my recent meeting with the Pond Inlet's alcohol education committee, the issue of bootleggers using the postal service to illegally ship alcohol into the community was raised as a major concern.

When an individual creates a customer account with the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission, they are required to "authorize the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission to share

information from the customer account with law enforcement as a way to reduce illegal bootlegging.”

Can the minister confirm that this information is also being shared with Canada Post’s enforcement authorities as a way of combatting bootlegging through the mail? Thank you,
Uqaqtittijii.

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

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member again for the question. I’m glad that Pond Inlet’s alcohol education committee had raised concern about bootlegging and the ties to the postal service. The member is correct; the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission customer application form does authorize the commission to disclose that information should it be necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission has, on a number of occasions, shared some of that unusual activity with the RCMP. However, I’m not aware if that information is shared with the Canada postal service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the Government of Nunavut’s strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm indicates that “Sometimes the courts, justices of the peace, RCMP or other mechanism of

Nunavut’s justice system limit, restrict or prohibit an individual from accessing alcohol. These restrictions are often put in place after the individual, under the influence of alcohol, has caused themselves or others significant harm...in order to better reinforce these restrictions and limit future alcohol-related harm to the individual or others, the Government could potentially support such court-ordered restrictions by not issuing an alcohol import permit to the individual.”

When the minister sat on this side of the House during the previous Assembly, he spoke strongly about the importance of supporting court-ordered restrictions on alcohol. Now that he is the minister, can he clarify what actions he is taking to accomplish this objective? Thank you,
Uqaqtittijii.

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

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for continuing to raise concerns on that very important matter. Mr. Speaker, it is true that I myself have asked that very same question and I’m proud to stand here today and inform the Members of this Legislative Assembly that I’ve had discussions with my colleague at the Department of Justice to begin the dialogue to identify possible means to address this concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 019 – 6(1): Senior Assignments

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are again to the Premier. It’s good to hear in his reply there that the matter about the acting deputy minister is being referred to the Integrity Commissioner. It all goes to ask another question because twice yesterday he said there was no policy broken, but it is going to the Integrity Commissioner and we will wait for that.

I have more questions for the Premier on this issue. I have seen your appointments to public service. On January 28 of this year, the Premier announced that he would be recommending the appointment of a new president of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, pending board approval. Can the Premier confirm whether or not the board has granted his request? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like thank the Member for Arviat South for that question. Yes, I understand that the board has approved the request. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It must be an Arviat thing because I forgot to shut my mic off too, Minister Main.

As the Premier is aware, Directive 517 of the government’s Human Resources Manual provides for the conduct of criminal record checks and vulnerable sector checks for certain positions. The directive clearly states that a “position of trust” includes positions that involve, and I will quote directly here, “decision-making at the level of deputy head, assistant deputy head or director.”

Can the Premier clarify whether or not the government’s Senior Personnel Secretariat continues to follow these criteria when recruiting for positions that come under its responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for asking that question, which I can easily answer. Yes, the criteria are still applied and all procedures are followed. We are all aware that the Premier has that avenue and has the discretion for the assignment of deputy ministers, but I can confirm that all procedures are continually reviewed and they have been followed to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier’s announcement on January 28 also indicated that he had appointed a new Deputy Minister for the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and that the appointment was effective on February 9.

Can the Premier confirm that all of his new appointments to the public service have successfully passed the screening requirements for designated positions of trust? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for that question. Yes, I can confirm that all of the appointments have been screened in accordance with the procedures that are established. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 020 – 6(1): Marine Infrastructure

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you for the opportunity to rise to direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, and it concerns the issue of marine infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River have been advocating for many years about the importance of having modern marine infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, on August 4, 2021 the Government of Canada announced \$40.0 million in federal funding towards the construction of a new deep water port in Qikiqtarjuaq. The territorial government will provide the remainder of the funding through our budget process.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm when the formal contribution agreement

for this funding is expected to be signed between the federal and territorial governments? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When there are territorial funds that are going to be applied along with the federal funding, it has to be approved by the House first. When we're referring to the deep sea port, it has to be approved by the House and, if it is, then we would negotiate with the federal government on how this money is going to be applied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): That's very good to hear. Thank you for your response. I'm very pleased. The Municipality of Qikiqtarjuaq has been involved for many years in developing proposals for this important new marine infrastructure, which will support our fishing sector and encourage greater economic self-sufficiency. Will the minister commit to ensuring that the hamlet is closely consulted during the design and planning phase of this project? Will the minister commit to that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, in the upcoming days we will be reviewing the government's request and this will be

included in our proposal and it will be applied to the new marine infrastructure for all phases; the design, where it's going to be located, and so on, but it has to be approved by the House first and only then will we go to the next stage and we will be consulting with the hamlets and organizations in the community about the location, the design, and so forth. The department is not going to be working on this alone. That would be the first part. We will be having discussions with the organizations, the associations, the fisheries sector, and the hamlets during the planning and design phase. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): That's great. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say that I would be very happy if you could come to Qikiqtarjuaq. When I was the mayor and we were looking for funding, we had a design made of what we wanted it to look like and we had it put up on the wall at the airport. It was made by professionals and it looked very good. We don't want to lose that initial planning that we have done.

The Government of Canada made an announcement on August 4 and when P.J. Akeagok was the President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, it was included there in the document. We believe that this will go ahead because the Government of Canada's announcement of August 4 also indicated that federal funding for the construction of new small craft harbours in Clyde River and Arctic Bay had been provided and that work is underway on these projects.

(interpretation ends) Can the minister clarify the extent to which his department is involved in the planning for the new Clyde River small craft harbour? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague is talking about two different projects. We were talking about Qikiqtarjuaq and then all of a sudden now we're talking about Clyde River as well. Once we are able to run things the way we did before COVID-19, I want to go to Qikiqtarjuaq at some point and meet with the people there and look at what their idea of the project is, Mr. Speaker. Once travel is more open, we will go to Qikiqtarjuaq and see what they want. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 021 – 6(1): Third Party Review of Iqaluit Water Situation

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did have some questions planned for the Premier today, but out of respect for the Integrity Commissioner, I will defer them until a later date, so today I'll move on to the Minister of Health. Welcome to the hottest of the hot seats.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department was heavily involved in responding to the recent water crisis here in Iqaluit, which involved hydrocarbon contamination and "do not consume" orders. It is my understanding through

media coverage that the government has confirmed that some form of independent third party review into this situation is taking place. Would the minister be able to give us an update on the time frame of that review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. I thank my colleague for asking that question. In regard to the emergency water situation in Iqaluit, the Department of Health was involved. We assisted the Department of Community and Government Services, who were mainly responsible in working with the city.

(interpretation ends) In terms of the independent review, Mr. Speaker, that's something that is definitely on the radar. It's in the very early stages at this point. We do not have a timeline currently set. Ideally the event to be reviewed would have concluded before an independent review would begin and, as the member is aware, we recently had a boil water advisory here in Iqaluit from January 19 to 28.

In terms of the ongoing issues with the water system, an independent review is on the radar; I just don't have a firm timeline at this date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that partial response. Mr. Speaker, although we recognize and it has been mentioned before, water infrastructure here in

Iqaluit is lacking, to say the least. I hope that they're not waiting for all water issue to be resolved before they start this process.

Mr. Speaker, I have been very publicly clear about the need for public confidence to be restored, which is why I have said that it's essential for the review to be independent and that its findings be tabled in the House at the earliest opportunity, which will allow all members to consider the report in detail. Will the minister commit to ensuring that this is done, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Savikataaq, I left my mic on again.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Unfortunately I cannot commit in terms of the member's enquiry. In terms of the independent review, the review itself is intended to inform next steps and/or the need for a further inquiry. As I mentioned earlier, these types of review usually occur after the matter has been resolved and they serve as an examination of the event and best practices going forward.

Mr. Speaker, the review would be done in partnership with the City of Iqaluit, who are the operators of the water system here in the city. In terms of whether or not the results would be made public, I cannot commit either way at this point in time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's response segues right into my next question. It's very obvious that the review into this situation needs to consider the actions of all relevant levels of government. Can the minister confirm the extent to which the City of Iqaluit has committed to fully cooperating with this review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can inform the member that the city is willing to go down this road of a review. Currently we have a memorandum of understanding that's being drafted, which would establish the ground rules in terms of the work on the independent review between the government and the city. I can't make commitments on behalf of the city, but I can say that to date, when it comes to the concept of an independent review, the relationship has been good and collaborative and I hope to see that continue. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 022 – 6(1): Condominium Issues

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing.

Mr. Speaker, in order to effectively address the housing crisis in Nunavut, we have to take action at all points along the housing continuum.

As the minister is aware, one of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's

initiatives has been to encourage and support homeownership by selling condominiums to GN employees.

As the MLA for Iqaluit-Sinaa, I am committed to supporting actions that will make homeownership more affordable to our residents, especially to new homeowners and younger Inuit, who cannot necessarily afford to pay the inflated prices in our current housing market where three-bedroom bungalows now sell for close to three quarters of a million dollars.

The corporation's most recently tabled annual report indicates that approximately 60 condominium units were identified for sale, and the corporation recently announced that the application period for the program closed in late November 2021.

Can the minister confirm how many units have been purchased to date by Inuit employees and how many have been purchased to date by non-Inuit employees? Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the current number of how many of the units that are currently occupied of that program are Inuit or non-Inuit, but I do know that there are approximately 23 Inuit and 37 non-Inuit applicants for the available condominiums at this time. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that response, Minister Kusugak. An emerging concern across the country is the issue of condominium insurance. Information published by the federal Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation indicates that “There are hundreds of thousands of condominium corporations in Canada, and insurance rates are increasing dramatically for many of them. This is particularly true in the North, where some have been quoted unaffordable premiums or simply denied coverage. This has devastating effects on northern and Indigenous housing, driving up the cost of living and reducing access to housing.”

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has been a project partner in a CMHC-led initiative to address this issue, which has also involved a condominium corporation located in Rankin Inlet. Can the minister update the House today on what progress has been with respect to this initiative? Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from my colleague. Actually the timing is very good, Mr. Speaker, as I’m currently looking into that very topic at this time and once I have the full details and particulars on that, I will be more than happy to share it with my colleague and those that are interested.

Mr. Speaker, it’s very hard to get insurance at the best of times and I’m very much aware of the people who are in condominiums across Nunavut who

are finding it very hard to feel secure in a condominium that they’re having trouble insuring. We are looking to work with the CMHC and the Government of Canada on dealing with this very important issue and I’ll be more than happy, at the appropriate time, to share that information with my colleague. Unfortunately I don’t have the progress report on that detail at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, correspondence from the Iqaluit Condominium Corporation Collective concerning the insurance crisis was tabled in the House last year by the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak. The correspondence was jointly addressed to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the Minister of Finance, whose portfolio includes certain regulatory responsibilities. You say that you’re working with the federal government right now. Can the minister confirm how the NHC is working with the Department of Finance to address this issue? Thank you.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that particular topic, our senior staff are meeting with the appropriate department senior staff and trying to see ways in where we could collaborate and work with the homeowners and the condominiums and the condominium committee to see how we could work things out so that people

can be insured where they need to be.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 023 – 6(1): Attendance in Nunavut Schools

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me a second time. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, the COVID pandemic has had a huge impact on our daily lives, from employment to recreation to education. I am confident that one of the minister's first priorities has been to determine the impact of the pandemic on Nunavut's education system.

Can the minister provide an overview of how attendance at Nunavut's schools has changed in the past two years, and tell us how attendance rates at Nunavut's schools prior to the COVID pandemic compare to what they are right now?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question about education and attendance. The department has seen lower attendance rates due to COVID-19, with students isolating, teachers isolating, or people who have contracted COVID-19 and the attendance rates have gone down significantly. I don't have the numbers in front of me for this week, but I can provide those later this week and share the numbers. The trend has been since

omicron that we're seeing about 23 percent attendance rates across the territory. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anecdotal evidence from my constituency also follows what the minister has said that even though schools are back to 100 percent capacity, the number of students actually going to school is quite low. It is sad that the minister confirmed that; not sad on her part but sad that attendance is so low within Nunavut. Isolation does have something to do with it, but also I think the fact that students are just used to not going to school now is a big factor with it.

My next question is: can the minister tell us what the attendance rates at Nunavut's schools currently are and what her department is doing to address the low attendance issues? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* for the question, member. There are a number of different things that the department is doing. First of all, we encourage the students to go to school when they are able to, if they are feeling well, and it's a fine balance between going to school and not having school. As we're aware, most of our communities across the territory at this point in time are almost at 100 percent attendance across our territory and we strive to ensure that our students are going to school.

Pre-COVID, I know we've had a lot of communities that have great attendance, but we do know that we need to ensure that students are being able to go back to school safely. It's a balance between what parents or students feel is a risk and a balance between how they're properly going to school and we want to ensure that students are going to school. However, that's an individual choice.

We hope and encourage all parents and students to be going to school when they feel it's safe for them to be going to school, if they're not feeling well, to stay home, of course, but we do want to encourage students to be learning at the most capable times to be in class learning is the most effective and proven that it is a great way to learn. I encourage those students that are maybe fearful or their parents may be fearful to send their kids to school.

We're learning to live with COVID. There have been a number of strategies that the department has worked on to implement COVID protocols. Mr. Speaker, this is something that our schools are aware of and that we have been aware of for the past two years, working with COVID and living with COVID across our territory. It's something that we're managing and we have very great resources available for our school leaders, for the DEAs, and that messaging is shared across to our parents and our families and the school community. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We could have the best school system in the world, but if the kids don't

step in the door to go in the school, they can't take advantage of it at all. Attendance is really important for all the students within Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that school attendance has often been an issue faced by our school system, and I do understand that as we transition back to 100 percent capacity in our schools, there will be some challenges. However, it is critically important that our youth resume their education. We simply cannot rely on policies and directives alone to address this issue. We need direct and substantive action to get our youth back into the schools.

Can the minister clearly describe what specific and tangible steps and activities her department is currently implementing to increase attendance in Nunavut's schools? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana*, member, for the question. Right now our school rates, as we know, with COVID are down, but we do have to ensure that we're working closely with the DEAs and the principals to develop stay-in-school initiatives to support attendance. The *Education Act* includes and requires the DEAs and the department to report attendance annually to the public. Despite COVID and the challenges that we are facing, we do want our children and our youth to be going to school.

This time that we're going through with the pandemic is something that's a challenge in some communities. We

have higher rates of COVID-19 and we've had some places where our schools have been closed. Some communities have had 50 percent cohorts A and B and we also have communities where we have 100 percent [capacity]. Depending on the community and what the situation is in the community, we have COVID differences and we're hoping that Nunavummiut become healthy and that our cases in our communities have gone down.

The chief public health officer works with the school principal and the DEAs to determine whether schools are open or closed, and we do of course want our schools to be open and we have maintained various protocols for the custodians and the staff to ensure that we have very clean schools. They work to clean the buses and they work to clean and monitor our schools. We've had enhanced cleaning protocols just for the enhanced safety of our students and staff, Mr. Speaker.

I once again would like to say that we hope that students feel safe to go to school and that they are attending school on a regular basis. We would like to see normalcy again in our territory and across the country and even throughout the world, and we are hopeful with people becoming vaccinated that we have more people that are not ill and that this pandemic will hopefully ease and things will change for our community and we can go back to what we know as normal reality and have high attendance rates in our communities. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members, the time allotted for question period is now over. Next item on the list, 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. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. I'll recognize the Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills

Bill 01 – Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – First Reading

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour to stand and move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 1, *Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

Bill 02 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023 – First Reading

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 2, *Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

**Bill 03 – Supplementary
Appropriation (Operations and
Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2021-
2022 – First Reading**

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 3, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2021-2022*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

**Bill 04 – Write-off of Assets and Debts
Act, 2020-2021 – First Reading**

>>No audio

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

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. I recognize the Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

**Bill 01 – Interim Appropriation
(Operations and Maintenance)
Act, 2022-2023 – Second Reading**

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 1, *Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023*, be now read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of Nunavut to make interim appropriation and maintenance expenditures for the 2022-23 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 1 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

**Bill 02 – Appropriation (Capital) Act,
2022-2023 – Second Reading**

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded again by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 2, *Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of Nunavut to make capital expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 2 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Lightstone.

**Bill 03 – Supplementary
Appropriation (Operations and
Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2021-
2022 – Second Reading**

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that Bill 3, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2021-2022*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations to defray the operations and maintenance expenses of the Government of Nunavut for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 3 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

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

Bills 1, 2, and 3 with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 16:06 and
Committee resumed at 16:30*

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

Chairman (Mr. Hickes): Welcome to the Committee of the Whole. Welcome, Minister Joanasie and your officials. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with today: Bills 1, 2, and 3. What is the wish of the committee, Mr. Chairman? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: We wish to commence the review of the 2022-23 capital estimates, Bill 2, and the Department of CGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Malliki. Are we all in agreement that we deal with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 02 – Appropriation (Capital) Act,
2022-2023 – Community and
Government Services –
Consideration in Committee**

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Joanasie: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanase: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do have officials. Thank you.

Chairman: Please proceed.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: My apologies, minister. Just a moment, please. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Joanase, please introduce your officials and move on to your opening comments.

Hon. David Joanase (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day, colleagues. It is my pleasure to join you today to review the Department of Community and Government Services capital estimates for 2022-23 as part of the proposed five-year capital plan covering the 2023-27 period.

Mr. Chairman, for the 2022-23 fiscal year, the Department of Community and Government Services is proposing a capital appropriation of \$58,222,000.

Joining me here today are Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister, and Mandy Hickey, Director of Financial Services.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for the planning, design, and construction of critical infrastructure that is essential to maintaining safe and healthy communities. The development and upgrade of water, wastewater, solid

waste, and fuel storage facilities are essential to supporting community growth and ensuring local systems meet existing and emerging regulatory requirements.

In 2022-23 the Department of Community and Government Services proposes a focus of capital funding on the assets that are the foundation of the programs and services provided to Nunavummiut by local governments and our territorial government.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, recent events in Nunavut's communities have demonstrated the importance of clean, treated drinking water. For 2022-23, Community and Government Services plans to continue the implementation of water and wastewater treatment facility projects in four communities: Arviat, Baker Lake, Kugluktuk, and Rankin Inlet. These four projects have a combined value of \$10,517,000 and include:

- \$250,000 to support planning of a lagoon and wetland for the Arviat wastewater treatment facility.
- \$2,305,000 for the replacement of the intake pipes for Baker Lake's water treatment plant.
- \$500,000 to support repairs to Kugluktuk's water treatment plant.
- \$7,462,000 to implement critical upgrades and replacement of sections of the Rankin Inlet utilidor.

Mr. Chairman, approval of these projects will allow Community and Government Services to upgrade and repair water and wastewater infrastructure in these

communities to ensure ongoing access to treated water to meet the needs of their growing populations. These projects are in addition to the other core infrastructure projects proposed within the 2022-23 capital estimates managed by the department, including:

- \$4,496,000 to begin construction of a new hamlet [office] in Sanikiluaq.
- \$2,148,000 to complete upgrades to the maintenance garage in Kinngait.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to these projects managed on behalf of municipalities by the department, Community and Government Services is committed to building capacity within local governments. In 2022-23 Community and Government Services is proposing additional investments into programs and projects managed by municipalities, including:

- \$1 million to implement year 4 of the Municipal Green Infrastructure Fund that was introduced in 2019.
- \$4 million in 2022-23 to the City of Iqaluit towards infrastructure improvements in water, wastewater, roads, and general operations. This is the final year of a five-year agreement with the city.
- \$2 million in municipal capital block funding to be allocated among non-tax-based municipalities to plan and manage their capital upgrades and improvements.
- \$5.5 million ongoing annual block funding to be allocated to non-tax-based municipalities towards the

Municipal Mobile Equipment Program.

- \$2 million to launch a Municipal Parking Garage Program, which is a program that will provide municipalities with a guided model to plan, design, and ultimately construct their own parking garages. With approval of this initiative, the department will be able to assess the level of interest among municipal corporations to take on additional responsibilities in managing multi-year municipal capital projects to meet their infrastructure needs.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, members will note that my department's funding request for 2022-23 no longer identifies \$13 million in capital funding towards the design and construction of a new tank farm in Arviat. This project is essential to ensure that the fuel storage and distribution facilities in Arviat have the capacity to meet the requirements and needs of this growing community and remains a high priority. However, the project will be postponed one year to allow the community sufficient time to designate the site.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, information technology and systems provide the framework that supports the work of the Government of Nunavut and services to Nunavummiut. The Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for maintaining these systems and as part of the 2022-23 capital estimates, the department is requesting \$3.5 million in 2022-23 towards lifecycle replacements and equipment upgrades in the local area network and data centres.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to these upgrades and replacement of the equipment essential to maintaining the Government of Nunavut's core network and services, the Department of Community and Government Services is also responsible for managing the design and construction of the Government of Nunavut's fibre link to southern Canada. This project was approved in 2018-19 and Community and Government Services is now prepared to complete the design and begin construction of this project which is expected to be completed in 2025-26.

Mr. Chairman, there is no question that establishing a fibre optic link to Nunavut will be a huge leap towards closing the telecommunications gap between Nunavut and the rest of Canada. Upon completion, the undersea fibre link will enhance the delivery of critical services, including health, education, and justice. Fibre connectivity into Iqaluit is also expected to improve Internet-related services in other Nunavut communities by relieving pressure on the existing satellite linkages.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Community and Government Services' 2022-23 capital estimates propose approval of \$17.2 million to continue with the design and construction of the undersea fibre link between Iqaluit and southern Canada. Construction of the fibre optic cable is scheduled to begin in 2023-24, with completion expected in 2025-26. The construction of this asset by the Government of Nunavut will ensure the government owns this critical piece of infrastructure and has control over the long-term costs of the services it is being built to provide.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, projects identified with the Department of Community and Government Services capital estimates for 2022-23 demonstrate our commitment to meeting the critical infrastructure needs of Nunavut's communities and an increased investment into projects managed by municipalities. These projects also demonstrate our ongoing commitment to enhancing the Government of Nunavut's core infrastructure to support service delivery to departments and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Chairman, it will be my pleasure to take questions from the committee regarding the projects identified within the Department of Community and Government Services 2022-23 capital estimates. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Is there a committee member who wishes to provide opening comments? Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Regular Members' Caucus on its review of the proposed 2022-23 Capital Estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services. The department's proposed capital budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year is \$58,222,000. This represents an increase of approximately 119.8 percent from its 2021-22 capital budget.

The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include funding for planning studies. Members have expressed concerns about the lack of clarity concerning the process by which the government determines which

specific projects to include in its list of approved planning studies. Members continue to encourage the minister to begin the practice of tabling, on an annual basis, detailed information concerning the status of ongoing and completed planning studies.

On March 28, 2018 the Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut announced the signing of a bilateral agreement under the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan. The announcement indicated that Nunavut will receive up to \$566,761,621 over the ten-year period of 2018-2028. The agreement's end date is March 31, 2028. On August 12, 2021 the federal Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs announced that "...\$517.8 million is available for shovel-ready infrastructure projects for Inuit communities. This funding will help close the infrastructure gaps by 2030." The extent to which the Government of Nunavut is working with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami to identify specific projects is unclear.

The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include funding for the government's planned fibre infrastructure project. On August 19, 2019 the federal Minister of Rural Economic Development announced that the Government of Canada is "...investing over \$151.0 million in this project under the Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan." On October 18, 2021 the department issued a request for proposals for "Marine Fibre Project Strategy Oversight Advisory Consulting Services." Although the request for

proposals closed on December 3, 2021, it is unclear which entity has been selected to perform this work. Members note that recent news reports have quoted departmental officials as stating that the project's budget is expected to increase "due to inflation and supply chain delays." Members encourage the minister to clarify the status of this project, including its projected cost, timetable, governance framework, and route selection.

Members remain concerned about the frequency of boil water advisories and other water quality situations in a number of communities; Baker Lake multiple times a year. The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include funding for three new water and wastewater-related capital projects in Arviat, Baker Lake, and Kugluktuk. Thank you for that. A number of requests for proposals were issued by the department in 2021 concerning water and wastewater-related infrastructure in Arctic Bay, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Resolute Bay, Sanikiluaq, Taloyoak, and Whale Cove. The department's current business plan indicates that it is "participating in the finalization of the Drinking Water Strategic Framework with a planned distribution to all relevant stakeholders in late 2020-2021. The development of the corresponding Action Plan will require additional input and engagement from stakeholders in 2021." Members look forward to the timely tabling of the action plan.

The department has issued a number of requests for proposals in recent years for solid waste management feasibility studies for the communities of Arviat, Clyde River, Gjoa Haven, Sanirajak,

Igloolik, Kimmirut, Rankin Inlet, Resolute Bay, Sanikiluaq, Taloyoak, and Whale Cove. The department's current business plan indicates that "the development of Nunavut's Solid Waste Management Strategy was initiated but has been delayed due to COVID-19." On November 4, 2021 the department issued a request for proposals for the development of a "Nunavut-Wide Regional Solid Waste Management Plan." The request for proposals closed on December 10, 2021, but was subsequently cancelled on February 8, 2022. Members encourage the minister to clarify the status of this work.

The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include \$2.0 million for a new "Parking Garage Program." Concerns have been raised that some communities face challenges in providing school busing services because of a lack of garage space. Members encourage the Department of Community and Government Services to work with the Department of Education to address this issue.

The department's 2021-22 main estimates included \$2,513,000 in funding for the Municipal Mobile Equipment Program, which fell under the department's Community Development Grants and Contribution Policy. The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include \$5.5 million in funding for the Municipal Mobile Equipment Program, which is now being funded as a capital expenditure. Members encourage the minister to table an updated policy for the Municipal Mobile Equipment Program.

The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include funding for the Arviat Tank Farm project. The 2017-18 *Annual Report of the Petroleum Products Division* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 2, 2021. The 2018-19, 2019-2020 and 2020-21 annual reports have not yet been tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The department's 2020-21 and 2021-22 capital estimates included \$1.0 million in each fiscal year for a new "Municipal Green Infrastructure Program." The department's proposed 2022-23 capital estimates include \$1.0 million for the program. The department's Municipal Green Infrastructure Fund Policy expires on March 31, 2024. Members continue to encourage the minister to report annually to the Legislative Assembly on the department's expenditures and initiatives under this program.

This concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2022-23 Capital Estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Do members have any general comments before we proceed to questions? Just to clarify, this is not a time of questions; it's just general comments to the opening comments. Does anyone have any general comments? Seeing none, we will proceed. I have no more names. We will now proceed to the page by page of the departmental estimates starting on J-3. Any members with questions? Just for the record, J-3. \$25,989,000. Any questions? I'll just give the members a moment to get their paperwork in order. Mr. Malliki. No? Just a moment, please.

Again, \$25,989,000. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was in the opening comments and it's in here that I would like to just get more clarification on the \$2 million for launching the Municipal Parking Garage Program. Is this on a first-come, first-served basis or what are the conditions for it? I'll start off there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. This is an exciting program that we're launching. There's a great need for municipal parking garages. We just want to get a feel for what the interest level is and at this point, whether it's going to be first-come, first-served, I think that's going to open up the floodgates, but we will consider what we will proceed with depending on the level of interest. Again, there's a great need across the territory, but I think this is an area where hamlets will be able to thrive over the course of this project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's odd that the minister would launch a program like this and not even have a policy in place in terms of who gets access to it first.

In your substantiation sheet you said that it's going to be roughly up to \$500,000 for planning. If you do the math, four communities can take advantage of this good program that is highly needed.

Why was there no policy even put forward before this program was asking for funding? Thank you.

Chairman: Very good question. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The policy, if we approve this project, should be in place for April 1. The policy is coming through too along with this program, so there will be set parameters for who is eligible and other criteria. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister wants us to approve funding for a new program which has no policy; we approve the money and the policy. Just for argument's sake, we could say that four communities will benefit on this. I think that for a new program such as this, a policy should have been in place before the funding is requested. It only makes sense. If you're asking for money, tell us how you're going to spend the money first. Just an explanation on that again. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to elaborate on what I have said, but I will take the note that my colleague there is mentioning about when we're asking for money to have the policies in place from hereon in. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I thank the member for the question. As the minister mentioned, we're quite excited about this program and introducing it to meet what is a significant deficit in parking spaces in municipalities.

The timing of the appropriation and the complementary policy that will inform how it is that it will be entitled to spend the funding, the member is entirely right; that is the mechanism that defines how it is that we spend the funding. Our intention is to secure the funding to support the municipalities in planning, designing, and constructing their garages.

We have met with the municipalities via webinar to go over the rollout of the program, very well attended meetings, a high level of interest in the program, but to the member's point about the mechanism that we will use to administer the funding, it is our intention to have that... Well, it's entirely essential that that policy is in place before we can actually administer the funding and it will need to be vetted by the Executive Council. When the policy is fully approved, it will be posted on our website and publicly available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the minister is aware that in the last Assembly, there were project funding requests that were denied by regular members because they had no policy in place on how this money would be spent. I know that this funding is greatly needed, all the hamlets need a parking garage, but I think it's

just poor planning that you would ask for money from us to approve money when we have no idea how the money is going to be spent. I know it's needed, but it would definitely help us if we knew how the money was going to be spent and how it was going to be allocated.

Can the minister inform us on when this program was conceived? Was it conceived like a month ago, two months ago, or six months ago that they had no time to come up with a policy? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With this Municipal Parking Garage Program, for year 1, it would be planning. This would involve the completion of needs assessments, geotechnical investigation and environmental site assessments, schematic design and cost estimation, and we know it was mentioned that there's high need and interest.

In terms of when this was conceived, in the background from the 2019-2020 capital estimates, there were funds for planning to upgrade and replace parking garages in several communities, as well as the larger construction program to replace or increase heated parking spaces.

We recognize that most Nunavut communities have old or the parking garages that are currently in place need significant repairs or replacement. This has been an ongoing thing that communities are dealing with and we thought we would roll this program out

sooner rather than later. We would hate to see it be delayed by a year if we're waiting on a policy, but that is coming forward and to be effective April 1. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Just to be clear, this wouldn't necessarily mean it would have to wait for a year; a supplementary appropriation can be brought into the House at any time. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity, the minister said that this was conceived in 2019. I don't argue there's a need; I know there's a need. I could bring my own community of Arviat there. The hamlet needs parking garage space. They need it, but the minister just said that this was conceived in 2019. Today is 2022. Is the minister telling me that he had roughly three years to come up with a policy but never did? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can clarify, the 2019-2020 capital estimates is when there were funds for planning to replace several parking garages in Nunavut. Those were kind of where we noticed that there are many communities experiencing the same thing.

Maybe this program would be, if we develop it over time... I have been in this role since November, as members know, and so this is an area that I think we can proceed with and have good news for the hamlets of Nunavut to build their own parking garages. There is going to be the great need, of course, yes, and then we are setting the

parameters for how this funding will be allocated to communities in an equitable manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How does the minister envision this policy will be like? I would like to know more. I don't doubt that this program is needed at all, but is it first-come, first-served? Do they have to prove a need? There must be some conception on what this approval policy will be because it has been worked on for a while. Can the minister just give us a bit of a highlight on how it might work?

If we follow the substantiation sheet, it's roughly \$500,000 per project for planning and designing that will be allocated, so that's four communities if you do the math from \$2 million. Can the minister enlighten us on how these funds will be distributed? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to provide some insight a bit more on the details. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very happy to see that there is this much interest in this program and how it will be administered. I'm happy to report that the administration of the funding for this program is envisioned as a proposal-based program and that is precisely how it was introduced to the senior administration officers for each

community during the webinars that we did earlier this winter.

The proposal-based program includes a highly prescriptive workbook, as we're calling it, for the municipalities to map out their project management plan on how it is that they would actually manage the project from start to completion. The evaluation of how it is that communities will be admitted into the program and which ones would be identified for funding is a really important question and it won't simply be based on the strength of the proposal. It will in fact incorporate the capacity of the municipality to deliver the program through to completion. We're going to need to see evidence that this is money that is going to be well spent on the planning element through the completion of that stage.

We will only administer the additional funding upon completion of the initial stage of the investment, so just to say to go through each phase, planning into the design, into construction, into completion of completion. The prioritization of those proposals will incorporate the needs analysis that we have included in prior years wherein the existing indoor heated storage space in each municipality will be correlated with their fleet size and the technical specifications required for each municipality.

We do have a ranking. It is a year or two old, but we also know that we haven't built any new garages in that time. That will be incorporated into the rubric for the selection of communities entering into the program. We do envision this as a very rigorous application process because we are managing the investment

of this \$2 million, admitting communities into the program, and as we move into the design and construction phases, we do expect to be very diligent in evaluating the progress that the municipalities have made to date on each subsequent stage of the construction.

I hope that addresses the member's concerns on the administration of the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to hear that fleet size will be a factor in it because Arviat has probably got the biggest fleet size, so I would think that that would be put on the top priority list there. This is a bit jumping the gun, but this is just for preplanning. What type of funding will be offered to actually construct the garage, once a municipality, such as, let's say Arviat puts in a proposal and gets money for the preplanning and they get approved for a garage. Where is the funding coming from to actually construct the garage? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I heard two different questions and I'll try to address the first part and I'll have my deputy cover the second part. For the priorities on new parking garages in communities, it will be helped by comparing the current enclosed parking space within each community as well as the number of spaces that are required. If you look at it similarly too like housing, for example,

there are needs looked at. That's part of the factor that we will be looking at and the number of spaces required, but if you will have my deputy cover the second part. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanase. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. The analogy that we used in introducing this program to the municipalities was that CGS would be functioning as the banker, which is to say that the municipality would approach for the first phase of planning, and let's say the planning is \$250,000, maybe up to \$500,000 to complete, it would determine how many communities that we could take in, depending on how much of the funding that we had that they actually required to complete that process.

As far as subsequent years, we made the decision to only include...as this was the first year introducing this program, we're uncertain of the interest level and we're uncertain of the capacity of the municipalities to complete the planning phase, so what we did do was frontload the budget in that \$2 million to sample the market, to see what the level of interest is among the municipalities to take on this responsibility that is typically meant to be managed by the GN.

Depending on the interest that we see and the territorial election has provided us with a little bit of a unique opportunity in the cycle in that we're coming forward for the \$2 million for the planning phase right now. We will administer that based on the proposals

that come in and the evaluation of those. We will then come forward in the fall, depending on how many eligible proposals we receive, to see those communities move into the design and ultimately into the construction phase.

We frontloaded the proposal to sample to see what the level of interest is there, and then we will come back with a fairly easy-to-illustrate level of interest from the municipalities on just exactly how much interest is out there on the program to justify future investment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can rule me out if I'm jumping the gun a bit too much here, but what does the minister envision as the top end of the budget would be to actually fund the construction of these projects? If the demand is pretty high, which I imagine it will be, the limiting factor, I believe, will be the number of hamlets that get the preplanning money. What is the upper limit of what the budget might come forward to actually build the parking garage? I assume that it will be a minimum of \$5 million per garage, just looking at other figures that the department has for other garages. What do they envision the upper limit of the capital request to come in will be? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you. In our estimation, we figure it could be between \$4 million and \$6 million, so the member is quite on the ball in his figures. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. [Chairman]. No, I think the minister misunderstood. That was my comment that I'm guessing it's about \$5 million per garage. How much total money...? Are we going to build four garages, six garages, or ten garages based on the amount? What kind of budget will be coming forward to actually fulfill the program? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that will depend on how many of the projects are completed with their planning and that will determine the next phase of going into design as well as the construction. It would be phased over multiple years, but we don't have an upper limit. We can't say that we will be coming forward with \$10 million, \$15 million, or \$20 million in two or three years' time, but we're trying to take it one step at a time and this is the first step is trying to gauge the interest and then seeing how well communities' hamlets can complete this planning. That's where it's at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this program will be very popular. I'm not sure how many municipalities would have the capability of doing it, but I believe it will be very popular and the funds will actually be all expended with more municipalities requesting. I would encourage the minister to think high because all the municipalities need parking garages.

I know that in Arviat they have roughly, I think, six water trucks and six sewage trucks that are on the go every day and they need a place to park them. Arviat needs to be one of the communities that get the parking garages there. They struggle with having a place to park all these [vehicles], especially since normally you do not park sewage vehicles in the same garage as the water vehicles in case of contamination.

I will support these funds. I just think that the policy should have come first. That was just a comment. Thank you. I'm done.

Chairman: Comment noted. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate Mr. Savikataaq's questions and your answers really helped to clarify a lot of the questions that I have.

I just feel a lot of concern about the risk of implementing any kind of a project or a program in the absence of any policy, and that's a risk to not just us as legislators but to the team that you have in place, our public servants, who are responsible for making these decisions or give the advice about where to expend these funds. Is this the norm? I mean, I don't think I have come across this in my life as a public servant. Thanks.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for her question. I can't speak for if it's normal or not, but what I can say is that for this program specifically, even if we do get the budget approved, we can't spend it

until the policy is in place. I wanted to clarify that as well so that members are aware. We don't be spending money until that policy is in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanase. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Another question that came to mind is the question about how the existing infrastructure, not just the existing fleets that people have and the age, I'm assuming, of those assets will be considered. Where does the knowledge about communities infrastructure needs fit into a program like this? I know, for example, even if Iqaluit might not... We recently, I think, got a new garage, so there might not be a need here, but certainly we have limitations in Iqaluit for creating new lots and for being able to run water and sewage to those lots. I'm assuming that that's an issue as well in other communities and I wonder whether or not there's baseline data or information about how that could impact a community's ability to build a new garage. Thanks.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of how this type of program fits in with community needs, each community has an integrated community sustainability plan that helps inform our capital planning process, but also with that, the asset management that happens within each municipality is also of value, and then there are other factors that we need to consider around new builds and having land use permits that are necessary to proceed and it's part of

the application for this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanase. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Just a last question about human resources and the ability to actually deliver a program like this. I'm just looking for assurance that CGS does have that ability.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Part of the program is to pay for the program staff, so it would be part of the budget all throughout. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that response. Are you telling me that you actually don't have the human resources on staff now to implement this program? Would you have to advertise and create new positions? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I misunderstood the question and I think it's an O&M question.

Chairman: Minister Joanase, the member is asking whether there is sufficient capacity to complete the program. The program itself is under capital and as it's a new program, it's a fair question to ask. Thank you. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have the capacity to

deliver this program. That's why we're coming forward with this budget request. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Brewster, are you done? (interpretation ends) Next name I have on my list: Mr. Qavvik, member from Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Minister Joanase, and I welcome your officials. On February 7, I would like to first thank Minister Joanase; he provided me with an update in a letter on the department's progress on the municipal office in Sanikiluaq. In the letter it states that CGS expects to tender the project by March 2022 and construction would be expected to be completed by 2023. I'm wondering there might be factors that might delay, one being over the budget of the projected cost, two being the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the cost of construction material. Will these three have a delay on the project? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we get the funding that we're proposing here, we would proceed with an RFP and proceed with the project and try to mitigate any risks for this particular project as well. The factors that the member points out are things that we try to mitigate any risks as we try to proceed with our projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanase. Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's 2021-22 capital estimates included \$4.96 million for the

construction of the new municipal office for Sanikiluaq. How much of this funding has been spent to date? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for the delay. The department has spent \$595,000 towards the design and there has been \$3.9 million in carryover as of December 31, 2021. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the substantiation sheet, page 2 of 6 and 3 of 6, on the section "Scope," it notes that "The intention of the project is to construct a new office building in Sanikiluaq that serves both the municipality and the GN. The office will include the following..." Under bullet 4, "...provisions for future GN office space for Family Services, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, and Justice."

My question is, when I look over the design brief, facility planning, and you have that ready in front of you, I counted 13 possible office spaces. If the plan is to include additional spaces, will they add them after the project or during the project?

Chairman: That's a good question. Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That bullet that the member points at in the substantiation sheet regarding future GN office space for Family Services, Executive and

Intergovernmental Affairs, and Justice, it's envisioned that this could potentially be an addition to the new office space that we're presenting here. It's not within the scope of this particular project we're proposing right now, but it could be an addition in future years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: I might have more or less of a comment than a question, given the fact that my previous predecessor has raised some questions in the House with the lack of office spaces. With the intent of leasing office spaces, I'm going to throw out to say to include an MLA office and a constituency office. Thank you.

Chairman: That's a good plug. Minister Joanasie, do you want to comment on that?

Hon. David Joanasie: I'll take his comment as noted, but also I'll just clarify my last response to him on that part about the GN office space for Family Services, EIA, and Justice; we are trying to accommodate it into the new construction that we are proposing. Hopefully we will be able to accommodate. I don't think I can commit and promise that it will happen, but we are trying to accommodate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Is it necessary to place Family Services given the fact that they deal with many clients on a monthly basis, just for the safety reasons for the municipal staff? That's my question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the member clarify his question; if Family Services is necessary to be in this new municipal office space? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I believe the member is asking if the safety considerations, if the Family Services office was installed into that building, was taken into consideration for city staff. Correct? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those things will be factored in. Wait a second.

This was coming from the hamlet council that they wanted kind of one hub for every type of office centralized into one location. That's what the hamlet had wished for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Qavvik, are you done? (interpretation ends) I would like to make an assumption that the department will look into, when they do that second phase of the design, that any security concerns would be addressed at that point. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Getting back to the subject of parking garages, in your substantiation sheet you mention that there's currently a parking garage crisis in Nunavut and that an audit was done and based on the audit, 23 communities were operating at a deficit parking space and several garages have passed their service life. Now, if this is going to be a proposal-based program, what if the hamlet does not have the capability? How will you

address this crisis then for those communities that do not have the capability of running this program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Each community can still include their needs of a parking garage space within their integrated community sustainability plans and if they rank it as their top priority, we will be looking at that as a factor too as we proceed with capital plans around the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm a little bit confused here. You mentioned in your substantiation sheet that there is a crisis, but there may be some other things in a community that might take precedence over a parking garage. You're asking us to approve this funding and your justification is there's a crisis. You didn't exactly answer my question. How will the department deal with this crisis to solve it if a hamlet cannot run the program themselves? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We recognize that what we have been doing, we haven't been keeping up as a territory around parking garages and this is meant to be part of the solution to that crisis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: When can I get an answer as to how they will actually deal with the crisis? Let's say Baker Lake can't handle the program, just as an example because I'm from there, how will the department deal with that to help solve the crisis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As part of the standard capital planning process, all communities provide their lists and their needs and we look at each community based on merit and all the criteria that we look at. That is going to continue on. Of course we don't have all the funds to address every crisis, but this is meant to be part of the solution to that. We will continue on with our capital planning processes and for those communities, if they don't fit in or they're not accessing this new program, we will look at how we can best support them, if it's through they're highest on the list for a new parking garage. That's going to continue on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Next name on my list: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is on the capital project substantiation sheet, project name, "Fibre Infrastructure." Total project cost, is it \$209,500,000? That is my first question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, what we have presented to the members here, we have \$209,500,000 for this fibre project before you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Just for members, this item is on a later page, so if you have more questions on this item, there is a later page for it, but if you have items on page J-3, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: I'll wait until a bit later. I have some questions that I'll wait. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Going to my next name, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a question regarding garage space. They're aware of the needs in the communities and studies have already been done. The separate funding that they're asking for will be a benefit to the communities. However, some communities might not be able to do their own work as planned. That is my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the question. We want to provide garage space to the communities, but we cannot build all that is needed. However, the funding that we are requesting will allow hamlets to independently control their own projects and build their own garage space for their vehicles, and it will be proposal-based funding. That is our vision for moving forward if we are

approved for this funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you, minister, for your response. With regard to the parking garages, does the requested funding account for the associated increases in electrical and utility costs for the hamlets? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, those increased costs will be taken into consideration and there will be an associated increase to the hamlet's annual funding. Additionally, this will also be considered once the individual communities start doing their capital projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we're all aware that the block funding agreement with the City of Iqaluit expired in 2018. Can you remind me of whether or not a new multi-year agreement has been negotiated and signed? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we are in the final year of that block funding and we're in talks with them for the next... . Yes, there has been \$16 million that has been

approved over the previous four years and we're in talks for the next block funding agreement. We're asking for \$4 million under this existing contribution agreement; it's in the final year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. Has a new agreement been negotiated for the next four years then and, if not, why not? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, it is not agreed upon yet. We just started renegotiating, so I will provide an update to the member and the House at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Brewster, are you done? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing me a third time. I just forgot to ask a bit more here on the Mobile Equipment Program. It has a policy; I have it in front of me, but I would just like to question on the amount that is given to municipalities. It says here, "Funding levels depend on available funding in the fiscal year, up to a maximum of \$250,000 per municipality per year." Can the minister confirm that a municipality as large as Arviat with the number of heavy equipment it has for snow clearing, which is quite a chore there, would get the same amount as a much smaller community like, I don't know, let's say Whale Cove? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to respond to the question.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question on where the equipment is stored after a parking garage is built. Under the previous policy...the Municipal Mobile Equipment Program Policy was just updated last year. We made changes to the policy last year in anticipation of coming forward requesting additional mobile equipment funding for communities.

The premise of that policy change was to address the issue that the member just pointed out is that the previous policy said that every municipality received precisely the same amount irrespective of their fleet size or needs. The changes to the policy that we made last year, pending approval by this room this year, will allow us to scale the investment based on community need, which is to say their total fleet size.

If I may anticipate the next question, some of the considerations that we're factoring into the scaling of that investment include some really key indicators and just how much mobile equipment is needed in each community, such as population size, road length, and a square footage of municipal assets. Road length, of course, being a really key indicator and I will point out that the Mobile Equipment Program does not apply to water and sewer service vehicles. It's actually the mobile equipment specified within the policy itself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm aware that the policy says it is loaders, bulldozers, dump trucks, which are needed mainly and mostly in the winter for snow clearing. They are used in the summer too and graders, I assume.

Just for clarity then, the policy I have in front of me was revised November 2020 and date of expiration is April 1, 2025. This is the current policy, but the department plans on updating this policy. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we're not planning to update that policy. The previous policy, I believe, had been a blanket amount for all communities, so it has been revised since. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. Just to confirm then, this policy is outdated that I have in my hand. It was revised November 2020 and expires in 2025. There is a newer policy in place now? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry for the confusion. No, there is not. That is the policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this policy, it's \$250,000

per municipality per year. Just for clarification, the minister plans to update this policy, as the deputy minister said, so that larger communities with more fleets and more roads will get more financial assistance than smaller communities that have less need for this equipment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry for confusing the member, but we have revised the policy to take into those considerations around different factors around community sizes and their fleet and the length of roads and all that good stuff. The new policy is allowing communities that are bigger in size to have the upper limit of \$250,000 as opposed to before, it was \$103,000. Each community, I believe, with the revised policy, all saw an increase of their mobile equipment funding through CGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'm getting confused now because this policy says \$250,000 maximum per community per year and the minister just said \$250,000 maximum per community per year. Is this policy current that I have in my hand, like I said, dated revised November 2020 and expiring April 1, 2025? Is this current, saying that all municipalities can receive up to \$250,000 per year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that policy was changed last year so that it can be implemented this year and we will be proceeding with our budget requests to support this new revised policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This policy is current and it says here, "Funding levels depend on available funding in the fiscal year, up to a maximum of \$250,000 per municipality per year." I haven't read anywhere in here where it talks about the length of roads and the amount of equipment used. Can the minister give us that policy pronto, right now, if this is outdated, what I have in my hand? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanase.

Hon. David Joanase: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. I think we will have to compare policies...

>> *Laughter*

...but if you will allow my deputy to respond to his question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your interest in mobile equipment. In previous years, as the minister mentioned, the policy specifically stated that every municipality would get approximately \$103,000. We recognized a year or so ago that that funding wasn't enough and

that we needed to have a mechanism to a) increase the funding and b) to scale it appropriate to the size of the operational requirements of each community.

The policy that used to say "approximately \$103,000 for every municipality" was amended a year ago to say "up to \$250,000 per community," but our budget still allowed for \$103,000 for the current year. We gave every community what they had traditionally received and right now we're coming forward for additional funding. If the additional funding is approved, we will then be able to divide up that pie based on community size, on parameters on things like road length and population.

The provision within the policy that the member is correctly citing is up to \$250,000, but in this current year the communities have only received their standard amount. Subject to approval in this room of the new funding, we will then be able to scale the investment and increase the investment to each community based on their need. As I mentioned previously, we're looking at a base plus formula wherein each municipality, even the smallest, will maintain their historical level of funding, and then we will build on top of that based on need, either on their population, road length, and/or unique fleet constraints.

I really hope that that has addressed the member's question and clarified that the policy was changed in advance of coming forward with this ask, recognizing that we do have the need to accommodate this need for municipalities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Microphone.

Mr. Savikataaq: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have more questions on this once we compare policies because this policy does not mention at all what the deputy minister has said, but right now I would like to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. We have a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses.

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. Your committee has been considering Bill 2 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Akeeagok.

An Hon. Member: Which one?

An Hon. Member: Guess.

>> *Laughter*

Speaker: The motion is in order. 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. A reminder that the Regular Members' Caucus meets tomorrow at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for March 9:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions

17. First Reading of Bills

18. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 4

19. Consideration in Committee of
the Whole of Bills and Other
Matters

- Bill 1
- Bill 2
- Bill 3

20. Report of the Committee of the
Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: This House stands adjourned
until Wednesday, March 9, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:55*

