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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Gjoa Haven)

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(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*

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(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

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Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic
College*

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of the Whole*

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(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)
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(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
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Minister of Languages; Minister
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, March 16, 2022**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaernerck, 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 Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Before we proceed, can you say the opening prayer, please, Mr. Anavilok.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Anavilok. Welcome, colleagues. Today we will continue our work to assist the communities we represent, and I wish to voice my appreciation to my fellow residents of Gjoa Haven for assisting another resident last night in our community. I thank you all for that.

Now, for our constituents who are watching the televised proceedings, welcome, along with residents listening to the radio broadcasts and even our webcasts, so I thank you for following our proceedings.

(interpretation ends) Hon. Deputy Premier, Ms. Gross.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 045 – 6(1):
Arctic Security and Sovereignty**

Hon. Pamela Gross: I rise today to speak about arctic sovereignty and security considering the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, Premier Silver, Premier Cochrane, and Premier Akeeagok jointly wrote our concerns to the Prime Minister. In the letter we stated that the path to stronger security in the Arctic is through investments in critical infrastructure that support healthy vibrant growth in our communities. Greater investments in airports, roads, digital security, and energy are now more important than ever. Canada also needs to invest in strong resilient arctic communities by investing in housing and social infrastructure that helps to grow our regions.

Mr. Speaker, I stand united with our northern premiers in expressing the need for peace and stability right across the north.

I will be tabling the letter to the Prime Minister on behalf of all three territorial premiers.

Mr. Speaker, this past week the premiers of Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut had the opportunity to meet with top officials from the Government of Canada as well as Minister Vandal and Minister Anand to discuss arctic security and sovereignty. The communication lines will continue to stay open on this issue and Minister

Anand will be travelling to visit the three territories soon. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 046 – 6(1):
Foster Families Support Healthy
Children and Communities**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, colleagues, Nunavummiut, and my family members who are watching.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our vision for all children in Nunavut is to be raised in safe and supportive family homes. However, this is not always possible. There are times when families are not able to support their children and they need to be placed in foster homes.

Mr. Speaker, we are asking Nunavummiut to open their hearts and homes to support children and youth in foster care. Nunavummiut make a difference in the lives of their young community members by offering protective and nurturing places in their home communities, surrounded by their culture and language.

In Nunavut there are three main types of foster homes, including kinship, regular and specialized foster homes. The foster homes provide care for medically fragile children or support to a parent seeking medical care. They provide emergency short-term care for infants awaiting adoption. Adopt-a-family arrangements support family preservation by helping

support a struggling parent. Finally, they provide long-term support for youth who need care but remain connected to their families.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, there are roughly 140 foster families in Nunavut, but we are in serious need of more. If you are listening today and you are interested to learn more about becoming a foster parent, please reach out to the family wellness office in your community. The Department of Family Services provides ample financial support and other resources to foster families to ensure there are safe and loving homes strengthening our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 047 – 6(1):
Nursing Roadmap**

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

Mr. Speaker, last month the Department of Health released its new five-year nursing plan titled (interpretation ends) *Roadmap to Strengthen the Nunavut Nursing Workforce*.

Uqaqtitsijii, this roadmap builds on the department's previous efforts toward building a strong and supported workforce. This strategy has a strong basis in Inuit societal values, focusing on innovation, collaboration, quality, and accountability.

Uqaqtitsijii, the roadmap is a Nunavut-tailored plan that will guide the GN towards a stronger future in Nunavut nursing that meets the needs of all Nunavummiut. The roadmap focuses on five strategic pillars, which are:

- Workforce planning and evaluation;
- Recruitment;
- Professional development;
- Professional practice environment; and
- Leadership.

Uqaqtitsijii, each pillar is further developed to include initiatives and actions designed to recruit and train Inuit candidates for careers in nursing and other public health professions, implement a nurse residency program, create flexible work arrangements, and support and develop nursing leadership.

Uqaqtitsijii, I believe this plan will not only develop a strong workforce and help retain staff, but also create a workforce that with improved continuity, has stronger roots in our communities, and one that enhances our ability to deliver culturally appropriate care.

Uqaqtitsijii, I am looking forward to supporting the implementation of this five-year plan that aims to build a competent, sufficient, stable, appropriate and well-supported health workforce. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements.
Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 048 – 6(1): Dolphin-Union Caribou Population

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Premier, your family, and those who are told to stay home. You are in my thoughts today.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update you on the status of the Dolphin and Union caribou herd.

This herd is important for the subsistence and culture of several Kitikmeot communities. After our 2018 coastal survey of the herd, which estimated the population at 4,105, the affected communities expressed concern regarding declining numbers. After this survey, an interim total allowable harvest for the herd was set at 42.

The Wildlife Research Division led and successfully completed an abundance survey in November 2020. All concerned co-management partners were directly involved in the planning of the survey, which was 20 times the size of the one performed in 2018. Fifteen local hunters and trappers members joined our team as observers. Our researchers found the population was stable from the 2018 count, with an estimated count of 3,851.

Following consultations, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board recommended a total allowable harvest of 105, and this was implemented in January 2021. After further consultations in September 2021, all co-management partners agreed to maintain the current harvest restrictions to assist the recovery of the herd.

Mr. Speaker, Department of Environment staff will continue to work closely with stakeholders to co-manage Dolphin and Union caribou to secure the long-term health and traditional use of this herd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 049 – 6(1): Sport and Recreation Impact Report

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

Mr. Speaker, delivering sport and recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic has required creativity, resourcefulness, and collaboration.

In 2020-21 my department invested over \$4.4 million through the Sport and Recreation Grants and Contributions Program. Financial and human support was provided to community leaders to support them in developing new program delivery methods that aligned with Nunavut's public health measures. This includes virtual events, providing remote training, and a series of resource development to support local program leaders.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my colleagues may recall in 2020-21 the Sport and Recreation Division released *Nunaliit Aulajut: Nunavut's Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation Framework*. Since the release, our investments in communities support in

advancing the five goal areas, which includes:

- Active lifestyles
- Programs and services
- Leadership and capacity
- Connect and collaborate
- Spaces and places

As we move forward with a corresponding action plan to the framework, I look forward to providing regular updates on our work in these five areas.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our community program leaders, including municipal recreation coordinators, community program leaders, coaches, volunteers, and recreation and sport organizations, who have been essential in delivering and adapting programming in a variety of ways that have benefited the well-being of Nunavummiut throughout the pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be tabling the Sport and Recreation Impact Report for 2020-21. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 050 – 6(1):
Nunavut Signs Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Better access to affordable, high-quality and culturally relevant child care has the potential to improve the

lives of Nunavummiut. It means a solid foundation for our youth, greater employment opportunities, more income for families, and more fluent use of Inuktitut at an early age.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share with you that on January 24, 2022 the Government of Nunavut signed the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the Government of Canada. This agreement has secured \$66.1 million over the next five years and will revitalize Nunavut's child care sector. It will also provide a much-needed investment in our families and our future.

A significant portion of this funding will reduce parental fees to ensure that child care for Nunavut families is affordable and accessible. In the first two years of this agreement, fees will decrease by 50 percent, and within five years, these fees will be \$10 a day.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement also commits our government to create 238 new child care spaces over the next five years. Additional spaces will fill a much-needed gap across Nunavut by ensuring that parents have the supports they need to participate in the workforce.

Most of our early childhood educators are some of the lowest paid positions in the territory. Under this agreement, we will streamline the range of child care worker wages to stabilize the workforce and improve wage fairness through access to wage enhancement funding program.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that this agreement will have positive, long-

lasting effects for Nunavut. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 080 – 6(1): Member's Apology to the House

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and viewers across our territory.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to apologize to you and all of my colleagues.

During yesterday's sitting of the House, I was overly enthusiastic about sharing some information about Sanikiluaq's geography and history.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that it is not appropriate for members to display props during sittings of the House.

I appreciate your guidance to me and I thank you for allowing me to make this statement today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 081 – 6(1): Recognizing Bilingualism

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank

everyone and my colleagues, as well as the people viewing us on TV.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a statement about the importance of recognizing and valuing bilingualism.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency of Uqummiut there are many people who are able to communicate in both Inuktitut and English.

In English, (interpretation ends) I want take a moment to pay tribute to the hard work in frontline staff in both Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq who serve the public in different capacities and in different official languages.

Uqaqtii, we have employees at the health centres, schools, hamlets, housing associations, and hamlet and private businesses and organizations who use both languages in their daily work.

Mr. Speaker, we should be encouraging and recognizing the effort and hard work that is required to master more than one language and we should be encouraging and recognizing the effort and hard work that is required to master more than one language and we should be encouraging and recognizing the commitment of our employees who serve Nunavummiut.

Uqaqtii, I will have questions for the appropriate minister at the appropriate time on the issue of the government's administration of its Inuit language incentive program. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 082 – 6(1): Tribute to the Late Colin Adjun

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Colin Adjun of Kugluktuk. Colin passed away on December 3 of 2021 in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, Colin Adjun was born on January 17, 1944, at Rymer Point. He lived to 77 years of age. He leaves behind his wife, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Colin was known as the "Fiddler of the Arctic." At age 9, he bargained for a fiddle instrument with a sailor on a Hudson's bay ship. Colin grew up with two uncles who played the fiddle and through them he learned how to play tunes. By the age of 12 he was already playing at square dances.

It was through his love of music that he was able to connect so well with everyone who met him. Over the years he played at countless festivals, created albums, and learned how to play many other instruments. He was respected and recognized by many and was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 for his contributions as an artist.

Colin spent many years working as wildlife officer in his community. He loved the land and sea, he knew the importance of taking care of his environment, and would often clean up at old campsites.

Mr. Speaker, Colin gave much to his community and region, having served in a number of different capacities,

including the board of directors of Kugluktuk's Hunters and Trappers Organization.

Mr. Speaker, the Kugluktuk Hamlet Council has decided to name the local community hall after Colin. They also awarded him the honorary key to the community shortly before his death.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed.

Mr. Anavilok: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

Colin loved his family and his community. His love for music and dancing carries on. He deserves our thanks for a lifetime of service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in paying tribute to the late Colin Adjun with a moment of silence and stand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 083 – 6(1):
School Bus Storage for
Chesterfield Inlet**

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to support the community of Chesterfield Inlet in their request for a heated building in which to store their school bus.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Education for providing additional information to the Regular Members' Caucus regarding school bus services across Nunavut's communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Chesterfield Inlet's District Education Authority currently holds the contract to operate the school bus.

However, because the school bus stays outside in the extreme cold it leads to a number of maintenance issues that are not always easy to fix.

Mr. Speaker, when the school bus cannot run due to maintenance issues, then it is the children who suffer because there is no transportation for them, especially during extremely cold school days.

Mr. Speaker, the Chesterfield Inlet District Education Authority is requesting a heated garage building to store the school bus. It is not clear whether it should be the Department of Education or the Department of Community and Government Services which should address this issue.

So far it seems that neither department has committed to addressing this need.

At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will tabling a letter from the district education authority on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Member's Statement 084 – 6(1):
Appreciation of Community
Volunteers**

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon to recognize and thank many individuals in Nunavut who provide volunteer service and especially the firefighters and search and rescue organizations. They provide valuable service and I would especially like to recognize a female firefighter who worked for 20 years and now her son has joined the firefighting association.

She retired in February 2022 and her son who was in her amautik when she was a volunteer. Lisa Ishulutak was a firefighter for 20 years. I'm sure there are a lot of people, but I would especially like to pay tribute to this firefighter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 085 – 6(1):
Appreciation of the Hamlet of
Igloolik during Pandemic**

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, people of Igloolik, and especially my immediately family.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hamlet council in Igloolik who provided a valuable service to the people of Igloolik when there was a COVID-19 outbreak.

They provided fresh ice to the elders and to the people who required the ice. They were a lot of people who were in isolation and the Hamlet of Igloolik provided their time to provide this valuable service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements. I have no more names. Before I go on with the next item, just a house cleanup for future use, I ask that if any members request a moment of silence, please notify me in advance. Thank you.

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

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

**Return to Oral Question 024 – 6(1):
Update on COVID Statistics**

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral question asked by Solomon Malliki, MLA from Aivilik, No. 24 – 6(1).

Uqaqtitsijii, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on March 9, 2022. The Member for Aivilik requested information on COVID-19 statistics, specifically the number of COVID-19 related deaths.

The Government of Nunavut is committed to ensuring that the public receive meaningful and science-based information to help reduce the risks associated with COVID-19. We recommend that Nunavummiut rely on information from medical experts such as Dr. Patterson and not misinformation

from people who are not basing their views on the scientific evidence available. We encourage those whose views do not align with the available science to stop putting others at risk by continuing to share opinions that might lead people to ignore public health measures or create fear around vaccinations which will put their health at risk.

Uqaqtitsijii, to the member's question, on the morning of March 9, the Government of Nunavut COVID-19 website had an error which affected COVID-19 case reporting. On behalf of me and my department, we apologize for any worry it may have caused. Once the error was noticed, it was immediately corrected.

The Department of Health is committed to providing accurate information. The total number of Nunavummiut deaths remains five. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions.
Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

**Return to Oral Question 033 – 6(1):
Alternative and Renewable Energy
Projects**

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on March 9, 2022 asked by the Member for Hudson Bay.

I would like to clarify that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is committed to the introduction of alternative and renewable energy in Nunavut and its contribution to

achieving the Government of Canada's renewable energy development targets by 2030.

The Qulliq Energy Corporation appreciates efforts of entities such as the [Qikiqtaaluk] Business Development Corporation and the Nunavut Nukkiqsautiit Corporation in making the deployment and use of renewable energy a reality. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's core business is to provide safe, reliable and affordable retail power to all 25 communities in Nunavut. There are significant costs to doing so, as the customer base for the supply or sale of retail power in Nunavut is small.

Recently the Nunavut Nukkiqsautiit Corporation provided an update on their project development to the Qulliq Energy Corporation, who in turn provided technical information as requested. The Qulliq Energy Corporation looks forward to a mutually beneficial relationship with both entities whilst protecting its customers from rate increases.

The member also requested information on the anticipated savings by the Qulliq Energy Corporation and its customers in Sanikiluaq. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify that this is not a Qulliq Energy Corporation project; as such, it is unable to provide this information. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Returns to Oral Questions.
Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Return to Oral Question 048 – 6(1):
Student Information Systems**

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr.

Speaker. I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on March 10, 2022. The Member for Arviat South requested information on the Department of Education's Student Information System.

Mr. Speaker, our Student Information System is used to record and produce student registration and enrolment information, attendance information, validation statements, and transcripts. It also produces report cards in all official languages. The system is useful as it provides a comprehensive source of data to evaluate school and program performance at all grade levels.

In early January of this year our previous system known as Maplewood was replaced by an updated version now known as Edsembli. There are approximately 2,000 schools across Canada using this same system. During the transition, there were some programming issues that impacted the processing of student transcripts, but these have now been resolved.

We have provided and continue to provide training to school staff on the use of the new system. This new system has a better user interface than the previous system and works seamlessly with our online learning platform, Edsby. This means that school staff will be able to more consistently and reliably input information on their schools and students, resulting in more accurate tracking and reporting in areas such as enrolment and attendance.

We are hopeful that as we adapt to the new Student Information System, we may be able to develop even more robust reporting, and increase the areas that we monitor and track in schools to improve our programs and the overall school experience.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to inform the member that while in the past, the funding formula used to determine how many teachers would be allocated to each school was based on student attendance, as of this school year, the formula is based on student headcount enrollment. This means that school staff allocation better represents the need for teachers in each community. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. As we are closed to the public, there is no recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Item 6: Oral Questions**Question 087 – 6(1): Inuktitut
Language Incentive Program**

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, I was going to further address the issue of bilingual Inuit, interpreters and workers. So I would like to address my question to the (interpretation ends) Minister of Human Resources, and they concern the Government of Nunavut's Inuktitut Language Incentive Program.

As the minister is aware, the Inuktitut Language Incentive Program Policy was last updated in 2020. Mr. Speaker, Government of Nunavut employees who demonstrate proficiency through a formal assessment are entitled to be paid

an annual allowance of one of three levels. The most recent public service annual report indicates that a total of 1,146 Government of Nunavut employees received compensation for language proficiency.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm how many employees in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River currently receive an allowance through the Inuktut Language Incentive Program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the question. I would like to indicate that the Government of Nunavut does encourage and support our employees to use the Inuktut language as the working language through such areas as training and performance incentives.

Mr. Speaker, I do have aggregate figures as to how many employees are receiving the Inuit Language Incentive Policy bonus. However, I do not have the exact details for the communities requested, but I will look into that matter and get back to the member as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you. I will look forward to getting that information.

Also, (interpretation ends) in order to receive an allowance under the Inuit Language Incentive Program, which we have, employees must go through an

assessment that is conducted by the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

I have heard concerns from constituents in that it is difficult to arrange for this assessment.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm how employees who live in smaller communities outside of Iqaluit can undergo this assessment? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member again for the question. The member is correct that assessments for employees who request to receive the Inuktut language incentive are assessed by employees in the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit and those employees are not employed within the Department of Human Resources, and I am unable to provide a response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure this can be worked on. Thank you.

My other question is: (interpretation ends) can the minister indicate if his department is currently considering making any changes to the Inuit Language Incentive Program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member again for the question. The Department of Human Resources is always open to allow for areas of improvement. With regard to the Inuktitut Language Incentive Policy, there was a recent adjustment which lifted the mandatory reassessment requirement, as an example of areas where the Department of Human Resources has actively sought improvements to this program. I would just like to reassure the member that the Department of Human Resources is continually open to improving this as well as other programs and policies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 088 – 6(1): Nunavut Land Use Plan

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Environment, and they concern the issue of the Nunavut Planning Commission's draft land use plan.

As the minister will recall, the draft land use plan was released in July 2021. At that time the commission indicated that additional community consultations would be required before the plan is submitted for approval.

In February of this year the commission announced that regional hearings will be postponed until the fall as a consequence of the pandemic.

Can the minister update the House today on his department's role in the review and approval of the land use plan? Thank you.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. The role of this government is in two roles. There are two roles that we do play; one is that we will be one of the three signatories once the land use plan is approved. We will need to approve the land use plan. The other role is that we do provide input into the draft plans. Through that, at this current stage, that's where our main role is taking place is providing drafts and input into the draft land use plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response. Information published by the Nunavut Planning Commission indicates that it endeavoured to take a "comprehensive view on responsible and sustainable economic development that considers health and quality of life as well as job creation and resource development."

The draft land use plan establishes one of three types of land use designations: "Limited Use Areas," "Conditional use Area," and "Mixed Use Areas." From the minister's perspective, does the draft land use plan strike the right balance between these categories? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's the whole intent and I do hope that one day we will sign the land use plan that covers all those, but right now it's a draft land use that all

stakeholders are given until April 15 to provide input and through that, there may be changes, so I cannot definitely say that that's the balance that's taking place right now. Even our submission is due in that time frame, so I look forward to providing an update to the House and hopefully one day sign the land use plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. I think we can all agree that everybody would really like to see that plan signed off on.

Information published by the Nunavut Planning Commission indicates that the Nunavut Land Use Plan “will apply to projects/project proposals within municipal boundaries that have ecosystemic impacts outside the municipality, or involve the deposit of waste by a municipality, the bulk storage of fuel, the production of nuclear or hydro-electric power or any industrial activities.”

Can the minister clarify how the Nunavut Association of Municipalities and the City of Iqaluit are involved in the review of the draft land use plan? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From my understanding, they're still very active stakeholders in the drafting of the land use plan and I do expect that both of those will provide input on April 15 and be an active participant when the regional hearings

are taking place. They have participated in the past and I'm assuming that they're going to continue to participate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 089 – 6(1): Government of Nunavut Employee Initiatives

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

Mr. Speaker, both the minister and I are former employees of the Government of Nunavut, and I am very confident that he shares my view that we need to make every effort to increase the number of Inuit who are employed in our communities.

As the minister is aware, the government's Priority Hiring Policy was introduced to support the Government of Nunavut's Article 23 obligations.

The current policy indicates that it was to have been reviewed before July 31, 2021.

Can the minister indicate what specific changes to the Priority Hiring Policy are under consideration? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's question regarding the Priority Hiring Policy. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I didn't catch the entire question, so I

would like to ask the member if she would be able to repeat the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted the minister to indicate what specific changes to the Priority Hiring Policy are under consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies to the member for not catching the whole details of the question.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut and the Department of Human Resources are committed to building an effective, functional and skilled public service which is increasingly representative of the population.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut does utilize the Priority Hiring Policy, which gives priority consideration in the recruitment and selection of GN employees to Inuit based in the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Mr. Speaker, the Priority Hiring Policy has proven to be effective when utilized strategically to ensure that Inuit are prioritized for Inuit employment plans and targeted positions. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am not aware of or do not currently have the intention of addressing any concerns surrounding the Priority Hiring Policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As a former employee, I am familiar with the government's hiring process and I recognize that the department has policies in place that are intended to support the ability of qualified Inuit to apply for positions.

Concerns have been raised with me that there are times when the processes are not being followed and qualified Inuit candidates are not getting a chance to be interviewed for positions, even if they meet the screening criteria.

Can the minister clarify what appeal rights are in place for beneficiaries who believe that they have been unreasonably screened out of a competition?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for bringing this matter up. There is no reason why any qualified individual would not be successfully screened in to a competition. In order to prevent any instances where this may occur, the Government of Nunavut recruitment policy does allow for the staffing appeals, as the member had alluded to. Mr. Speaker, the staffing appeals process allows for candidates who are notified that they were unsuccessful to be screened into the process and provides a brief period, I believe, which is two weeks to allow for those potential employee candidates to

submit an appeal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It has come to my attention that a significant number of job advertisements for vacant positions in the government are being restricted to residents of the community in which the positions are located.

As the minister will recall, he and I recently exchanged correspondence on the subject of the government's remote work policy.

It is my view that the government's hiring process should focus on locating jobs in the communities so that they are filled by people who live in the communities that they serve.

Can the minister update the House today on the status of his department's development of a new Remote Work Policy? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I would like to thank the member for a very excellent question. It is true that we did exchange some correspondence recently and at that time I informed the member that the Department of Human Resources is in the drafting stages of producing a remote work policy. Mr. Speaker, in light of recent events over the last few years, it has shown that the Government of

Nunavut is capable of allowing for and accommodating employees who wish to work remotely.

Mr. Speaker, to the point or the question on timelines, I am proud to announce that the draft policy is nearing completion and I hope to have a finalized policy published within the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 090 – 6(1): Qulliq Energy Corporation Projects in Netsilik

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation concerning projects in the communities of Kugaaruk and Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, during yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister informed my colleague from Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has not yet submitted its application to the federal Arctic Energy Fund for financial assistance to construct Chesterfield Inlet's new power plant.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm when the Qulliq Energy Corporation will be submitting an application to the Arctic Energy Fund for financial assistance to construct Kugaaruk's new power plant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for that question. For Kugaaruk, they haven't submitted a proposal because they still need to identify the land where the potential power plant would go. The land issue is progressing. That's where we are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister give me a time frame of when the process and how long will it take for the federal approval process is expected to take? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for the question. I can't say precisely when the potential site for the power plant in 2019 had started, but they started improvements to 2027-28. The approval process for the funds will be done annually. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During Monday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister announced that the Qulliq Energy Corporation's new district heating system for Taloyoak is expected to be completed next year.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation's most recent annual report indicates that there

have been delays in this project due to COVID.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify the approximate cost of the new district heating system project in Taloyoak? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue in question about the cost of the district heating system, there were different projections ranging from \$35 million to \$40 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 091 – 6(1): Vaccine Mandate

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, on November 30, Nunavut's health minister announced that many health care workers in Nunavut will be required to provide proof they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 10, 2022. This new rule affected nurses, dental therapists, central sterilizing room technicians, midwives, as well as staff at community and public health centres, the Qikiqtani General Hospital, continuing care centres, mental health offices, and the Akausisarvik and Cambridge Bay mental health facilities.

Mr. Speaker, to date, how many staff were impacted due to this vaccine mandate? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the mandatory vaccination policy that Health has implemented, just a bit of background, requiring the COVID-19 vaccination for individuals who work in these high-risk settings and with vulnerable populations reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission and prevents outbreaks within these settings and communities.

The member's question, I believe, was regarding how many staff have been impacted. There are 1,522 employees that the policy applies to. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe just to clarify my first question, out of those over a thousand employees, how many employees were impacted specifically that either they had refused or were unable to be vaccinated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) *Ma'na* for the clarification. To date there has been one request for an exemption and that request for an exemption is currently under review. To date no health employees have refused to provide their personal proof of vaccination and no disciplinary action has been taken. To date no health employee has been accommodated due

to a medical or religious exemption. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response. I thank our health care workers out there for taking the easiest step to help defend our population against COVID.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>> *Applause*

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, within the press release, there were also contractors were impacted. Just for clarification, were any contracted employees or contracted services impacted by this vaccine mandate as well? I'm specifically concerned about our most vulnerable population at continuing care centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member, for that question. (interpretation ends) Yes, the policy does apply to continuing care centres and in terms of the impacts to the employees, as I mentioned earlier, to my understanding, there has not been any negative impact in terms of the human resource capacity or recruitment or hiring at those facilities.

I would like to echo the member's comments that I truly appreciate all the employees across Health's various facilities who are vaccinated and who are doing it, I believe, in some cases out of consideration for others, out of consideration for their co-workers, some

of whom may be vulnerable to or have pre-existing conditions that make them more at risk from COVID-19.

In terms of the vaccination policy, it is still a work in progress, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health is still in the process of collecting proof of vaccination certificates from some of our employees and I will admit that our administration of the policy has been hampered over the previous months due to COVID, due to dealing with the Omicron wave. It's still a work in progress, but it's a policy that we are fully committed to implementing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 092 – 6(1): Caribou Management in the Kivalliq

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my constituents in Coral Harbour and Nauyasat, I wish you a good day.

My questions are for the Minister of Environment, and they concern the issue of caribou management in the Kivalliq.

During yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I tabled a letter that I recently received from the Aiviit Hunters and Trappers Organization in Coral Harbour.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtittijii*, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the board and members of the HTO.

The HTO has requested that a population survey be conducted on the Southampton Island caribou herd this

year. Can the minister assure me that this will be done? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to acknowledge the role of the HTO board in requesting a survey over their concerns about the caribou as they initiated the survey request themselves.

We will provide our support for this initiative as the survey was required in this fiscal year, but due to the pandemic restrictions, the survey was deferred and currently, we are preparing plans to conduct the population survey starting May 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your very good response. (interpretation ends) The letter that I received from the Aiviit Hunters and Trappers Organization indicates that "...the board of directors is concerned about the population declining ... there has been a report from our airline that in the year 2021 there were 21,000 pounds of caribou meat shipped out of the community for sales purposes."

Can the minister clarify how his department is working with the HTO and other co-management partners to address the issue of caribou management in the region? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the concerns voiced, I first thank the board for raising that issue, as it too was a commonly held concern.

The harvested caribou are managed using a tag system, and the tags are requested by the community, and due to the request for the tag system, the HTO and our department must collaborate on this management issue, and I will task my staff in the community and the regional staff to work with the HTO to make improvements if required.

This would be doubly concerning if the harvest was not managed with the tagging system, and since the community requested using this system, we are trying to listen to the concerns voiced by the HTO, and I want to work with the member and HTO to resolve their concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that good response.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, his department recently issued an invitation to tender for a caribou telemetry survey. The communities of Nauyasat, Baker Lake and Arviat will be involved in this work.

Can the minister assure me that the results of the survey will be shared with the hunters and trappers organizations and the local Members of the Legislative

Assembly representing the communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The various population surveys for wildlife centre largely on mammals, with caribou and other harvested species being surveyed. Once a survey is completed, the information is provided to the community, as well as the RWOs and main wildlife management body, the NWMB.

The survey is reported to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, and staff avail themselves to answer any questions, and with that being the situation, I can approve the transfer of information whenever they are provided to our department, as I would also provide it to my colleagues.

I believe this system is amongst the best managed where it relates to population surveys, as the local bodies are generally involved in the survey, and I will commit to continuing that practice. If minor improvements are required, then we will make those adjustments as needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 093 – 6(1): Caribou Management in the Kitikmeot

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “hello” to the people of Kugluktuk.

(interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Environment and they concern the issue of caribou management in the Kitikmeot.

As the minister is aware, there have been concerns about the status of the Dolphin and Union caribou herd in the Kitikmeot.

Last week the Department of Environment announced the closure of the harvest in respect to the community of Cambridge Bay. The announcement indicated that “The Total Allowable Harvest was established by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to support the recovery of the Dolphin and Union caribou population.”

Can the minister provide an update today on the current population estimates for the herd? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to answering the question, perhaps I can just make a brief statement about this issue, as it was brought up previously in a member’s statement and I genuinely felt that, as the late Colin Adjun was an exemplary employee, and I too share in the sense of loss of the community, along with many Nunavummiut who miss the presence of that wonderful man.

(interpretation ends) For the Dolphin-Union population, as for the recent survey in November 2020 that was conducted, was that there was an estimated count of 3,851 and the total

allowable harvest is to remain the same at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the issue of wolf predation has been a major concern raised by the hunters and trappers organization in Kugluktuk.

Can the minister provide an update on his department’s work to increase the amount paid to harvesters under its Wolf Sample Program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to applaud the MLA for continuing to lead on this herd within his community.

I was very fortunate to have a meeting with the MLA and the hunters and trappers where we discussed this wolf predation and how we can try to solve it. I committed to the community and I further had a meeting with my MLA colleague for Cambridge Bay along with her community hunters and trappers and asked how best we can look at improving our wolf program.

I look forward to getting some advice on this and in the near future I want to see if we need to improve any of our programs related to wolf predation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response. (interpretation ends) The issue of caribou management in the Kitikmeot also involves transboundary discussions with stakeholders in the Northwest Territories. Can the minister provide an update on his department's activities in this area? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very looking forward to having this pan-territorial meeting in person before the Omicron came and practically cancelled any of our meetings. I'm happy to report that I am planning to have a virtual meeting right after the session ends on March 23. That's the tentative date that we currently have for the pan-territorial meetings with the territorial and the HTOs that are affected in that particular caribou herd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 094 – 6(1): Sanikiluaq Local Housing Organization Complex

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and they concern the issue of new local housing organization complexes.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued a request for proposal in March 2019 for design services in respect to three new local

housing organization complexes in Sanikiluaq, Arviat, and Cambridge Bay.

In February 2021 the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued a request for tender for the construction of Sanikiluaq's new local housing organization complex. This new facility is extremely important for the community and I thank the Nunavut Housing Corporation for its support.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the tendering process for this essential project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nunavut Housing Corporation, for the information of my colleague representing Sanikiluaq, regarding his comments about that process, the tendering process was completed, and they identified the successful contractor who will provide the construction work in Sanikiluaq, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the update. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2022-23 capital budget does not include specific new funding for the new local housing organization complex in Sanikiluaq. Can the minister clarify the status of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's budgeting for this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funds will not be going through the supplemental appropriation process we are currently undertaking, as the funds are already approved from the past fiscal year.

The funds are immediately available, as they are, in English (interpretation ends) carryovers (interpretation) of funding already appropriated, and we will use those funds to construct the new complex and the LHO will be using these funds to build the complex with these previously approved funding amounts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that clarification. Can the minister commit to ensuring that the board of directors and management of Sanikiluaq's local housing organization will be consulted on an ongoing basis by the Nunavut Housing Corporation as this project moves forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I want to continue to be his favourite minister...

>> *Laughter*

...so, Mr. Speaker, yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

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

Question 095 – 6(1): Kivalliq Inuit Centre Contract

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and to the people of Baker Lake.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have been given to understand that the contract for the Kivalliq Inuit Centre, which provides services in Winnipeg to medical travellers from the Kivalliq, will be expiring in 2023.

Can the minister provide an update on the status of negotiations for a new contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for that question. The Kivalliq Inuit Centre is very well known by the Kivalliq people and I would like to thank the Kivalliq Development Corporation, who operates the Kivalliq Inuit Centre and making it very hospitable.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, regarding the contract, the member is correct that the contract for the operation is due to expire in March 2023. There is a separate lease for the facility itself,

which also expires in 2023. Currently Health is planning to proceed with a comprehensive process which will see the operations and lease for the facility combined into one agreement. That's our current direction with regard to the contract. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your response. I appreciate the work that you all are doing there to get the adequate services provided for Kivallirmiut down there that are on medical travel.

Mr. Speaker, the Kivalliq Inuit Centre has been delivering services at the same location for some time. There is some concern that it may no longer be adequate to serve the accommodation needs of Kivallirmiut in the future.

Can the minister tell us whether his department has conducted any analysis on whether the current needs for medical traveller services are being met and, if this analysis has already been completed, has it determined the need for a larger and better equipped building? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for asking that question. We have had meetings with the management of the Inuit health centre. We had our last meeting in December 2021 and we have ongoing dialogue when there are inefficiencies that have to be corrected or when there is a requirement to have

dialogue. We haven't identified the need for a larger or better equipped building. We have 122 beds available at the current centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your responses. You're slowly becoming my favourite minister...

>> *Laughter*

...so I hope you continue the trend.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the catering contract for Kivalliq medical travel is a separate contract from the accommodation contract. It is not clear whether there are other contracts for services such as transportation or interpretation.

Will the minister commit to providing updated information to the regular members on the current status of all contracts relating to medical travel from the Kivalliq region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It's nice to know I'm somebody's favourite. For the record, Mr. Speaker, all the regular members are my favourite.

>> *Laughter*

Uqaqtitsijii, regarding the contracts that the member is enquiring about, it's my understanding that the interpretation

services provided at the facility are part of the operations contract.

In terms of the various contracts that are under medical travel, those should be captured in the annual reporting through the Ministry of Community and Government Services in terms of the contract activity reports that are tabled, but I will commit to following up with the member in terms of what specific gaps might exist in the reporting of the contracts and trying to fill in any gaps in providing information to the regular members if there are information gaps there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 096 – 6(1): Chesterfield Inlet Power Plant

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I have more questions today about the Qulliq Energy Corporation's proposed new power plant for Chesterfield inlet.

As the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation's application to construct a new power plant in Chesterfield Inlet was submitted to the Utility Rates Review Council earlier this year.

Yesterday the minister indicated that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has not yet submitted its application to the federal

Arctic Energy Fund for financial assistance to construct the new power plant. Can the minister clarify why the application has not yet been submitted? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. We will be submitting our proposal for Chesterfield Inlet's power plant this summer of 2022, but it's very likely that it's not going to be started right away. There are also quite a few things that we have to do prior to the construction and that will take place around 2023-24 and ending in 2026-27. In Chesterfield Inlet we haven't identified where the power plant is going to be located and we have to do a review of that first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She answered this question, but I'll go ahead with it. Yesterday the minister indicated that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is "currently working on the final land selection for the new power plant with the Chesterfield Inlet community and related stakeholders." Can the minister indicate when this process is expected to be completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank

you for that question, but I can say that I already answered that question.

>> *Laughter*

We have identified that we are going to be looking at all of the power plants up to 2026-27. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's application to the Utility Rates Review Council indicates that Chesterfield Inlet's new power plant will "... be designed to be capable of integrating renewable energy sources." Can the minister clarify what types of renewable energy sources are being considered as part of the plant design? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As to what can be added to the power plant, it would be such things as solar energy development and/or district heating; reusing waste heat from the power plant and using it to heat other buildings. They would be using less diesel fuel and also producing less waste and that is why we are trying to make it possible for them to add other ways to generate energy if they wanted to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 097 – 6(1): Status of \$10-a-day Child Care

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education and it is pertaining to the minister's statement.

As was noted by the statement, on January 24, the Prime Minister of Canada, together with our Premier, announced an agreement to support \$10-a-day licensed daycare in the territory by March 2024. That may seem like a long way away, but we all know that it takes planning and hard work to implement such initiatives.

Can the minister clearly explain how her department is working to address fees for daycare space to ensure that by March of 2024, the average cost for daycare in Nunavut will be \$10 a day no matter where in the territory a family lives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to our colleague for the great question on early childhood. It is a pleasure to be one of the signatories on this ELCC agreement across Canada for Nunavummiut and better accessibility and affordability for child care. The Department of Education has an implementation plan, five-year plan, and it is all on different categories, including affordability, accessibility, inclusivity, quality and also administration and reporting.

I can say that by the end of this year, December 2022, the fees will be reduced to 50 percent for parental fees the child or children attending daycare. So the funds will offset the cost for the parents by 50 percent for their child or children attending daycare, whether it is half day, full day, or after school fees.

By the next year, January 2023, to the end of 2026, through year three to five, that is when the \$10 a day fees will come into effect and that will help increase affordability and child care. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her information on the rate the fees will go down, but I didn't hear a response or an answer at all. My question was whether the \$10-a-day daycare fee will be through all the communities in Nunavut, and I didn't get any assurance that that would be the case, but I'll go on to my next question.

Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister announced this, he also indicated that the funds would be used to create 238 new licensed early learning and child care spaces by March 2026, with federal funding of \$66 million over five years. The minister reiterated that.

Can the minister clarify whether any of this funding will be directed towards capital projects to build daycares and, if so, which communities are likely to get new daycares? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of [Education], Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member. To further answer the question previously, yes, all Nunavut communities that have licensed daycare or day home facilities will see the benefit from this agreement.

To answer the next question, there are currently 1,082 licensed spaces in our territory. By the end of this year, there will be 30 more daycare spaces and that will go on over the years to 238 new daycare spaces.

Right now we're assessing a needs assessment based on community and the department has received requests from a couple of our Nunavut communities to enhance and work on the communities' daycares to get them back up and operational. Mr. Speaker, this funding has a different approach, but it's a great one because we're able to enhance daycare and daycare facilities across our territory. We will be doing this needs assessment and from there, we can see where we have gaps in our communities. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I didn't hear an answer from the minister about my question, which was: will any of this funding be directed towards capital projects to build daycares? I got an explanation of they're going to do studies and see what communities can be enhanced, but I didn't get a response as to whether any of these funds will be used as capital funds to fund new daycares in communities that badly need them. I'll go on to my next question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education is responsible for the implementation of the *Child Day Care Act*. The federal announcement indicates that this \$10-a-day child care agreement will support a child care system that is fully inclusive of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports.

When our government updated Nunavut's *Education Act*, amendments were made to enhance the K to 12 education system with respect to inclusive education.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that Nunavut's *Child Day Care Act* is amended to enhance and support inclusivity of our child day care system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* again to our colleague for the question. Based on the previous question, I'm sorry for not elaborating on capital projects. The new funding does not cover the creation of capital projects. That is a separate entity that will have to go through the capital planning process.

In terms of the Act, that Act does need to be updated and yes, we will be working to update the Act to include the points that our colleague has raised and *quana* for bringing those forward. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 098 – 6(1): General Rate Application

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for recognizing me again. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I would like to revisit the issue of the upcoming general rate application, and I am hoping that the minister's answers today will shed some additional light on the subject.

In her reply last week to questions on the subject asked by one of my colleagues, the minister stated that she can commit in having it standardized in communities in Nunavut to "pay the same rates."

Can the minister clarify why the Qulliq Energy Corporation supports this change and how the minister could commit to this rate structure change without it going through the regulatory process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To standardize them, the work will be done and there is a reason behind it. Within Nunavut, the power rates are the highest in Canada. For example, I can say that in Nunavut 37.5 cents per kilowatt-hour is what we pay, but in the other parts of Canada, they pay pretty much a standard fee of 17.9 cents per kilowatt-hour. We are paying too much.

We believe it would be better if we all had the same power rates because right

now the different communities pay very different rates. Because of that, once we start to pay the same amount, it would be better for everyone and it would be easier, but the fact that it needs approval, we have to follow the proper approval procedures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the record, can the minister confirm and clarify if the Qulliq Energy Corporation's upcoming general rate application requires approval from the corporation's board of directors and/or cabinet approval prior to it being submitted to the Utility Rates Review Council for consideration? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Applying and approval are two different things; we have to go through that. The Qulliq Energy Corporation would give a proposal to the minister to get approval, and then the minister would present it to the Utility Rates Review Council, and the Utility Rates Review Council may take up to 150 days to review it. Once it is at the minister's desk, then the minister has to present it to cabinet and to the affected parties. That's why the process is very slow, because there is a process that we have to follow so that everybody can see what the application looks like. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you to the minister for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past week a number of my colleagues have been asking important questions about the Qulliq Energy Corporation's Independent Power Producers Program and its Commercial and Institutional Power Producer Program. Can the minister clarify the extent to which the rollout of these programs will impact the proposed rate structure for Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. The rates and approval process will be affected by solar and wind power production. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 099 – 6(1): Student Information Systems

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Education and it's related the return to oral question on the Student Information System and specifically on how we support post-secondary education for students.

In the return to oral question, the minister stated that there is a new Student Information System that is in transition to, known as Edsembli, and during the transition, there were some programming issues that impacted the processing of student transcripts, but these have been resolved.

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of months I've had a number of constituents reach out to me about their concerns about delays in accessing post-secondary education support such as FANS and being able to actually apply for post-secondary education because their transcripts have come in late. I wonder if the minister can assure those students and parents today that there will not be any more delays in the distribution of transcripts. Thank you.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to our colleague for the question. On post-secondary education regarding transcripts, yes, as indicated, there was an issue with the transition to using our new software and the transition did result in students being delayed with their transcripts. I am happy to say that all the transcript requests that we have received have been processed and mailed electronically and hard mail through our mailing system. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for that response. Mr. Speaker, many students in Nunavut can rely on parents, family, and friends to help them in their applications for post-secondary education. However, many families and students struggle with the process and deadlines due to access issues, whether it is access to accurate transcripts or access to the Internet or even computers, as well as really importantly, access to Visa cards or other payment methods.

Can the minister clarify with us how the Department of Education supports students in their applications? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. The Department of Education has the FANS program and as we know, the FANS program has been a long-standing issue for Nunavummiut to access funding for post-secondary. I'm happy to say that we have started the process to review the FANS program and I look forward to tabling documents in the near future on the implementation of the plan and the way forward for our post-secondary students to have better enhanced means in terms of funding, transcripts, and so forth.

We do know and can say that we have very outdated systems and the FANS database is one of them that is very outdated and will require going through a process to implement and find a new database. The department is currently reviewing databases across our country and doing a jurisdictional scan to see what software might suit our territory, as the software is probably older than Nunavut currently.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of escalated files coming in from our fellow members and from Nunavummiut across our territory who have sent either the FANS department or myself or the department emails or phone calls regarding FANS or transcripts. We take those matters very seriously and work to resolve those issues. Like all of us here and Nunavummiut, we don't want to see

delayed payments or any issues. I'm really happy that, from what I think, the escalated files that were received have been dealt with and I can report that the student matters are addressed. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for those responses. I am glad that you brought up FANS. Deadlines for the applications for FANS are sometimes difficult for students because they are sometimes unable to plan due to many circumstances to apply for a post-secondary education, and sometimes young people spontaneously decide to pursue a post-secondary education and those deadlines that are in place can be a barrier to students who are inspired to pursue that education.

I know from the last few months in supporting some of the students who ran into those problems that it can be something that really hinders their ability to actually be successful in their schooling. I'm wondering: in this review that you're doing, will the minister commit to creating more flexibility in order to support all students who are inspired to pursue more education? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. I can commit on behalf of the Department of Education that we will be looking at the FANS overall process and timelines and everything geared around FANS and its distribution of payments to

our recipients who receive FANS. I can say that we have a plan that we're excited to be working on and hope to have the review conducted by next year, at the end of next year. I will take that comment into consideration when we are looking at the review of FANS. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to extend oral questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay, so we will continue. 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. Hon. Deputy Premier, Ms. Gross.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 021 – 6(1): Pan-territorial Letter to Prime Minister on Arctic Security

Hon. Pamela Gross: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the pan-territorial letter to the Prime Minister on arctic security. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Tabled Document 022 – 6(1): Sport and Recreation Division 2020-21 Impact Report

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to table in the House the Sport and Recreation Division's 2020-21 Impact Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabled Document 023 – 6(1): Letter from Chesterfield Inlet District Education Authority Requesting Heated Garage for School Bus

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table today a letter from the Chesterfield Inlet District Education Authority requesting a heated garage for their school bus.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the ministers of Education and Community and Government Services to read this letter with care and attention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 1, 2, and 3 with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:34 and
Committee resumed at 15:58

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

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the capital estimates for 2023-24, Bill 2, and the Department of Education, the Department of Finance, and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. That is what we wish to deal with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Bill 02 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023 – Education – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I believe it's the Department of Finance after Education, correct? Thank you. Thanks for the clarification. I would like to ask Minister Gross: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like to ask if the Deputy Minister, Rebecca Hainnu, Manager of Capital Planning, Barry Cornthwaite, Director of Corporate Services, Ibrahim Suleiman, and Mary Kilabuk, Manager of Policy, along with Director of Policy Arielle Stockdale will be here as witnesses. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I don't have to proceed with the next part of identifying your officials. We're still under Mr. Malliki's line of questioning. Just one moment please.

I understand the minister had some comments she wanted to make before we proceed. Minister.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for giving me the opportunity to provide some additional information to the members following our appearance in Committee of the Whole yesterday.

One question that we heard from the members which I wish to address first was whether outbuildings are included in school designs to be used in emergency situations such as fire or lockouts. While the school emergency response manuals must indicate muster stations where students and staff should assemble in the case of an emergency, there are not always shelter outbuildings. Outbuildings for this purpose are not currently included in our school designs. However, as we develop capital standards, this may be something that could be incorporated.

Mr. Chairman, we also heard questions about why the renovation and addition for Sakku School in Coral Harbour has an estimated price difference than the construction of a brand new school in Taloyoak. Mr. Chairman, I would like to

share with the members some of the reasons for this.

It is very difficult, Mr. Chairman, to compare the cost of two different school projects in two different communities. Firstly, as suggested by members yesterday, the square footage of the two schools will vary significantly and they are two different types of schools. Sakku School will undergo not just major renovations, but a significant addition. Sakku School is currently 4,000 square meters and following the renovations and additions it will be 5,000 square meters. The new high school in Taloyoak, however, is planned to only be 2,800 square meters.

Student capacity at Sakku School will go from 335 to 445. The new Taloyoak school is expected to have a capacity of 210. Even when capacity is similar, elementary and K-12 schools are often larger than high schools because younger grades needs more space to interact with hands on learning than high school students. Sakku School will also have separate entrances for high school and elementary school students. This will help prevent bullying at the school, but of course it also increases the cost of the renovations.

Additionally, as mentioned yesterday, the new community learning centre that will be built together with the Sakku School is a brand new stand-alone building that is incorporated into the cost estimate of the project. The community learning centre will be approximately 330 square meters.

Mr. Chairman, I want to ensure the members that full scoping, due diligence, and thorough cost analysis

went into the decision for a major renovation over a new build in Coral Harbour. The costs of a new build were determined to be significantly higher and would also have to include the high costs of demolishing the existing building.

Mr. Chairman, the project in Coral Harbour is beyond the design phase and if approved, the tender for construction is set to go out in the fall of 2022. At this point we are beyond the opportunity to change the scope of the project from a major renovation and addition to a new building without causing significant delay.

Taloyoak's new school is currently in the design phase and if approved, will have further community consultation in the coming fiscal year. With regard to the cost estimates provided by our design consultants, while there are always unknown factors that could affect the bid values, by putting the tender out in the fall, we can expect to see lower bids. A fall tender date reduces the risk to the contractor by providing them with more time to secure trades materials and space on the boat, which in turn should reduce the need for high contingency estimates with the bids.

Mr. Chairman, to summarize, the square footage of the school, the separate entrances for the high school and elementary school children, and the separate community learning centre are all reasons why the cost of the major renovation and addition to Sakku School was estimated as per what is listed in the substantiation sheet.

Quana for the opportunity to provide this additional information to members and I welcome further questions to the

department's 2022-23 capital estimates. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for those comments, Minister Gross. Like I started saying earlier, Mr. Malliki still had a line of questioning going, but I will ask any members that do want to be added to the list that they notify me. Mr. Malliki, please proceed with your questioning.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for that clarification on some of the questions that I was going to raise. You responded to some of them and when we hear more detailed responses, our line of questioning is generally lowered. Thank you.

However, one of my remaining questions was something I wanted to raise at yesterday's committee meeting. In looking at the short-term, either for (interpretation ends) high school or elementary (interpretation) school replacement timing, or perhaps to deal with the underground water that flows underneath the school and it is an enormous amount of water. Will this contribute to more mould forming in the school or does staff know how to remedy that? Thank you, Mr. [Chairman].

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Malliki. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to our colleague for the question. All the issues that are raised regarding Sakku School with regard to water mold will be addressed and are being addressed with the plan and the design and the build of the building. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With Arctic College included in the budget and while Sakku School is being renovated, what would the cost be and how long would that new building take to build? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. As the question pertains to budget figures, the CLC, I can say, will be a part of the total cost for construction of the Sakku School and the CLC project. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The DEA in Salliq gave me a letter. They started making requests way back 2014 for a new school and if you want to see the letter, it was just given to me during lunch hour and I have the letter.

The DEA did make requests and a request was not adhered to. I just want a quick response to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that, Mr. Malliki. Maybe as the letter is about six or seven years old, the minister may not have it in front of her. Maybe you can just give the minister a bit of context to your question. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): My apologies, Mr. Chairman. I will read the letter from the DEA in Coral Harbour.

(interpretation ends) “Good day. We are writing to you because we feel rejected and forgotten in this part of Nunavut.

A couple of years ago we were promised school renovations which were cancelled due to budgetary allowance. However, our community is rapidly growing. The present school building is becoming rundown and falling apart, even though we have maintained the structure to our best ability.

The DEA has placed their case to the government on more than one occasion and has raised the necessary concern, yet no positive response. We are looking to the new school build. We are all worried about our children’s education. We need the situation addressed.

Kind regards, Tony Netser, Acting Chair, DEA.”

>>*No audio*

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to our colleague for the question. I would like to say that the Department of Education does work closely with the DEAs and works to support the DEA. As this letter was from the community regarding the school, I can state that the Department of Education did receive a motion from the DEA to go ahead with the design of the Sakku School as part of the planning process and it was approved in the fall of 2020. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my last question then,

(interpretation ends) The chair stated that the community has asked for a new school. Why did the department not listen to the DEA request?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. As part of the capital process, any new construction has to go through the Community and Government Services process and sometimes all applications aren't approved. We did hear the request and to my understanding, this is a request that has already been going through the capital process for the last five years and, Mr. Chairman, the process for creating capital, it takes eight years to go through this process and we are already in year five, Mr. Chairman.

There has been a lot of work with the community, with planners, with the Department of Education, going to meet with stakeholders as I discussed yesterday, and there has been a lot of due diligence put into the Sakku School, Mr. Chairman. I would like to state that there has been concerns raised by the District Education Authority and the District Education Authority Kivalliq School Operations and the Sakku School staff were consulted to discuss the education program needs for the community.

There was also community information gatherings, meetings with stakeholders were held in November 2019 and January 2020, along with meetings that were planned for late March of last year, however due to COVID-19 this meeting was delayed until August 2020. It's been

a long corporate history for working with the community, Mr. Chairman. We would like to see this, if approved, go forward.

We have many communities in Nunavut that do want new schools or new facilities incorporated. Renovations; we have 45 schools in the community and we can only work on two a year. We're hoping that Coral Harbour will see these changes for their community, for the children, to have the benefit.

If this project is delayed, Mr. Chairman, that will mean that the project will be stalled and take a longer time to go through the capital process. So I hope that this answers most of the questions for the member. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): I have one last question. I thought I had asked my last question, but as it's been worked on that many years, so I don't think it's going to change. I think that it goes ahead that will be more appropriate then. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that. It was just a comment. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you can just indulge me, you will see that this is connected to capital.

To determine when this process is started to either renovate or build a new school in community, it has to be 85 percent capacity, and on the Taloyoak

school in 2017 it was 90, 91, 103, and 107, respective for the years. Does attendance play a part in figuring out the number of students in a school? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the question. No, attendance is not a factor in this circumstance. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate when that changed or if it has changed? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. That changed this year due to headcount and condition of the building. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last year attendance played a role in determining school capacity, and this year it doesn't. Is that correct? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the member is correct. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that clarification. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The attendance plays no role

in it. Just going from return to oral for the past four years, 2017-18 attendance, this was Nunavut-wide, was 66 percent; 2018-19, 64 percent; 2019-2020, 76 percent; 2020-21 was 57 percent. Is there a possibility that a new school would be built and if you're at 50 percent attendance, that it would be fairly empty? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* for the question to our colleague. The Department of Education goes based on utilization of the school and that goes into head count and that goes into and the FTE is used for capital.

Sorry, if I can turn it over to Barry to provide supplementary information. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

Mr. Cornthwaite: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister for allowing me to answer.

As the minister said, full-time equivalency is FTE and that is what is used when we are designing schools. Basically those are the children. Fulltime equivalent is an easy example; the children that go to school help us build the schools.

What the minister was talking about head count is what is used now, that is all of the young people in the community would attend the school. That is the difference between the two. Full-time equivalency is used when we are building new schools. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. I did not get part of it in the ear piece, so just for clarification; to build a new school to figure out capacity, it is the number of students that were enrolled at the beginning of the school year? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to the member for the question. Yes that is correct. It is based on the number enrolled in September. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the schools in Arviat are quite full I think. There seems to be a lot of students there and I do not know if the minister would have this with her since we are not dealing with Arviat, but are there any school in Arviat close to past 85 percent and they should be planning for a new school? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. I think it is a very valid question when we are talking about the change and the measurement of students, the impact on other communities, so I will allow the question. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is one school in Arviat and that is the middle school. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is the capacity there? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The capacity is one hundred eighty-seven, and it is at 103 percent utilization. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. When are they going to put that on the plan for a new school then because it is over the 85 percent? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The two schools that were put to preplanning this coming fiscal year did not get approved. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is sad to hear that a school is needed and it did not get approved.

I understand where you said you could only do two a year, but if something is needed, I think the education minister should be pushing harder because Arviat and Baker Lake both were due for schools, I believe, about five years ago and they were cancelled due to attendance.

If they needed the school five years ago and the only reason it was cancelled was due to attendance, then they desperately

need one now and I would highly recommend that they put this back on the books and fight hard.

Arviat is a third largest community and I would dare to say that the student populations is maybe very near a thousand if you add the three schools. So that is just a comment, but they have to make this a priority, a new school for Arviat. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq, for that comment. The next name I have on my list: Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, *Iksivautaaq*. My question is under Ongoing Lifecycle. Nasivik High School has carpets that have been there since it first opened and they have not been replaced. (interpretation) What plans do you have to replace the carpeting in the high school and some of the staff and students are allergic to the material. (interpretation ends) It has affected students and staff with allergies. Thank you, *Iksivautaaq*.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to our colleague for the question. I understand and sympathize with carpeting and allergies. For your community of Pond Inlet, I would recommend the DEA write a letter to the Department of Education requesting the concern as the department is not aware of this issue and we look forward to receiving that letter. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. CGS took the initiative and I would like to know if you received a copy. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. As far as I aware, the Department of Education has not yet received a copy of that letter. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): I'm done.

Chairman: The next name I have on my list: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and officials. Mr. Chairman, the minister gave very long and detailed opening remarks. I'm wondering if the minister will commit to providing us a copy, through you as Chair. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can provide that information to you to distribute the letter. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the commitment, minister. Moving on, I'm getting back to the Sakku School, I'm sorry if I missed it but what was cost to build a brand new school during your studies there? You had mentioned in the end you decided to renovate because the

building was structurally sound. I don't remember hearing the predicted cost to build brand new; not taking into account demolition. I'm just talking about building only.

I say that because we have buildings all over that are supposed to be demolished but are not demolished yet, so I can say that. I'm wondering: what would it cost to build brand new only in a different location in the community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. I believe that information was laid out quite clearly yesterday with the bid coming in over 100 percent higher than anticipated, but just if the minister has a quick number, if he can refresh the member's memory with. Minister Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. The number for a new school for the Sakku School was a lot higher and I cannot provide those numbers; they are on the substantiation sheets. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving along again, a few minutes ago, the minister was talking about school attendance counts. She mentioned that they are done in September. Some schools do start in August. Baker Lake is one of those communities. I'm wondering: what effect does that have on Baker Lake's need or justification for a new build if you're going based on a September count of like opening day in some communities and four weeks behind or earlier in Baker Lake? Are there any

changes or anything like that or any effects? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. I think there seems to be a bit of confusion over how this headcount and FTE has played out across the territory, which is leading, I think, to all of us to having questions of our school capacities. I think it might be a worthwhile effort...obviously the minister, I'm sure, doesn't have it with her now, but it might be worth providing to the committee through me the changes for all the schools across the territory so all of us can follow up with the minister through other means than this process, but if the minister does have the Baker Lake information with her, if she can provide the member with the response. Thank you.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to the member for the question. The attendance is taken three different times a year and there are three different vantage points involved in collecting the headcount information.

The change happened because it used to be the other way and we have seen in our schools across the territory that were being constructed that they were built too small and when we have higher increases in attendance, if you have a brand-new school that's already too small based on the old calculations, it's doing a disadvantage for our Nunavut students, Mr. Chairman.

The scenario was changed to use this new formula and I know it has been used in the past and was switched and now we're back to it again. There are different schools across the territory that have had different calculations for the

size of the school based on either headcount or the other formula. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list. That being said, Corporate Services. Capital Expenditures. \$17,730,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree that we have concluded with the review of the Department of Education?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask the minister if you have any closing comments.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. *Quana* to our colleagues for all of the questions. I look forward to, as well as everyone else, these new schools going ahead in our communities. I thank everyone once again for enquiring with the questions that were asked yesterday and today. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Members, please remain in your seats; we're only going to take a two-minute break 'til we switch over witnesses. Thank you.

>> *Committee recessed at 16:34 and resumed at 16:37*

Bill 02 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023 – Finance – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Welcome back, committee members. I would like to ask Minister Lightstone: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like to ask to have my Deputy Minister, Jeff Chown, as well as Comptroller General Susan Nichols. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Do committee members agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I don't have to worry about the introduction. Please proceed with your opening comments, minister.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. I just want to give you advance warning that I have some very lengthy opening comments.

I am here to discuss the Department of Finance's request for \$15.1 million in 2022-23. This request is unusual as the Department of Finance has rarely required its own capital. In fact my team tells me that the last time the department asked for capital was in September 2013, when they needed \$184,000 to support the office renovations in Cambridge Bay to accommodate the merger of the Department of Human Resources with the Department of Finance. I note this

little piece of trivia to emphasize from the start the significance of the project we are putting forward for your approval here.

Mr. Chairman and members, we are formally seeking your support for \$15.1 million in 2022-23 and \$41.5 million over three years to develop and implement an enterprise resource planning system, also known as an ERP. This is a system which will be utilized across our government. Put simply, we are seeking your support to overhaul and replace the Government of Nunavut's core financial and human resource systems, the fundamental technologies and processes all departments use daily to deliver services to Nunavummiut.

The term "ERP" refers to a whole-of-government approach. It will be a collection of software and processes that will work together to transform how our departments do business. Replacing our existing system is essential and will generate significant benefits for Nunavummiut. Before describing those benefits, I would like to give you a sense of our current practice.

From the beginning, I would like to emphasize the fundamental nature of the financial and HR-related tasks an ERP will improve. Whether we are ordering new medication to stock health centres, providing grants to municipalities, building new schools, or even just buying the pens and paper in front of us, there is a series of financial steps involved along the way, from budgeting and ordering to paying and reporting. On the HR front, each of the thousands of individuals who work daily to support Nunavummiut, including all of us here, relies on a series of transactions and

data, hiring, bi-weekly pay, leave, retirement and pensions, etcetera.

What is wrong with our existing system? Our current financial system, which is called FreeBalance, has been in place since before the GN was formed in 1999. Our current HR system, which is called ePersonality, or EP for short, has been in place since the early 2000s. They are each 20 years old. Of most concern, FreeBalance operates without support or maintenance like security updates from its vendor. EP is not much better. We can ask the company for help, but their ability to make the updates we need is limited. The functionality of this old system simply is not there. This lack of IT support represents a significant risk to GN operations.

The current systems are stable. If either of them failed or is breached, the GN would suffer immediate consequences like not being able to pay any of our employees or vendors. Our government would grind to a halt. We have experienced the impacts that ransomware and various COVID shutdowns have had on government operations. Can you imagine the disruption our departments, communities, and families would experience if the GN could not make payments?

In addition to being risky, the functionality of these old systems is limited and inefficient. They are inadequate for where a modern, accountable, service-oriented government should be. As a result, our employees must waste significant time, effort, and public money undertaking manual, labour-intensive processes relating to basic government functions.

Our processes are unnecessarily complicated. They take far more time than they should. They waste the talents and time of our employees. There are too many opportunities for errors, errors we then need to correct down the road.

On that note, our systems lack the basic controls that should be present in any modern finance or HR system. A control is simply a rule or process that is meant to stop something basic from going wrong. I'll give you two examples. First, our current system does not limit the number of hours someone can work in a week. If someone typed in that I worked a thousand hours between Monday and Friday, the system would compensate me for these hours, even the impossible ones, unless someone else manually catches and corrects the error. As another example, it was not until recently that our users needed to change their passwords in EP. Our department requested this change specifically, even though this should be a basic function of any IT system these days.

As members can appreciate, using the same password adds to the risk that over time the password may be shared, lost, or stolen, allowing anyone to have access to our financial system. We should not need to ask for these basic controls. External organizations agree. In 2016 the Department of Finance contracted the KPMG, a major accounting firm, to review our systems. The KPMG also identified significant control issues at that time. They highlighted the fact that due to our lack of controls, the GN has needed to develop hundreds of exception reports and manual processes to compensate. In other words, we have had to make things

up as we go along to make up for these system shortcomings.

Similar reports in 2011 and 2017 also highlighted the need to update our systems so we can move away from administratively burdensome processes and support effective decision-making. The Office of the Auditor General consistently highlights the significant operational risks that are present due to weak controls. When they audit us each year, they choose to look at our individual transactions because they do not trust the control in place.

Mr. Chairman and members, now that we have painted a picture of our current state of affairs, I would like to touch on our vision going forward. We are seeking your support to invest in a modern, cloud-based enterprise resource planning platform over the next few years. We are not just looking for something to replace existing applications. Instead we intend to adopt an ERP which will establish the foundations and framework for future enhancements within the GN. We intend to adopt a modern ERP that is secure, powerful, and efficient. We want a system that adds to what we can do for Nunavummiut like giving decision-makers timely access to accurate information. We envision an ERP that is easy to work with. Our employees should not struggle to learn a system because of complicated interfaces. We envision a system that is more intuitive, easier to pick up, and that supports users along the way. We want to free up employee time to do more useful activities than enter data and correct mistakes.

We envision a system that is modular, that will evolve with industry best practices and that we can build on over time to suit our growing needs. With this vision in mind, the Department of Finance has invested significant efforts already to develop our thinking. We have worked with departments, in close collaboration with the departments of Human Resources and Community and Government Services' IT team to identify needs. We have engaged technical consultants to help our planning and develop cost estimates. This work has been supported from third party funds from the Government of Canada related to strengthening our financial management capacities. As part of this early work, our consultants have estimated some important benefits. These are all subject to assumptions, so I caution against putting too much value in specific numbers. However, they gave us a sense of the magnitude of benefits. For example, once established, the ERP platform will automate the financial, payroll, auditing and reporting functions. Once up and running, this automation will increase productivity in major ways.

The Department of Finance alone employs about 36 full-time staff through our Compensation and Benefits Division. These staff currently spend much of their time manually processing time sheets for the roughly 2,600 workers the GN pays by the hour. Automating this function alone will save tens of thousands of hours within a single department. The benefits will spill over to other departments as well. This means we will be able to reallocate employees to focus on more productive, proactive and meaningful tasks for Nunavummiut. This will also reduce

margins of error across existing forecasts, budgets, and reports.

By automating time-consuming HR tasks, we expect to speed up the hiring process. Less paperwork and faster hiring will help all of our departments. As the Minister of Human Resources, this makes me happy to think about. By adopting a modern, intuitive system, we expect to see important benefits related to learning financial literacy and employee confidence.

Having worked with FreeBalance myself, I'm strongly convinced that its clunky and challenging design turns many people off from the start. In contrast, today's modern ERPs present environments which promote knowledge and education of industry best practices. I am confident and hopeful that better technologies will have a direct impact on recruitment, retention, and promotion of all employees, including Inuit.

As a final point of consideration, you may be asking yourselves, "Why now? Why does this ERP need to move forward this year?" These are reasonable questions. First, there is no benefit to waiting. The core need for an ERP will not change, costs will not decrease, and our current systems are not getting any better. There are no advantages to putting this project off a year. Further, there are risks to not moving forward now.

Most important, I think, is that the GN currently has a team of individuals, including the staff here with me today, who can bring their significant expertise, experience, and corporate knowledge to bear on this project. There are other key players elsewhere within Finance, CGS,

and HR. Given the staffing challenges our government faces, we should take full advantage of the current team while we can.

Mr. Chairman and members, I am sure you have questions related to this important project, and I appreciate that I'm speaking for a very long while. We know an ERP may not seem quite as exciting as some of the other capital projects on the go, but we firmly believe it will help transform how our government operates.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. I would be pleased to take any questions members may have about this crucial project. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Does a regular member have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: 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 Finance.

The department's proposed capital budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year is \$15,131,000. Information provided by the department indicates that it plans to procure a new "Enterprise Resource Planning System" over the course of the next three fiscal years. During the minister's recent appearance, members raised a number of questions concerning this proposed project, including the extent to which public agencies and territorial corporations, including Nunavut Arctic College and the Nunavut

Housing Corporation, are anticipated to utilize the new system.

The Government of Nunavut's current *Capital Planning Process Handbook*, which is a public document, indicates that the Informatics Policy Committee "reviews all departments' Five-Year Capital Information Technology Plans. Informatics Policy Committee recommendations are submitted to the Financial Management Board for approval at the same time as the departmental five-year capital plans are under consideration." The extent to which this has occurred in relation to the proposed new "Enterprise Resource Planning System" is unclear.

Although members recognize the importance of the government having functional accounting systems and financial applications, members caution the department to be mindful of the importance of ensuring that the cost and complexity of such systems and applications are appropriate to the government's size and human resource capacity. It is important that the department examine what lessons can be learned from such experiences as the procurement of the government's new Motor Vehicles Information System, a process which experienced a number of timeline and cost pressures.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2022-23 Capital Estimates of the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. Just a note for the committee and the minister, just in the opening comments, the number of \$15,131,000 was mentioned as the capital request; there

are a couple of other items on this bill as well, for a total of \$17,931,000. With that, I'll ask if any members have general comments to the opening comments. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to highlight two things on the opening comments here; one is the current system that is being used, the core financial human resource system.

It seems like the minister has a negative attitude towards the current hard-working workers who work on the system because on page 3, second paragraph, it says, "As a result, our employees must waste significant time, effort, and public money undertaking manual labour-intensive process related to basic government function." The way it's written, it appears that they're wasting their time.

On page 5 of 6, down to the fourth paragraph, "When the new system is being used, this means we will be able to relocate employees to focus on more productive, proactive and meaningful tasks for Nunavummiut," implying that their tasks prior to was meaningless.

I think those are not very good comments in terms of the hard-working finance workers we have right now. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment. Any other comments to the opening comments? Seeing none, Centrally Administered Funds. Total Capital Expenditures. \$17,931,000. Mr. Malliki. ...(inaudible)...question on this topic. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister and your officials, for being here.

(interpretation ends) Your departmental substantiation sheet for this project indicates that cost estimates are based on mid-market products. How does your department define that term?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member for the question.

Before I respond to that question, I would like to reply to Member Savikataaq's comments to my opening comments. I would like to assure the public as well as our hard-working public servants that the member's comments were taken completely out of context.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate that my opening comments are emphasizing the inadequacy of our current systems, information systems, not our employees, and further that the inadequate and inefficient systems that we have in place is requiring labour-intensive, time-consuming, and overall burdensome efforts on behalf of our hard-working employees and that is something we would like to correct and give them the tools that they need to do their jobs in a more efficient manner for them to be more productive and provide an overall better efficiency for the Government of Nunavut.

Returning to Member Malliki's question about the substantiation sheet, yes, the Department of Finance, along with our working group, including CGS and Human Resources, have determined that we are not looking to buy high-end ERP, which would be entirely excessively costly. We would like to buy something that will meet the needs for the size of our government and our workforce. On the other side of things, we do not want to go and utilize our limited capital towards a low-end system which would put us at risk of purchasing something similar to the federal government's Phoenix payroll system. That is something we would like to avoid. I just want to highlight that our intention is not to buy something that we don't need, but the intention of buying a mid-range product is to ensure that we will not find ourselves in a similar situation with the federal government's payroll system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, minister for the response. You mentioned a high-end and low-end product and you mentioned you wanted a midmarket product. I wonder why you want something in the middle. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister, the member is asking why you want a middle-range calculator.

>> *Laughter*

Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thanks again for the question. The intent is that we are not

looking for a high-end, excessively costly system. Meanwhile, we want to ensure that we are not going to buy a discount system which will end up causing more trouble than it fixes. In essence, we don't need any more than we need. As well, we don't want a system that is going to be overly complex. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you minister for the response. How long do you figure it would take to train the staff to be able to operate the system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the project is spread out over a number of years, from implementation to closure, their training will be on-going throughout all phases. It will continue as and when needed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister for the response. For the ERP, how long do you figure the government will own this ERP system if we approve here today? How long will this last? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Very valid question. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again for the question. As I indicated in my opening

comments, we expect to utilize an ERP system, which is robust as well as modular. We will start off with a system which focuses on accounts payable and receivable, as well as payroll and other HR-related functions, but as ERP systems evolve, there is a likelihood that the systems we utilize will also evolve with it. There is no specific duration that I can provide at this time, however hopefully this system will be as utilized as efficiently as FreeBalance was. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll go on to my next name: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't doubt that we need a new system, a more modern system to keep track of all the human resource hours and what goes on there, but I just have some questions on this. Is there any other government that is using the system that is being requested right now? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I cannot provide a thorough response to that question, Mr. Chairman. Right now we are seeking these funds, this appropriation, to begin the tendering process, which we will hope to then narrow down potential vendors and eventually determine which one would be best fitting for our needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if the minister misunderstood. I asked if there was any

other government using it. Not on which system that they are going to figure out buy. Either I didn't understand or the minister didn't understand. So if he could clarify: before they went to pick out this system, if they looked at other governments within Canada that are using it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we have not determined which ERP system, which would be the most appropriate for our needs. However, I would like to highlight that enterprise resource planning systems are used widely across other governments across Canada. Some examples of potential ERP system that could be utilized are Oracle or SAP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In his opening comments the minister said how more efficient it was. On the substantiation sheet it also says 1,000s of staff hours could be saved by moving to a system that automates financial human resource payroll processes, auditing, and reporting functions within the GN. That's good. He also states in his opening comment that currently the Department of Finance employs about 36 fulltime staff in our Compensation and Benefits Division. If this system is going to be so much more efficient will there be some layoffs of workers that are currently doing the work that will be done by automation when the new system is in full operation? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question and would like to reassure everyone in the Assembly, as well as all those listening, including our public servants that this potential ERP system will increase efficiency and productivity of our employees but will not lead to replacing or terminating positions. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to be assured that there will be no layoffs due to this more efficient system. Can the minister elaborate on what's going to happen to these people that are working, according to your statement, some of them doing meaningless tasks; what's going to happen to these people that their job gets taken over by automated? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and again, I appreciate the question and where the member is coming from. The efficiencies that a robust ERP system will provide will allow for our existing employees to be better utilized spending their time working on other matters related to their roles, which really do deserve much more time. In essence, the efficiencies of an ERP will just lead to increased productivity and allow our employees to utilize their time in a more efficient manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These tasks that are not being now by what the minister just said, that will be done once there is more time available for these employees; can the minister just elaborate on what tasks are not being done currently that will be done once we start the system? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the question is a bit technical, I will ask that Deputy Minister Chown provide a response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq. Oh, sorry. Mr. Chown.

>> *Laughter*

I was distracted here. Mr. Chown, please.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think one good example is on the human resources front.

So right now our departments have staff in the Human Resources divisions and a huge amount of their time is taken up doing something like leave and attendance. Our leave and attendance process is very manual. To give you an example, if an employee was going to apply for leave, they would fill out a form; they'd either walk that over, or scan it and email it if their HR people were not there, to their HR staff asking them to confirm how many leave credits they have. Their HR staff would then scan that and email it back to them. They

would then print it and take it to their supervisor who would sign it and then they would potentially scan it and email it back to their HR staff.

Under a new ERP system, we would envision a scenario where that employee would fill out their leave record on their computer, it would electronically go to their supervisor who would at the click of a button approve that transaction, and then it would go on and be automatically uploaded into their file, and that would all happen very quickly as opposed to the quite lengthy manual process now.

What that then hopefully will provide as an example for those HR employees, is we know training and development, for example, of employees is an area that is very important and it's an area that often gets set aside because of the time spent doing the very basic things like leave and attendance and employee relations.

If HR staff could focus more on gathering data and collecting information on what training employees have, what training employees would like to have, they could work on training plans and plans to help employees move up in the organization.

Being able to capture that data in the system and being able to have the time to actually do something with that data and work with employees is a good example of an area where human resource employees might be able to do something that for the organization overall that will have a much more meaningful impact than the leave and attendance, which is absolutely important, but because of our current system, takes a lot more time than it needs to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to hear that there will be possibly more training that will be offered to employees because if an employee wants to get training that is a good thing. It's also sad to hear that they are not getting it now, but it doesn't quite answer what I said. What other things are not being done that will be done?

I'll let that go, but can the minister reassure us that there will be no layoffs at all with this new system because just by looking at all the efficiencies that are going to be there, there is going to be a whole lot of extra time on employees hands that are doing all the data entering and all the reading of the reports and entering things into the computer. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member again for the question. I would just like to elaborate a bit further on Deputy Minister Chown's response. The potential of a robust ERP system, and specifically, a robust HR information system; the potential that has on providing a positive impact on our public service overall is tremendous.

As Deputy Minister Chown had alluded to, our HR employees in all of the departments are overburdened by the manual processes that we have in place and a significant amount of time devoted by HR managers in departments is, in essence, wasted on these manual leave and attendance functions.

Again, that is one area where a robust ERP system could have in freeing up HR managers time to, instead of focusing on leave and attendance and employee relations matters, start focusing more on the positive aspects of HR practitioners and identifying the potential needs of our employees, and assisting them with career broadening programs and identifying training opportunities that they would most likely be interested in or benefit from, is going to change our government for the better.

Finally, I would just like to reassure the Assembly and our public servants and Nunavummiut that if we proceed with an ERP system and are successful in procuring one, there will be absolutely no layoffs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is very good to hear. Also on the substantiation sheet, the project indicates that the government's current financial and human resource systems have little capacity for management reporting. What specific examples of management reporting in the current system is unable... What can't it provide right now? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member for another excellent question. On the HR side of things, when we consider management reports, our current HR system is unable to put together or consolidate information of our existing public service.

For example, the HR's public service annual report, which contains a significant amount of useful information, is manually put together because we don't have HR information system that should in essence just be able to provide that information at a whim.

Another example; we don't have HR information system that has a database of all of our employees' qualifications. I think that is pretty much unheard of in the public service. In relation to the financial side of things and management reports, most governments are able to produce their public accounts in a very short period of time and that is due to their accounting software, which utilizes a significant amount of automation which allows most of the work to be conducted within a few clicks.

Right now we don't have that useful information available to us within FreeBalance. I would like to thank our Comptroller General, Ms. Susan Nichols, for being able to put together our public accounts and our financial statements, while utilizing a significant amount of resources to do that and a significant amount of time, but that's just another example of how our current financial management reporting mechanisms are lacking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to be seen as I'm opposed to this system. I agree with the minister that it's needed and it's not a cheap process here because it is \$41 million total cost. The part that kind of scares me is two Assemblies ago when we started with that, it was mentioned in

the opening comments here, a new Motor Vehicles Information System started off at \$3 million or \$4 million, and then I believe it got to \$8 million, and then I think the final budget might have been \$12 million. I hope that this system will not be going on the same route because \$41 million is a good chunk of change. What assurance do we have? I know the minister can't say no, it won't be like that, absolute guarantee, but assurance is there that we won't be going in the same direction? Thank you.

Chairman: A very valid question. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree that is a very valid question. As we know and as the Assembly knows, IT-related projects are inevitably risky, especially when it comes to databases and, for the most part, are very customized. However, in regard to an ERP system, they are very standardized and we are not looking to overcomplicate the system to match our individualized needs. We are going to look at the industry best practices and adjust our current processes to match the systems that are currently out there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the federal government looked at their Phoenix pay system very carefully before they got into it. We know what happened there and it's still not settled. That's why I asked. I don't want to have our own Phoenix system here, costing us billions...I mean, the federal government. It cost them billions.

That's why I brought up that I would like some kind of reassurance that we're not going to go the same as the Motor Vehicles Information System. We're not going to go the same as the Phoenix pay system. The federal government chose to do so. We just need some assurance that, like the minister said, there's always a risk on IT matters. I expect the minister and his staff do their due diligence to make sure that we don't go like the Phoenix route or the vehicle information system route. That was just a comment. Thank you.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually Mr. Savikataaq basically asked my one and only question; I'll mention it anyway.

Going by memory, in our last Assembly, the Department of Family Services was in here requesting capital money to purchase and replace the current software that they had at the time and it was only a few years old and they were sure that what they were purchasing was going to meet their needs, and then they realized that it wasn't meeting their needs.

I was going to ask what assurances the minister can give us that this ERP they're going to purchase will meet their needs and we won't be back in here two or three years from now requesting more money to do the same thing, but anyway that was what I was going to ask. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Maybe the minister might be able to describe what type of methods they're using through

the RFP process to make sure that they can mitigate some of these concerns that the members are raising. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I would like to thank the member for the question; very valid concerns. As I mentioned, information system, especially databases, are very risky projects to undertake, and that is because they are highly customized, including the federal Phoenix system, which was also custom built.

I would like to reassure the members that we have taken that into account and we have learned from those lessons. The ERP systems are very standardized and there is significantly less risk associated with this project than that of a custom built database. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During your opening comments I took the time to look at the ERP and same thing with the KPMG. Immediately I got excited. To make it very short and clear; it is going to speed up all of the departments, meaning income support, driver's licensing, ID, payroll, firearms licensing, and the health department. I'm pretty sure it is going to speed up everything. So my hope is that we can go hopefully, my members can approve this budget. That would mean we don't have to wait so long for our driver's licence, our ID and then all the payroll, and our firearms licence. It is going to benefit all Nunavummiut.

Correct me if I'm wrong. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister, correct him if he is wrong.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I truly appreciate the member's comments. An ERP system, in essence, will be replacing our accounting software as well as our HR information system, and we will have a tremendous amount of benefits to it to increasing efficiency and productivity. That will, of course, have spill-off effects into other areas and hopefully will lead to increased efficiencies in other areas through supplementary benefits or spill-offs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I think what the minister was trying to say is that it will not speed up anyone getting their driver's licence any fast than what they are already getting, or their hunting or firearms licensing. It will only impact accounting and human resource functions of the government.

Do you have any other questions, Mr. Quqqiaq? Thank you. I will go to my next name. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here today. My first question was going to be: how many systems can it interact with, but I think that we have just had some clarification there.

As somebody who for many years was a user of FreeBalance and who spent hundreds and hundreds of hours trying to sort out peoples' leave and attendance, and sometimes a couple of hundred hours just on one person when there are

employees that require that level of scrutiny, I can attest to how much this is needed to not just improve the amount of time that we spend on these systems, but to improve morale as well.

I'm curious about the cloud. It is cloud-based. I remember, I think it was in 2011, Anik F2 went down and everything in Iqaluit shut down, including airplanes in and out of Iqaluit.

When I hear cloud-based, I might be wrong, but when I hear cloud based I worry about how is that transmission happening and how important is it for us to have excellent telecommunications, and what would happen if our telecommunications were to go down for a significant amount of time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I would like to thank the member for her question as well as her comments. This new robust ERP system will definitely have a tremendous impact on our finance and financial aid employees as well as our HR employees, but will have a very significant benefit to our senior managers, our directors, and managers and in every program area which will also have significant benefits across every GN office and division.

The risks associated with a cloud based system are being taken into account. The risks are not too far off of the risks associated with our current system. Whenever our offices lose internet access they currently lose access to our accounting and our information systems, and that will be the case if we proceed

with a cloud based system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you minister for that response.

For those people that have responsibilities to track budgets and to create payments and who need the ability to look for information in real time in order to update; I know there is medical travel that has nine briefing notes for every cycle, each of one requires an update on expenditures. I'm wondering about permissions that various levels of employees will have, whether or not people who are responsible for budgets will have the ability to make changes, to create reports real time, to just basically keep everything up to date and, what ensures that somebody who doesn't have those responsibilities for those specific budgets wouldn't have access to that information or to change it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question, a very valid question.

With any IT system it is very important to ensure that there is appropriate IT management set in place. Designated employees are responsible for setting the permission of each individual that is granted access to the system and that is something that is absolutely crucial to ensuring that the system operates appropriately.

I envision that the proposed ERP system will also maintain the current level of permission settings that we have within all of our IT systems here within in the GN. As I previously mentioned, this ERP system we envision being very robust and being modular in design and will meet the needs that we have today as well as be able to expand the needs that we have tomorrow.

To give an example of a robust ERP system in other governments, it allows program managers and directors to instantly access relevant information, open up a dashboard with all of the information at their fingertips with regard to their budgets and commitments, payments that have been authorized, and have transactions that have been posted. That's an example of what ERPs are capable of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned tracking employees or you mentioned employees in one of your earlier responses. I'm wondering what sort of data or reports could be created in order to, for instance, track Inuit employment, track the employee, the average education levels, all of the assignments. How would this create more information for us in order to raise the level of Inuit employment and not just raise the level but raise the experience for retention to ensure that maybe we're moving people around and giving people different opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A very excellent question. Those examples that the member provided in the question are things that we will expect that the system will be able to accomplish, specifically the HR side of things, allowing for HR managers to have access to all of the qualifications of their employees across the department to identify Inuit employees or employees in general that could be matched up for career laddering opportunities or mentorships, mentor or mentees.

More importantly, a robust HR information system will have pretty much a significant amount of the information provided in the Public Service Annual Report ready at a moment's notice. There is a significant amount of very useful data contained in that document, which is only put together once a year because it takes an excessive amount of time to put all that information together manually.

Again, I believe that the biggest benefit is freeing up the time of individuals, specifically senior managers, directors, and managers who spend a significant amount of time on employee attendance and other performance-related matters. It is going to free up that time to allow those supervisors and senior managers to actually devote more time to what their program is actually doing and other areas of improvements.

Again, we're turning to the human resources managers in every department. Having a robust HR information system and having an ERP available to them will also free up their time. As was previously mentioned, a significant amount of HR employees' time is

devoted to leave and attendance and the manual paper processes that we currently have in place. That will allow our HR managers to start focusing on the positive aspects of their jobs, assisting employees with their desires and identifying individuals with potential and approaching those individuals to see if they would be interested in further career advancement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, minister, for that response. You don't need to convince me. I'm sold on any system that does free up time, but I think that it really is important to go through this process and just ask as many questions as we can.

One of the things that the last line in this substantiation under the scope says, "This system will initially be deployed in every department that currently uses the GN's finance or human resource system," and it says, "currently xx users across government." I'm just curious about what that number actually is. How many users will this impact?

In my experience, all program level people have access to FreeBalance if they're tracking their own budget. I'm just really curious to get a greater idea and understanding of just how much time this will free people up to work on other really important issues within their jobs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member's comments in supporting the

project, but as well with balancing the need to ensure the project proceeds appropriately.

Currently, there are approximately 865, sorry, 600 users of our FreeBalance accounting software as well as 260 employees who utilize our EP HR information system, but as we intend to use an automated leave and attendance function, this will be available to all GN employees who will then be able to go on to a computer and submit a leave request directly to their manager immediately. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on that last note, know that sometimes some communities have issues even just interacting with the systems that we have now because of various... whether it's broadband issues or just current equipment and infrastructure. I'm wondering what the plan is for ensuring that every single, truly every single employee will have this access? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, a very valid question. Just a few years ago there were problems where the GN core network was not available in all communities, but the Department of Community and Government Services was able to expand the network and the bandwidth available to the GN which then allowed CGS to expand the core network to every community. With that, it is envisioned that there should not be too much complications with employees in every community utilizing the automated

leave and attendance function. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the subject of utility for individuals as employees, is it just for leave and attendance that employees will be able to interact with this program and for example, will they be able to go into the program and print off a list of their assignments over the years for use in a discussion perhaps with a manager about employee training plans or that sort of thing?

Is it intuitive enough to prompt an employee, when they open it up, to say at this time of year you should be considering an education plan or talking to your manager about this? You know, that sort of thing, so that it helps an employee to move along in their career. I know that there are some employees who are really happy to have a job and stay in one job, but there are also employees who are interested in moving around and gaining new and more experience, and how will this system help that individual employee to do that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member again for the question. Every employee will have access to the leave and attendance function, but as for the member's question along the lines of performance management and career planning, that is something that an ERP system is capable of, but it's uncertain at this time what type of functionality the system that we will eventually select will

have. I hope that I will be able to better respond to that once the procurement process is completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of the reason that I ask that question is because you piqued my interest when you talked about mentors and mentees. In my experience being a public servant and the transitional nature of our workforce, often Inuit employees are asked to transition employees from the south into our traditional values and into our core values.

I have observed many, many Inuit throughout my career who, though they didn't hold positions within the GN that were necessarily considered leadership positions, they were actually leaders and still are leaders in the work that they do to support those transitional employees. I just see this as something that needs to be tracked, that needs to be valued, and if we are investing in a whole new system in order to track employment and to create time and energy in order to be better employers, that we should take that into consideration and it should be a function of any system that we put in place. Those opportunities should be kind of built into a system that flags people who have certain skills and values that might not be measured easily by transitional leadership. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I must thank the member for the excellent questions.

These are all items that will be taken into consideration throughout the selection process.

I assure you that HR staff who are participating in this project are very excited to see... really unlock the potential that an ERP system could have, especially when it comes to human resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you again for that response. I had one more, what I thought, was a really good question, but I can't find my note on it. I suppose if we could have just a little bit more reassurance of your risk mitigation plan for if we have a Phoenix. To me it's so ironic that that system is called Phoenix because to me 'phoenix' is something rises and is really amazing, and I know the federal employees that work and live in Nunavut, some have lost so much. Their credit scores have plummeted, their ability to make payments on vehicles or homes and to put food on the table was so greatly affected, and I know that the impact on peoples' mental health was huge and continues to be quite large. The impact on the children who live with families whose parents were suddenly unable to provide for them is immense. Food security is such a huge issue here.

Given the number of employees that the GN has and how important it is to ensure that there is no interruption in their financial well-being, I think it is really important just to give us a little more assurance about whether or not their plans and abilities to go back to FreeBalance or back to a back-up system

in order to ensure that people continue to get paid should this system crash in some way. Thank you for your time today, I really appreciated it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Minister Lightstone, do you have anything to reflect on that? Thank you.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I truly would like to thank the member for the questions and the comments. Recognizing that this is a very significant project that will require significant investment by the Government of Nunavut, this will not be proceeding as typical projects proceed. This ERP project is being led by a steering committee, as I mentioned, which has individuals from a number of departments participating. We do not want to see a system that will inevitably lead to failure or wasted funds.

I just want to highlight on page 4 of the substantiation sheet we've identified our procurement approach which we are taking, which is a Best and Final Offer RFP. This is a two-stage process which will allow the GN to move those respondents who can meet the GN needs to a more rigorous review stage to ensure that the best product and implementation team is selected.

We are not going to rush the tendering process. We are going to do our due diligence and submit the best and final offer, submit the RFP, seek the respondents, and then go through the second, more rigorous review stage with the selected candidates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Just a quick question that you triggered when you were speaking, minister. Also on the substantiation sheet it does speak to a significant O&M cost, and I realize that this is the capital side of it, but are there going to be any new PY's created to administer this project? Thank you, Mr...

>>Laughter

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been a long week.

Yes, there are projected to be some incremental O&M costs associated with this project, as outlined on page 5 of the substantiation sheet. These figures are just a very rough estimate as we don't know what it will actually look like until we have completed the tendering process.

To ensure that a major transitional project such as this does succeed, we will require change management function to be incorporated to ensure that all users will be appropriately oriented with the new program and ensure that all of its functionalities will be utilized. It is likely that there will be incremental O&M costs associated with this project, but at this time it is uncertain what that will be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to report progress. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of

the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

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. Thank you.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Quqqiaq. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

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. Just a reminder that the Full Caucus meets tomorrow at eleven o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for March 17:

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

5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3
 - Bill 4
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 Thursday, March 17, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:59*

