

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

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Minister of Human Resources;
Minister responsible for Nunavut
Business Credit Corporation; Minister
responsible for Nunavut Development
Corporation; Minister responsible for
Trade; Minister responsible for Mines;
Minister responsible for the Workers'
Safety and Compensation Commission*

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

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

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of
Education; Minister of Justice;
Minister responsible for Labour;
Minister responsible for Human Rights
Tribunal*

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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

Hon. David Joanasie
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister
of Transportation and Infrastructure
Nunavut; Minister of Environment;
Minister responsible for Energy*

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance; Minister
responsible for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation; Minister responsible for
the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis
Commission; Minister responsible for
the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis
Board*

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention;
Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee
of the Whole*

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Nunavut Arctic
College; Minister responsible for
Homelessness; Minister responsible for
Status of Women; Minister responsible
for Poverty Reduction*

Karen Nutarak
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(Hudson Bay)

Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Members Present:

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

>>*House commenced at 13:31*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Mr. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Good afternoon, my fellow colleagues. Before we proceed, Mr. Kaernek, please start with prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Kaernek. Good afternoon, my colleagues, and to Nunavummiut who are listening and watching on TV.

Today is Suicide Prevention Day, as we all know. We all know this very important subject hits our lives one time or another, but we have all experienced that. And we will continue to try to work on the suicide prevention for all Nunavummiut, and I encourage all my fellow colleagues to work on this for all Nunavummiut.

Let's have a moment of silence for everyone. Thank you.

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 636 – 6(2): World Suicide Prevention Day

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

Today, September 10, we mark World Suicide Prevention Day. This is a day that resonates deeply and urgently in Nunavut, where the pain of suicide is felt in every community and the need for healing and hope is more pressing than ever.

Our territory continues to face one of the highest suicide rates in Canada. The recent redeclaration of suicide as a continuing crisis in Nunavut is a solemn reminder of the deep and lasting impact this issue has on our communities. Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy that reverberates through families, friends, and the entire territory.

(interpretation ends) I'd like to thank our Speaker for leading the moment of silence earlier to honour and remember those we have lost. May that moment also serve as a call to action, to listen, to support, and to stand together.

Since 2024, the continuing theme for World Suicide Prevention Day has been "Changing the Narrative on Suicide." This is a call to raise awareness and transform how we perceive this complex issue.

Changing the narrative means shifting from a culture of silence and stigma to one of openness, understanding, and support. It requires systemic change: advocating for policies and legislation that prioritize mental health, increasing access to culturally-grounded care, and providing meaningful support for those in need. It also means investing in research to better understand the complexities of suicide, and develop evidence-based interventions.

The Department of Health stands with our suicide prevention partners across Nunavut in supporting this shift. Guided by Inuit societal values and the lived experiences of Nunavummiut, we are committed to creating safe spaces for open, honest, and compassionate conversations about mental wellness and suicide.

Guided by the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan, we are also committed to continue increasing our staffing, increasing our resources, and supporting more and more Nunavummiut through our work with partners across the territory.

World Suicide Prevention Day reminds us that we all have a role to play. By reaching out, showing compassion, and fostering hope, we can build a Nunavut where every person feels valued, supported, and safe.

I'd like to thank the many staff, volunteers and organizations who are working on suicide prevention initiatives across Nunavut. Your dedication and hard work is a key part of enabling better mental wellness and mental health supports for Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Minister's Statement 637 – 6(2): World Suicide Prevention Day (Mental Health Supports in Schools)

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as we recognize World Suicide Prevention Day today, I would like to highlight those in our schools who support students' mental health and well-being.

Our department is committed to creating inclusive, safe, and caring schools. As of 2023, all schools across Nunavut have access to school-based mental health support services. Our schools also have dedicated *ilinniarvimmi inuusilirijiit*, who act as school community counsellors to support our students.

We recognize that students' well-being and academic success are closely intertwined. It takes the entire school community to create a positive learning environment.

With continued focus on mental health, our department will continue to provide training opportunities for school staff to strengthen the environment we create for our children. We strive to reflect a school system that fosters hope and supports social-emotional learning and student success.

Mr. Speaker, to our students, I want to say this directly: If you are facing challenges or feeling overwhelmed, please know that you are not alone. There are people in your schools and communities who care about you, and reaching out to talk with someone is a sign of strength.

Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Community Services, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 638 – 6(2): Nunavut Hosts Successful National Fisheries Ministers' Meeting in Iqaluit

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share that Nunavut was honoured to host the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers' annual meeting in Iqaluit from August 28 to 29. Ministers from across Canada gathered in our capital to advance collaboration on the future of fisheries and aquaculture in our country.

The meeting was a success. Together, we addressed issues of national importance, including economic development, sustainable fisheries, Indigenous co-management, and Canada's aquaculture sector. As co-chair alongside Minister Thompson, I was proud to see Nunavut's unique perspectives at the forefront of these discussions.

For the first time, many of my colleagues experienced this council in Inuit Nunangat, where our way of life and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit guides how we govern and protect our fisheries.

Hosting this meeting in Iqaluit provided an opportunity to highlight Nunavut's fisheries co-management framework, showcase our priorities, and underline the importance of Arctic perspectives in shaping national policy.

The meeting reinforced the role of Inuit and northern voices in advancing sustainable fisheries management. Our co-management regime, rooted in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, partnerships with Inuit Organizations and modern science, was highlighted as a model for the country and reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring that fisheries continue to provide food, livelihoods, and opportunities for our communities well into the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Minister's Statement 639 – 6(2): Nunavut Territorial Parks Awards

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people, members here and also Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the house of the 2025-2026 Nunavut Territorial Parks Awards recipients. In collaboration with the Nunavut Joint Planning and Management Committee, each student recipient received a \$1,000 grant.

This award is presented to high school students who have demonstrated academic excellence in courses such as *Aulajaaqtut* or Environmental Studies; and have demonstrated our government *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* principle of *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq*, respect and care for our environment.

(interpretation ends) The 2025-26 Nunavut Territorial Award recipients are:

- Felix Tologanak-Labrie of Cambridge Bay
- Masen Panioyak of Kugluktuk

- Tina Misheralak of Rankin Inlet
- Emily Enuaraq of Clyde River
- Enosi Nashalik of Pangnirtung
- Hazel Arragutainaq of Sanikiluaq
- Anita Nauyuk of Iqaluit
- Angel Tayara Kolola of Kimmirut
- Zack Qayaq of Kinngait
- Fernando Makayak of Baker Lake

Mr. Speaker, indeed, the Department of Environment is proud to support educational opportunities through this annual award for students who aspire to enter the environmental field, and I wish these students much success.

(interpretation) Thank you and congratulation to the students. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 640 – 6(2): Pan-Territorial Commitment to End Gender-Based Violence

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to my colleagues and also to the people of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, today I rise to share an important development in our collective work to address the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit Plus people, and to strengthen our efforts to end gender-based violence across the North.

Last month, I attended trilateral meetings in Whitehorse with the governments of the Northwest Territories and Yukon to increase collaboration to these ongoing crises. Our three territories committed to sharing expertise, best practices, and culturally grounded approaches to prevention and response. Together, we will strengthen supports for survivors, families, and communities, while advancing Indigenous-led solutions that recognize the deep impacts of intergenerational trauma.

The northern territories are working together to share innovations such as Sexual Assault Response Teams and child advocacy centres, and to develop joint resources, including toolkits and strategies that can be adapted across our territories. The ambition is a strong pan-trilateral partnership dedicated to improving safety and wellness in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, while we are moving forward together as territorial governments, we also call on the Government of Canada to do its part. The National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence has been essential in helping us stabilize services, strengthen prevention, and support Indigenous women's organizations. However, to meet the growing needs in our communities, the federal government must renew and increase its funding commitment for the remaining years of the action plan.

Rising costs, coupled with the impacts of major infrastructure and military projects in the north, require greater investment to ensure the safety and well-being of our people. The current federal funding model must also be revised to reflect the unique fiscal responsibilities of the territorial governments, which, unlike southern jurisdictions, deliver critical services directly to Indigenous populations.

Mr. Speaker, we also stressed the importance of maintaining Jordan's Principle and the Inuit Child First Initiative. These programs have been vital in closing gaps for children and families, and we cannot afford to see this progress rolled back.

Our message is clear: Northern voices must be heard, and Northern realities must shape Canada's investments in safety, equity, and reconciliation.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Minister's Statement 641 – 6(2): Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) Program Changes

Hon. Pamela Gross (interpretation): *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through the support of this Assembly we are delivering major improvements to the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program, FANS, to increase funding and remove barriers to post-secondary education.

Years of collaboration with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, combined with reviews and input from members of this House, led to the creation of the new *Post-Secondary Student Support Act*, which was unanimously passed in March. While work continues on the regulations to bring this act fully into force, we have made interim changes, funded internally, to ensure students can benefit right away.

Mr. Speaker, these changes mean:

- Higher combined living and housing allowances,
- A simpler system with grants for Inuit students and remissible loans for non-Inuit students,
- An increased disability grant,
- More flexible enrolment timelines, and
- Easier re-entry for students who previously held grant debt.

These new supports will help with the high cost of living, reduce financial pressures on students, and allow them to focus more on their studies. Next year, we aim to roll out the full program renewal, which will also provide non-financial academic and social navigation supports.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all members of this House, especially the Standing Committee on Legislation members and staff, for their advocacy, tireless work, helpful recommendations and genuine collaboration. I also thank Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated for their guidance and partnership throughout this work. And finally, I want to thank Nunavut students for their patience, as we work together to build a stronger and more supportive program.

Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 879 – 6(2): Health Costs for Non-Inuit Nunavummiut

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that has been raised by a number of older Nunavut residents who face considerable challenges when they require health care services in addition to the primary care provided at our local health centres.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that Inuit, as well as First Nations and Métis of Canada, have access to the federal government's Non-Insured Health Benefits program, which covers the costs of flights and accommodation when they have to travel away from their home community for medical care. Nunavut residents who are not Inuit need an alternative form of health insurance to cover these costs in case they need medical services outside of their community or outside of the territory.

Mr. Speaker, employees of the Government of Nunavut, whether they are Inuit or not, have health insurance through their employment. Other employers may also offer some kind of health insurance to their employees.

However, if a non-Inuit person, or non-Inuk person living in Nunavut is no longer employed, or if they retire, or if they are no longer covered under their spouse's health insurance, then it becomes a great hardship when they have serious medical issues. For those on a limited income, private health insurance can be very expensive.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Department of Health does offer support for non-Inuit and others facing serious costs to address medical issues under its Extended Health Benefits program. Even so, the patient must pay their expenses up front and then, hopefully, be refunded through the program afterwards. This puts a heavy financial and administrative burden on the patient and their family.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of non-Inuit who have lived, worked and raised their families in Nunavut. As they grow older becoming long-term members of our communities, it seems they fall through a gap in our health system.

At the appropriate time, I will have questions on this issue.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Member's Statement 880 – 6(2): World Suicide Prevention Day

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on this day, September 10, 2025, and it's World Suicide Prevention Day.

Mr. Speaker, to the world, my message to you if you do need help, please reach out to anyone. Please reach out to the people that can help you. Please reach out to the people that has a listening ear.

Mr. Speaker, the world needs kindness and love. Please show your kindness and love to all walks of life, no matter who you are, what gender, what ethnicity you come from. The world needs love and they need kindness and care. Please be the sunshine in someone's life, because we all need sunshine and sunshine is great.

Mr. Speaker, I have many people ministering respect come to me. Why? I had a viral video that I have done before, prior to become a member of the Legislative Assembly, and I have many people that saved the video on their phones, and they told me I saved their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I have lost many to suicide, and I don't want to lose any more. I don't want anyone else to lose anyone else to suicide. Why? Because we are loved, we are cared for. Know that you are loved and cared for. And if you feel that you don't feel that you are loved and cared for, know that I love you and I care for you.

Mr. Speaker, we all need kindness and all over in our lives. Please show your kindness and love to anyone who needs it, because we don't know what anyone is going through. They might put on a happy face and smiling face to show that they are okay. There are many that keep it inside them, that won't show you that they need help.

Please ask anyone if they are okay, because, Mr. Speaker, that's what we all want to hear: "Are you okay?" Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Member's Statement 881 – 6(2): Suicide Prevention Day

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I say good day, good afternoon to my constituents and Nunavut.

On Suicide Prevention Day, as you've said no matter how hard we work on it, if someone decides they want to commit suicide, even though they don't wanted to it, they try to do it. When I was a school counsellor I heard of situations, and whenever it doesn't seem to be able to fixed, it's really hard.

Many people have been affected by suicide, and myself too. However, there are programs to help available but there's not enough programs.

Let's advise our fellow people, if you need to talk to someone, please talk to someone, and don't just keep it to yourself, if you're going through a hardship. Many of us have gone through great hardship through losing our loved ones through any means. The programs that we have to try and help others, they need to be corrected, because suicide still happens.

I would like to tell my fellow Inuit, especially young people: Please, whenever you have an opportunity to talk to someone, please it do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Member's Statement 882 – 6(2): World Suicide Prevention Day

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Malliki for sharing his wise words and Mr. Quqqiaq for sharing his love and caring for all, and thank the ministers for their ministers' statements on World Suicide Prevention Day.

It is obvious that every single Inuk in Nunavut has been impacted by the loss of a loved one, and as the minister of Health has previously indicated, there are several different avenues for support, one being the *Kamatsiaqtut* help line. I would like to extend my appreciation to the strong and brave volunteers that offer themselves support for those that are teetering on the edge.

With our staggering rates of poverty and associated social issues, there's no shortage of despair in Nunavut, but I would like to remind all Nunavummiut that are watching our proceedings today that there's also much good in our territory, and it's important to stay positive and celebrate the good in our lives.

And for all Iqalummiut that are watching, I would like to remind everyone that Embrace Life Council is hosting a suicide awareness walk today at four, which will be ending in a community feast at the Inukshuk high school. Although members will not be able to be there for the walk at four, I do plan on attending the feast, and I encourage my fellow colleagues to attend as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 883 – 6(2): Annual Festival in Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon all, and to the people of Baker Lake, I hope you guys have a wonderful day today at home.

Mr. Speaker, during August 22 to 24 the Hamlet of Baker Lake held the annual Festival by the Lake, back home. It was a great successful weekend. There was a qulliq lighting by our elder, remarks by our mayor and myself. There's fees, games, a square dance. We had some acts and people coming in and helping us celebrate the weekend: Mr. Circus, a luncheon organized by Agnico Eagle Mines, radio games for elders or people that can't go out, activities in the rink on the turf for kids, the face painting, balloons with Rosalie; the Angotitok band, Jacob Okatsiak, Rosalie Pissuk. Aavsia came in and held ukulele workshops with children and teens; a jiggling contest, barbecues. A whole slew of

different workshops and festivities happened over the weekend. It was very, very successful.

I would like to congratulate Karen Yip from the Hamlet of Baker Lake and her team that put this all together, planning it, during it, and after for the festival was done where we had to clean up and make sure everyone got back to their homes.

And I wanted to do this today on World Suicide Prevention Day, because it is festivities like this that help get people out, get people socializing, get people together again and have fun. And then it helps remind people that there are fun things to do out there.

I'm hoping more stuff like this will happen across the territory. I do know it does, but I'm hoping there will be more festivities that happen locally in communities, because we need to get people out there again and have fun and socialize, and see each other again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa. Quassa.

Member's Statement 884 – 6(2): Isuma Production Recognition

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and people of Nunavut and Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud and I believe that all of Nunavummiut know that there's a famous movie producer and also his staff this past week, they were awarded a gift. If you had listened to the radio on Friday, September 12, their recent movie made by Isuma will be shown at the theatre. There are not very many producers, and I would like to congratulate them and they are recognized worldwide. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Member's Statement 885 – 6(2): Recognizing Eva Natsiapik

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Eva Natsiapik. I apologize for coughing.

Eva Natsiapik has been training for three years now, and can now pilot a boat or a ship. She has been trained in all aspects, and is involved in the fisheries sector. We are very proud that she has completed her training and is available to pilot a small ship or large one.

Mr. Speaker, additionally, I am very proud to say that she will not only be a labourer on the ship, but will be piloting and driving ships. She also teaches culturally relevant programs about Inuit in Nunavut. She is urging people to make their dreams come true. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say congratulations to her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Member's Statement 886 – 6(2): Suicide Prevention

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Suicide is secretive, I guess. Secretive. You don't know who's thinking about it, and some of those secrets get out. I guess Facebook was the main one.

I want to make a suggestion to our government. It would be great if a position was created to just watch social media, because that's where some secrets get out. They don't get out really good, but you can tell. I think that's a good suggestion for our government, to create a position. You're going to help families, and if it can work, maybe the mental health could add for portfolio to get maybe a little higher wage.

But it's secretive. I know that social media, you see some of it. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Member's Statement 887 – 6(2): World Suicide Prevention Day

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, and my constituents of Hudson Bay.

September 10 is being marked as World Suicide Prevention Day. During my time as an MLA I read a poem from my friend, and I would like to revisit that poem.

“Read on Facebook this morning.
Another person has died.
How many in the family will weep and cry?
That's the tenth one this week.
So stop and think
Your momma will cry.
Many wonder in their wondering mind.
What's going on in their young mind?
And as your father buries you,
Will he drop on his knees and whisper, why?”

I cry out for help.
What's going on amongst our young?
I cry out for help.
This has got to stop.
So we can move on.
You ever wonder what would happen if you try?
Stop and think.
Your grandma who loves you
Will feel like slowly dying.
Your grandpa who taught you so much
Will walk around wondering.
What did I do wrong?
Your friend who walked beside you
Will wonder, if I only had been there,
Would you still be here?
Your partner cries and yells out why,
Plays the same music,
Wishing you were still here,
Wishing him still there.
Think about suicide,
Dark thoughts enter the mind.
Stop and think will that change?
Or bring him home?
Or will that change?
Or bring her home?
Stop and think.
You're now just a stat of people gone.
Stop and think.
You're just a picture on the wall.
Stop and think.
Your father will still whisper, why?
Stop and think.
Yes, your mamma will cry."

Mr. Speaker, I call on the Canadian government to support Nunavut on this important area, and I also call on the next 7th Assembly of this Assembly to prioritize youth initiatives in all areas.

Thank you for allowing me this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Member's Statement 888 – 6(2): Recognizing Felix

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. I want to also say our thoughts are with everyone across our territory and across our country, as we mark today as national Suicide Prevention Day, and I thank all of the families and first responders and everyone who helps in any situation. We want to end suicide and stop it, and know that there are supports out there for people.

Mr. Speaker, it is a special day here for us as colleagues. One of our colleagues has a birthday today. I just wanted to say happy birthday to Ms. Brewster, and wish you a very wonderful day and thank you for being born today.

>>*Laughter*

I hope you have a wonderful day.

Mr. Speaker, earlier our colleague brought up the Nunavut Territorial Parks Award of some wonderful people across our territory who have been recipients of that award.

One of them is one of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, Felix Tologanak-Labrie is also known as Akana, and that's my namesake's brother. I'm always so proud, and I have a special connection I feel through our namesakes, to your relatives.

This young man has been a trailblazer in terms of his on-the-land recreational activities. He's already a leader in his own way of knowing our land, hunting, providing for family, and really taking on our skills that he's acquired from family members of our hunting grounds and the way of life. He's an excellent trapper, hunter, fisher. He does so many wonderful things out on the land.

For that, Felix, continue to be a role model in all that you do. I'm so proud of you and I continue to look forward to where you're going.

Mr. Speaker, he was one of our graduates this past year, and I wish you all the best.
Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Speaker: I would like to remind my colleagues that everyone wants to ask questions again today. We didn't have time to finish yesterday, so keep in mind keep your questions short and answer preambles short, just to help your fellow colleagues. Thank you very much.

Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Oral Question 1360 – 6(2): Combating Bootlegging in Igloolik

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Justice, and they concern the issue of combatting bootlegging in Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, Igloolik is a restricted alcohol community. Unfortunately, bootlegging in Igloolik continues to be a concern to many of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the department's approved 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 is to "work with Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other stakeholders to reduce the importation of alcohol and drugs into Nunavut."

Can the minister clarify what specific actions her department, in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is currently undertaking to address this important matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for raising this important topic.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice does work on the issue, and are in communication with Canada Post and through the RCMP, Mr. Speaker, we've been able to work to combat illegal alcohol and drugs that continue to harm our communities, by combatting bootlegging and drug trafficking. This is one of our key objectives within the Department of Justice and with the RCMP.

Each year the RCMP seizes significant quantities of illicit alcohol and drugs across the territory, and since January 2025, the RCMP has made 88 notable alcohol and drug seizures.

We do work with the areas, with Canada Post as well as our airlines, to help combat this area of concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the problem in our communities, it's very visible.

(interpretation ends) on May 31, 2023 the Nunavut Minister of Justice and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2022-2025 shared directional statement was tabled in the House. The document indicates that one of the priority areas is "the Government of Nunavut and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police commit to addressing the harmful effects and crimes associated with bootlegging and substance abuse in our communities."

Can the minister clarify what specific actions in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have been undertaken to address the harmful effects of bootlegging.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

The Department of Justice urges all Nunavummiut to stand together in protecting our communities by reporting any information about drug trafficking and bootlegging in our communities, and that is really one sentiment that I want to share across our territory, is that the way in which we do stop this is by people coming forward with information. There are toll free lines to call and share that.

Mr. Speaker, the RCMP members continue to use intelligence-led policing to investigate bootlegging and drug trafficking, and where feasible, we do partner with the Canada Post, as I said, and our airlines, to help support this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for clarifying that.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities' recent annual general meeting passed a resolution that calls for enhanced measures of alcohol and drug screening in the Canada Post shipments to Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I support every effort to combat bootlegging and to reduce the impact of alcohol-related incidents in our communities. Can the minister commit to collaborating with the Canada Post and enhanced package screenings to address the illegal

transportation of drugs and alcohol into Nunavut communities, including Igloolik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for that question. Yes, we are committed to working with Canada Post, and we have staff within the Department of Justice who are in touch with the head people of Canada Post. It is my intention to also reach out to the new minister of that department, and share some concerns that we would like to see the funding back to supporting inspections with Canada Post and go forward from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Our birthday colleague for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Oral Question 1361 – 6(2): Child and Family Services in Nunavut

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services, and I rise today to focus on the progress being made towards addressing critical failings noted in the recent follow-up report by the Auditor General of Canada and on child and family services in Nunavut.

The minister has tabled a number of updates on the progress achieved under the Department of Family Services Ilagiitsiarniq Action Plan.

Correspondence from the deputy minister at the beginning of the summer indicated that the department would be reorganizing its Family Wellness division to improve accountability, resource allocation, and responsiveness. Can the minister provide an overview of the status of that reorganization, and how it directly impacts services provided to Nunavut's most vulnerable family and children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I do apologize as close as you are, I didn't get the full question. If you could repeat that question, please. Thank you.

Speaker: Ms. Brewster, please repeat your question.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I admit my voice was a little bit quieter, because I'm grateful the birthday wishes but I feel a little bit shy.

I'll just read the last part. Correspondence from the deputy minister at the beginning of the summer indicated that the department would be reorganizing its Family Wellness

division to improve accountability, resource allocation, and responsiveness. I wonder if the minister can provide an overview of the status of that reorganization, and how it directly impacts services provided to Nunavut's most vulnerable children and families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for clarifying that. It is a very good question. The report by the Auditor General are areas that have been worked on in reorganization and how the staff may be reorganized.

Our review of what actions we must take is in progress, but it is not complete as yet, but to date the progress is being made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really would like to hear more details on that reorganization, and how it is meant to improve the delivery of services. I think that's a valid question, and I would like to hear the answer.

Mr. Speaker, this summer on June 25, 2026 Nunavut's information and privacy commissioner filed a report on a breach of privacy complaint raised by Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth.

The commissioner noted that the recent reorganizations within the Department of Family Services may result in child protection files being seen by staff who are not authorized to do so. He recommended that the department either change its structure or change the law to address this issue.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what specific steps have been taken to realign the department's structure with the legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question.

(interpretation ends) I want to go back to the first question. I do understand, like I stated, there's a lot of things we've had to work on, and we continue to do a lot of work right now within the department. The structural organization changes are still ongoing, and there is a number of positions that we are still talking about, in terms of ensuring there's proper streamlining of positions within the department, including the headquarters office.

We are trying to ensure there's proper supports for all the employees within the department, and ensuring proper training and follow-ups are being done.

When we're talking about the issues that the commissioner had mentioned, we have been talking a lot about how we need to look into this furthermore, because the report that we do have from the review is quite serious, and we do understand the confidentiality of the child protection files. There are things that we have to look into furthermore on that.

I also understand and I do acknowledge the importance of safeguarding personal information and ensuring compliance with the *Child and Family Services Act*, and we also have to ensure that we are ensuring that act is being followed.

There is a number of things that we do have to take into consideration when we're trying to look at this furthermore, and also when I talk about the exclusion of ADM within the department, this really means that the CFSA, *Child and Family Services Act*, excludes the ADM. Like I said, there is a number of things that we are looking into, and it really has to come down to the act itself.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what I gleaned from that is perhaps there is a focus on changing the legislation to realign. Just for the record Mr. Speaker, the minister did nod her head at that, so I appreciate that knowledge, because I think it's really important to take action on that issue.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Nunavut Gazette, on July 1, 2026 a new director of Child and Family Services was appointed for a six-month term. It seems unfortunate that a time when the department need to ensure stability, continuity, and improvement in the delivery of services to children, youth, and families across Nunavut that this position is being filled on a temporary basis.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on the current status of her department's family wellness division, and what impact the recent changes and reorganizations will have on the implementation of the Ilagiitsiarniq action plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I do understand that the *Child and Family Services Act* does need to be updated, and we were really hoping that would be done this term of government, but

unfortunately with the OAG report and the work that the department has had to do, we have had no time to do that. So it is very unfortunate. The department hopes that it will be dealt with in the next government, because it is due time that the act be reviewed.

In terms of the staff changeovers, I do understand there has been a lot of pros and cons to what is good and what isn't but what we've had to do is ensure that our strategic plan and all the processes we have been trying to work on are a continuum. Like I stated with the OAG report, there's a lot of work that has been done already, and there's a lot of work to be done yet.

I cannot mention in detail what the plans are for that position itself, but we are correcting what needs to be done and it doesn't matter who's in or who's out, it's a matter of getting the work done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1362 – 6(2): Marine Infrastructure

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question (interpretation ends) to the Minister for Transportation and Infrastructure, and they concern the issue of Qikiqtarjuaq's new deep water port. (interpretation) I always stand to ask questions in regards to deep sea port.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) when I raised this issue during our recent Spring Sitting, the minister indicated that the design phase of the project was approximately 60 per cent completed. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of planning and design of this important new marine infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question. I thank my colleague for asking a question in regards to this issue, and I know that she has been pushing this for quite some time in Qikiqtarjuaq.

The design phase is now being worked on continually to date and it has developed further. On October 25, 2025 the design phase will be completed, perhaps, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly was informed last year during its Fall Sitting that the estimated cost of the Qikiqtarjuaq Deep Sea Port has increased from approximately \$50 million to over \$300 million. In August of this year Nunavut Tunngavik identified the project as one of the four projects of national interest that the organizations had indicated it wishes to co-develop with the territorial and federal government.

Can the minister indicate how much additional funding has been committed by the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik to move forward on the new Qikiqtarjuaq Deep Sea Port. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question.

Mr. Speaker, as of now I think those discussions are still ongoing, and there's no confirmation of additional funds towards the Qikiqtarjuaq port facility being proposed. We do note that our partners Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated does have a high level of interest on this specific, as part of the nation-building projects and we are looking forward to this might possibly be identified through the federal budget process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, for the next 7th Assembly, for the new cabinet. The reason why I say this, I want to say is that I want the file to shine in the cabinet side with the new members after the election.

Mr. Speaker, in July of this year the Nunavut Impact Review Board issued a notice of screening and inviting comments on the project from interested individuals and organizations. Information published by the board indicates that four federal departments made submissions.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what concerns the Government of Nunavut has with the submissions made by the federal departments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On a high level I'm not aware of any concerns that were brought out specifically around this, but this project as well as all others that go through our regulatory process of ensuring permits are in order, when those concerns are brought up, we do try to coordinate to ensure they get addressed as immediately as can be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1363 – 6(2): Health Costs for Non-Inuit Nunavummiut

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I send my greetings to Pond Inlet residents, and also to the Clyde River residents. I think of you and send condolences to my first cousin.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, concerns have been raised by older Nunavut residents who do not have access to such health insurance programs as the Non-Insured Health Benefits program or employer-provided health insurance. Can the minister clarify whether he is aware of this issue facing Nunavut's older non-Inuit residents, and if so, can he tell us how many Nunavut residents currently do not have health insurance to cover the cost of accessing medical service away from their home community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and also I would like to thank my colleague for the question. I know that they require to have some health insurance, no matter where they live.

(interpretation ends) in terms of the numbers that the member is requesting, there are three different streams that we have through the Extended Health Benefits program, and so looking at the last number of years, say for the last five years, on average we've seen about 325, that's a rough average over the last five years, of individuals who have accessed one of the three streams through the Extended Health Benefits program.

It is a program that we would like to see improvements made to, and we're starting to move in that direction of looking for what needs to be improved. We're at the early stages. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker and the minister. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, some older Nunavut residents have health issues that require them to travel away from their community, and they often face financial difficulties during this experience. They feel that they fall through the crack when it comes to paying for medical travel. The added stress of this situation does not help with their healing, and makes them reluctant to seek further medical care.

Can the minister clarify or clearly describe how his department provides financial support to Nunavut residents who have serious health issues, but are not covered under such programs as employer-provided health insurance or the Non-Insured Health Benefits program that is provided to Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The medical travel support stream of the Extended Health Benefits program is where those type of clients could go. It is designed for clients without third-party medical travel benefits, or clients who have exhausted their existing benefits. However, we do know and we have heard that the cash flow aspect of having to pay up front for expenses and then claim them back afterwards can create hardship, and as the member elaborated, can create a disincentive for people who need care.

We don't want there to be barriers between people, Nunavut residents and the care that they need. So that is part of the reason why we have begun reviewing the programs policy. We've developed a pre-consultation plan, and we begun the pre-consultations with our stakeholders.

We do want to make improvements, and this is the first step along that road.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who move to Nunavut, they are in-laws, they are brothers-in-law, are our sisters-in-law. They are part of our family circle, but whether the spouse passes away they have to take care of themselves. They have to take care of their services and pay for their own services during medical services and they go through hardship when they have to pay for their services.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that Nunavut residents who are not covered by a health insurance program can get some of their costs refunded through the Extended Health Benefit program.

However, when they go on medical travel, they must find accommodation that they can afford, collect receipts for meals, and manage the costs for medical and other needs while they are travelling. This can be quite difficult with limited income to start with. Then they have to submit a claim and wait to see if they will be reimbursed.

Would the minister consider working with his staff to improve the situation with these Nunavummiut by providing per diems in advance of their medical travel, instead of reimbursing them after the fact? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can confirm or affirm that. My staff are following these proceedings, and as I have indicated, we're at the pre-consultation stage in terms every looking for ways to improve the policy. I appreciate the member's suggestion, and once we get into the full swing of the consultations, the department will be seeking input from community members or impacted individuals right across Nunavut. And so please stay tuned for that opportunity.

In the interim, as we do work on these pre-consultation activities, effective April 1, 2025 medical travel rates have been increased for commercial accommodations from \$125 per night to \$175 per night, and the long-term rate has also been increased. So that's the first update that we've had since 2016, and it's just an interim measure as we work on looking for how to improve the program policy. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1364 – 6(2): Utility Rates

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation on the topic of the recent request of the Utility Rates Review Council on the standby power rate application. I do understand that the deadline for feedback was a couple of days ago.

I would like to start off with my question:

In the Qulliq Energy Corporation's web site it's got a section on the topic of frequently asked questions, and numbers 5 and 6 talk about the new rate, the transparency aspect of it so the customers can see the rate before deciding on self-generation with backup.

The proposed rate is 48 cents per kilowatt hour, and I know it describes the process, the level of maintenance and the need to be able to keep the power on, availability, to meet the demand if the corporate client does go offline. I would like to get a little bit clearer description on what is eliminated from the cost, because if I look at the commercial cost for non-government, it's 62 cents a kilowatt-hour. So this is only a 14-cent savings for a company to go to their own standalone generation.

I would like to get a little more context from the minister on how this rate was concluded. Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague.

(interpretation ends) When it came to doing the work around researching this topic and at the heart of this rate application is we want to be able to support and allow commercial customers to generate their own electricity. We looked at other jurisdictions that have this standby rate established, and did a comparison between the different jurisdictions that already have it, and then we incorporated some Nunavut specific considerations, and that's where we arrived at the rate which is being proposed. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while I didn't take the time to go through all the different jurisdictions across the country of Canada, I did take a quick look at Northwest Territories Power Corporation as I felt that that was the most applicable comparison. In that one I did notice that it's not a per kilowatt-hour charge. So I'm curious as to how that formula will work on a kilowatt per hour basis. Is it projected or historical kilowatt-hour use? How many kilowatt-hours is to be determined to charge this 48 cents per kilowatt-hour? Sorry, 42 cents per kilowatt-hour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) that is going to be a very difficult for me to explain. I have to admit I'm not expert when it comes to kilowatt-hours and the different rate classes, and projections of usage, but I can speak to how this rate application was designed.

We want to recover the full cost of providing the service to the standby customers, and we want to avoid the need to increase rates for other customers, and so we want to allow commercial customers to generate their own electricity and use their own electricity, but then we don't want them to create costs that are passed onto other customers.

At the heart of it it's around fairness, and through the Utility Rates Review Council review, we are open to input and feedback, and we understand there has been some provided. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do appreciate the minister's elaboration on that. I do have some concerns, and I know, I'm sure other people have brought them forward.

When we look at offsetting fixed costs, there are so many variables: how much power is actually needed; the size of the corporate client; if it's a small entity that's producing its own power, there's not a lot of demand. There is not a lot of increased cost to the Qulliq Energy Corporation to have that power set aside.

From my understanding, and especially here in Iqaluit there's a number of generators online that unless that demand is needed, no other generators are brought online, but if the power is still available. So a generator could be sitting there silent where the demand is meeting the current need, and still able to meet the need of the corporate client that goes offline where there's no expenses other than the general maintenance cost to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I did note that with Northwest Territories Power Corporation that they deal with these on a case-by-case basis.

I would encourage the minister to take a look at Utility Rates Review Council's report when it comes back and take a number of considerations into play. I did use the right amount earlier at 48 cents per kilowatt-hour, and the current commercial rate at 62 cents per kilowatt-hour. At 14 cents a kilowatt-hour, it's going to take a long, long, long time, if ever, for a corporate client to recover the capital cost that would be needed to set up a standalone power supply.

I would really encourage the minister to take that into consideration, and if it's rates are going to continue to be that I would encourage some other further type of subsidy for corporate clients to help them get more independent power available to them.

I'll leave that as a comment, but I would appreciate maybe if the minister could just acknowledge I think he understands where I'm coming from this. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague. (interpretation ends) Yes, I understand where the member's coming from and I will take that under advisement. I appreciate that suggestion.

Following the rate review process, the minister will be able to either proceed with the proposed rate, not proceed with the proposed rate, or proceed with an alternate rate or tariff recommended by the URRC, the Utility Rates Review Council. And so it's a process. The rate application process is one that we embrace. We take very seriously all the input that is provided, and we want to support the private sector and we understand the high capital costs.

One final point, Mr. Speaker, that is so exciting about alternative energy is that the cost of installing alternative energy, including solar panels, continues to come down, year after

year, in terms of capital costs through increased volume of manufacturing, and so I think we'll be seeing more and more alternative energy due to that factor. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1365 – 6(2): Where are the Elder Vans

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the premier, the Minister responsible for Seniors. Mr. Speaker, almost one year ago the premier rose in this place and promised that elders vans would be delivered to five communities across Nunavut, including Rankin Inlet. \$1 million of public funds was used for this elders van initiative, but to this date, it is not clear where these vans are.

I have been to the hamlet office in Rankin Inlet; I have been to the Department of Community Services in Rankin Inlet. No van.

Since these vans were purchased with public funds, they should be government assets, and they should be put to use providing the service that they were intended for.

Can the premier confirm that the five specialized elders vans are government assets, and can he tell us where these are currently located. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank my colleague for asking that question. We had a contract available to provide transportation services. It is a company, and the vans were for five communities and they are in the five communities now. And the government does not own the vans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) My question was not answered. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, almost one year ago the premier announced that the entity called Nunavut Future Skills Development, in partnership with Arctic Training Limited and Caribou Cabs, was granted the contract to deliver the government's elders van initiative.

Can the premier tell us what specific deliverables were committed by the entity which received the \$1 million contract to provide elders vans, and what steps the government is

prepared to take if this entity does not provide these deliverables. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question. I did provide the response to his question. These aren't government assets, as I said in my comments. Further, I think it's important that the assets do belong to Northern Future Skills Development. During the consultations we did hear the importance and the urgency of wanting to see elder vans in these communities. It hasn't panned out to the way we wanted, no.

As we have heard directly from the owners of these vans, they continue to seek federal funding as well as other funding to operationalize these vans, but to date they have not been successful. We very much look forward to continuing to see if there's anybody interested to be able to work with them to be able to really continue to see the operationalization of these. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on October 11, 2024 the premier stated:

"We heard elders loud and clear."

With respect to their needs for reliable transportation, he said:

"These mobility vans will improve the lives of the elders by giving them the means to get to where they need to go safely."

Mr. Speaker, Rankin Inlet elders have been waiting a long time for their ride. They still don't have the transportation that the premier promised them over a year ago.

Can the premier clearly explain why there has been so little progress on the single initiative which was intended to improve the lives of the Nunavut elders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question. The grant recipient continues to seek funding to support the operations of those vans in all communities, as I had mentioned, and they did deliver as indicated in the request, the vans to the communities and the target date was last year. Since then they

have been seeking federal funding, as I've noted, and to date they have not been successful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1366 – 6(2): Status of Taloyoak Schools

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we'll soon be reviewing the government's proposed interim capital appropriation for 2026-2027. However, I would like to know the current status of the Taloyoak high school project in this current fiscal year, as I have been given to understand that there were some recent cost adjustments to the project.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an overview of the current status of the Taloyoak high school project, including whether it is still proceeding according to schedule, and if it will be completed within the proposed budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The Taloyoak high school project is on schedule, and set to open next July 2026. And it is on budget, Mr. Speaker, and there has been a lot of work under way to help complete the school.

Some main things that have happened or that they have been working on are: They laid a concrete floor in the school and pads in the mechanical building were completed this past July, and they have also worked on mechanical and electrical rough-ins and they are nearly completed. Windows are installed, with siding insulation to follow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that when money that has been allocated to one project will not be used within a given fiscal year, it may be reallocated to other projects so that they can proceed. Mr. Speaker, for clarification, can the minister clarify whether any of the unused 2025 funding allocated for the Taloyoak high school will be reallocated to other projects in the community that have been requested, such as the installation of lighting around the school to make the area safer and prevent vandalism? That's the Netsilik School, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. I believe that is not happening, but I can check with the department and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Mr. Speaker, when I last questioned the minister on this, she indicated that they would be fixing the lights in August or September of this year, but that hasn't happened yet. I'll move on, Mr. Speaker.

Information provided by the department has indicated that renovations to implement full-day kindergarten at Taloyoak's Netsilik School would cost less than 400,000. Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on the second phase of the full-day kindergarten implementation plan, and specifically with respect to renovations to the Taloyoak Netsilik School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Jumping to full day kindergarten, we do have seven communities this last school year, including Taloyoak, that are offering full-day kindergarten, and renovations have been ongoing throughout the various schools.

In terms of the work, what type of renovations have happened to each school, I don't have that breakdown – oh, sorry, yes, I do. For Netsilik School the construction is supposed to start on October 7, with an estimated completion of November 19. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1367 – 6(2): Grays Bay Road and Port Project

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Community Services who is responsible for economic development and mines. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow-up today on the Grays Bay Road and Port project, which is an issue that I have raised in the Legislative Assembly on a number of occasions.

In August of this year Nunavut Tunngavik identified the Grays Bay Road and Port project as one of four projects of national interest. That organization has indicated that it wishes to co-develop with the territorial and federal governments. Can the minister describe how the Government of Nunavut is currently working with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association to introduce the Grays Bay Road and Port project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this file is very active right now. A lot of work is being done throughout, and through different channels and Nunavut Tunngavik is one way. Our premier and the president put out a press release on in terms of the national interest. Our premier has been in discussions with the prime minister highlighting four major projects, which Grays Bay is on. They just recently opened the major capital department in Calgary, and definitely putting that in notice to that, too.

Our friends from Kitikmeot Inuit Association are very active on it, too, along with the proponent that is doing the bulk of the work there. So we're very vocal in terms of seeing Grays Bay, and I'm really happy. Over the last summer it has been going through the news from Alberta premier to NWT premier and even our prime minister has stated the importance of Grays Bay on a number of occasions.

So we're very looking forward to hopefully that from dreams it will become reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sounds like good progress. Good to hear.

As the minister, will recall the Nunavut Impact Review Board issued its notice of screening for this project in September 2024. A full environmental review of this project is now underway. In July of this year the federal government confirmed that it is providing \$133,600 to the Kugluktuk Inuit Hunters and Trappers Association to enable the HTO to participate in the review process.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that the community has meaningful input into the review process. Can the minister highlight what input the Government of Nunavut will be providing to the Nunavut Impact Review Board during the environmental review process of the Grays Bay Road and Port project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a very robust review process within the government. It's all government departments that go in and review what is being considered under the Nunavut Impact Review Board, and provide advice and

direction. And that's what is going to happen within the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When I raised this issue last year during the Legislative Assembly's Fall Sitting, the minister stated that he had signed a memorandum of understanding with the project proponent, West Kitikmeot Resources, as well as Canada Infrastructure Bank.

During the Legislative Assembly's recent Spring Sitting, I asked the minister to table a copy of the memorandum of understanding to the Legislative Assembly, so that all members can be aware of what the government has agreed to. However, the document has not yet been tabled.

Will the minister commit to tabling a copy of the memorandum of understanding in the House before the end of the current Legislative Assembly, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if memory serves right, the memorandum of understanding is a public document and should be made available. If it has not been, I'll definitely commit to providing a copy to my colleague. I can't necessarily commit to tabling, because we do have a process in terms of what goes through our tabling process, but yes, definitely I'm prepared to provide that information to my colleague. And I really appreciate his campaigning this project, too, because it's a national interest and it's something that's right in our back yard. Thank you very much for questioning me on this topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1368 – 6(2): Sole-Source Contract with Airline

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my regards to Arviat. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to revisit my question on that air travel agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the premier stated that he did answer my question when I asked why a sole source was given out and not a tender, and I disagree with that. The premier talked about the processes are there. Their due diligence and we chose to explore sole source, and as it is their prerogative, and I agree that a government can do what they want.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back to the basics. In elementary school we were taught the five Ws: who, what, where, when, why.

Mr. Speaker, who was involved? I believe the premier because he's been quoted on the news release. What happened? An agreement was signed between the Government of Nunavut for a 10-year agreement with Bradley Air Services for air travel agreement.

When did it happen? The news release says July 16. Very clear.

Where did it happen? I assume in somebody's office somewhere, where the government officials and Bradley Air officials inked it.

Why did it happen? That's the one question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, why was this 10-year agreement with the optional five-year renewal that ties the Government of Nunavut's hands for possibly 15 years, so close to dissolution, why was it sole-sourced and not put out to tender? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok. Hon. David Akeegoak.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for following up on that question.

As I had mentioned, it is the prerogative in terms of the government to look at what we could do.

Specifically to the member's question, it did allow us to be able to directly shape the different service standards, and looking at securing a pricing structure as well as creating accountability during a time of the market realignment, while avoiding disruptions to critical public service, whether it's duty travel or medical travel. Thank you. Checks check.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not clear why a sole-source contract was issued and not a public tender. Mr. Speaker, that agreement had not expired. Mr. Speaker, most contracts have overhold period, where if a contract does expire that you continue on with it with the overhold agreement. And I don't think there would have been a disruption, because the agreement with the airlines, to the best of my knowledge, had not expired yet. They were still within the time frame.

Can the premier please tell Nunavummiut and us why this did not go to public tender.

Mr. Speaker, generally a public tender process gives you options, and the best deal. You look at what this person is offering, what that other person or business is offering, and then you pick and choose the right one. With a sole-source contract you're talking to one company or one individual.

Why was this sole-sourced and not put out to public tender for the best possible deal that Nunavummiut could have got? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)
Again I want to thank my colleague for his question.

As noted, the departments that, whether it's medical travel or duty travel, they would lose our timelines where the contract was there. Our sole purpose around wanting to ensure that we had that continuity of service as we saw the realignment around that that was really at the forefront of what we wanted to explore.

As noted in yesterday's discussion as well, the equity piece is one where it is not a done deal, but it does allow us to be able to have a year to really explore what we could do to become an equity owner in the airline, which is really our highway, and through that mechanism of negotiating through sole source, it did allow us to be able to explore that as we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I disagree that medical travel or duty travel would have been disrupted, as the contract was not ended. They would have continued on with the conditions of the medical and duty travel contract until its end, and there's always an overhold period, and the next government could have negotiated or gone to tender for a deal.

Going back to the equity piece, Mr. Speaker, this contract is signed for ten years, possibly 15 years. I believe the government has no more leverage for equity. Why would a company that already has a contract go into equity? The bargaining chip that the government had is given to the airline. They signed the deal for 10, possibly 15 years, so the equity piece is almost relevant. And as I spoke yesterday and the premier said he would get back to me on it, how will it work when you have a contract with the company and you want to buy an equity piece on it? Do you complain to yourself if the service is bad, because you own part of it? It's quite complicated, I guess.

For the last question, then, does the premier agree with me that, for lack of a better word, the hammer, the advantage that the government had is gone because they signed a 10, possibly 15-year agreement with the airline already? There's no incentive for the airline

to be bought out by the government, unless they're going to get another contract I guess that extends this even further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question. As noted, the agreement does open up those conversations whether we will proceed or not within the one-year period for the future government to make that option whether they want to become an equity owner or not. It is at that time those conversations and those negotiations will occur. Many of the due diligence that are required will continue to happen.

After a flow, I will have to reconsider in terms of the types of structures that are going to be in place, but right now, we are at the point where we have the ability to be able to look into and to really look into whether the Government of Nunavut wants to become an equity owner or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1369 – 6(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation Projects in Kivalliq

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I asked a number of questions during our recent Spring Sitting and Fall Sitting about clean energy project in Kivalliq, including project in communities of Naujaat and Coral Harbour. As the minister is aware, the Ikayuut Solar and Storage Energy project in Naujaat is planned to “supply 30 per cent of community’s electricity demand with locally produced, renewable energy.”

When I raised this subject during our recent Spring Sitting, the minister stated that “connection impact assessment” has been completed for Naujaat project. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the Qulliq Energy Corporation working to negotiate an energy purchase agreement with the project proponent, Kivalliq Alternative Energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for his question. In listening I’m looking at this project. It is moving ahead. We’re very happy to see it go through and we’re glad to support it.

(interpretation ends) Qulliq Energy Corporation, similar to our partnership with Nukkiqsautiit in Sanikiluaq we're committed to advancing the Naujaat solar project. Right now our detailed design work is about 90 per cent complete, and so it's very technical work and it's done by people much smarter than myself, of course, but they are designing how or trying to figure out the point of interconnection line expansion between the solar array and the storage and our grid.

That's work that's ongoing, and we'll continue to work with Kivalliq Alternative Energy on these technical details needed for a successful interconnection. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

(interpretation ends) Kivalliq Alternative Energy Partnership is also working to develop a solar and energy storage project in Coral Harbour that also aims to provide 30 per cent of community electricity with locally produced clean energy. When I last raised this issue during our Spring Sitting, the minister informed the Legislative Assembly the feasibility studies were ongoing, to determine the location of the installation.

Can the minister provide an update on the status of the Qulliq Energy Corporation with the alternative energy on Coral Harbour project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This as well in Coral Harbour project, we are in support of that project and we are working with Kivalliq Alternative Energy (interpretation ends) right now they are currently performing a feasibility study of the selected renewable energy location, so my understanding is that following the feasibility study the next step would be to work on the connection impact assessment. Sorry, and I have lot of acronyms here and I'm trying to keep them straight. If the feasibility study proves positive, then the proponent could move towards the connection impact assessment process. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that we are in support of all this to enhance the community.

(interpretation ends) In August of this year the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a request for proposal to conduct assessment of power plant in a number of Nunavut communities, including Coral Harbour, Rankin, Arviat, Whale Cove, Resolute, Pond

Inlet, Sanirajak, and Kimmirut. Can the minister confirm what criteria will be used to determine whether or not to replace Coral Harbour existing power plant with a new facility. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

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

(interpretation ends) When it comes to power plant replacements, the criteria that are looked at, there is multifaceted analysis. There is the plant itself, the age of the plant, any safety concerns or safety issues with the current operation of the plant. There's geotechnical considerations. Some of our older power plants, due to the heat and vibration of the diesel generators. They will actually sink, or the foundations will tilt or crack. And so that's a major consideration.

We'll also be looking at things like the projected growth of the community, as well as what the previous two questions were around, potential availability of land and ways to incorporate more renewable energy. So it will be a multifaceted analysis.

We know that we do need more infrastructure dollars to do that work and we're still hunting for those dollars for all Nunavut communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1370 – 6(2): Iqaluit Elders Home Inuktitut-Speaking Staff

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With six minutes remaining, I'll keep this as brief as possible.

My questions are for the Minister of Health. Approximately six months ago I shared some very serious, alarming concerns that are brought forward from elders at the Iqaluit elders home. The first issue I would like to raise is the allegation there are only two Inuit staff working there from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., meaning for the other 16 hours a day there's no bilingual staff to provide interpretation and translation for elders. Can the minister confirm whether or not this allegation is true. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I will try to keep my answer, my responses quick.

In terms of the allegation, there are more than two Inuit Inuktitut-speaking staff currently. However, recruitment and retention of Inuit staff at the Iqaluit elders home is a priority,

and it's a challenge for the contractor. They have put their job postings all over town. They have put them online. They find it challenging to secure staff and to retain staff. They have even offered some of their casual staff full-time positions, but have not been able to transfer casual staff to full-time status.

They continue to work to retain and hire Inuktitut-speaking staff. We know that's an important component of the service to elders. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I appreciate the minister's response there are more than two bilingual Inuit staff working at the elders home. Although I am not actively looking for other employment opportunities, I have not seen any advertisements around town advertising positions at the boarding home, sorry elders home.

It was recently announced last year the Government of Nunavut's health department signed a 10-year contract for the operation of the elders home with Sakku Investments and Embassy West. Can the minister indicate what Inuit employment rates are stipulated in that contract and what type of penalties have been given for not meeting it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The new contract that we're operating under with Tagjaq Corporation sets out reporting requirements that are quite stringent for the contractor to report back to the government, much more stringent than previous contracts. These reporting requirements include setting up monthly meetings between the contractor and Health to discuss issues specifically like Inuit employment.

At the Iqaluit elders home currently their Inuit employment rate is 15 per cent, which is lower than where we would want it to be. As a government we want that employment rate to be as high as possible. I can't speak to the existence of penalties in the contract itself. I don't have that level of detail, but I can say that Inuit employment as well as training is something that we value very highly and it's something that we work to help our contractors move forward on. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my last question, as I have indicated, there's only bilingual staff working on one shift, meaning there is 16 hours of the day where Inuit interpretation is not made available to elders. Can the minister provide an update on the current status of bilingual staffing, and what sort of options are made available to elders when there are no bilingual staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The contractor targets 16 hours of the day, trying make sure that during the 16-hour period that there is a consistent accessibility or availability of Inuktitut-speaking staff. It is something they are having challenges with, and it primarily, as I understand it, has to do with the human resource issues.

The contract that we have also does have stipulations around section 3 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, and so that's a component of the contract that we are able to work on with the contractor. I really hope that continued efforts and work with the contractor will see that Inuit employment rate improve, while also making sure that it's top quality service for the residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1371 – 6(2): Family Services in Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services. Mr. Speaker, as I wrote to the minister this past summer, I am concerned about staff well-being at her department's office in Baker Lake, as it is very cramped with family wellness staff, income support workers and career development officer all in the same place, even with a number of positions not being filled. I would like to thank the minister for her replies in providing me with an overview of the steps her department is taking to fill positions which are currently vacant, and possibly adding more positions, as they are very much needed.

I note that having had adequate space and housing constraints are two major concerns in hiring new staff. Can the minister provide an update on how the government is working to ensure that adequate staff housing will be secured for Family Services staff in Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. That's a very good question. As ministers in the government, this is one of the biggest concerns, the lack of office space, and the Department of Family Services is not the only department. We work with another department and housing corporation, and we're also working with the department of transportation because they review office spaces. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Speaker, Baker Lake is Nunavut's fourth-largest community, and the number of Family Services positions in the community is not adequate to meet the need. With two social worker positions currently vacant the few staff currently in office are at risk of burnout. I appreciate that the department is working to fill vacant positions, but we are all aware that there is a huge backlog in the government's hiring process. Correspondence from the deputy minister of Family Services to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts which was filed on September 8 is indicated that 77 staff are working under letters of authority to conduct family wellness work.

Can the minister describe the current status of recruitment and hiring activities currently under way to fill the positions in Baker Lake, and indicate whether any consideration has been given to direct-appointing local frontline staff under letters of authority because local residents would not only be familiar with the community, but they may not also not need staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking those questions. This is one of our biggest concerns, that we need more staff. I know we need more staff. We need social workers, but there are many barriers. There seems to be many barriers. There's lack of housing and lack of office space. And up to today this has always been a barrier. And as I stated earlier, the Department of Family Services is not the only department that deals with the government as a whole, tries to find solutions and that's continuing. But we're not the only department operating everything. So that causes a barrier sometimes.

We're going to continue our efforts and hold meetings with people that are under the care of the government, and we're also planning, we have to set our priorities on what we're going to work hard on in the future. Those are the two concerns that were mentioned that are the most worrisome. We have to see where we're going, what else can we do, and how else can the Department of Family Services be assisted. Family Services is going to continue to work on that, and we're always going to be presenting requests for proposals so that they can have adequate office space. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you, Minister for the responses and the continued work to better provide better services across Nunavut, especially for my constituents in Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, during the standing committee's hearing on the Auditor General of Canada's 2025 follow-up report on Child and Family Services in Nunavut, the deputy minister of the department of transportation and infrastructure stated that some office space in Baker

Lake had been freed up in a leased property which could be identified for Family Services to “potentially relocate to a larger space or more suitable space.”

However, he also indicated that Family Services needed to identify what its office space needs were and put forward a request. Can the minister provide an update on what specific steps have been taken to formally assess the need for Family Services office space in Baker Lake, and to put forward a formal request to transportation and infrastructure to secure larger and more suitable office space. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking those questions. (interpretation ends) I think our department has been quite vocal about wanting more office space, and I can’t express that enough, especially within our second floor. We have done a lot of reviews on where we could get more office in the communities, because when we’re talking about the OAG report and wanting more staff in the communities that is our priority, is to ensure there are offices and apartments in the communities.

We will look into this furthermore within my department, and also work with the transportation and infrastructure department to ensure that if there’s available spaces in the community, we certainly want to work with the department to ensure we have staff working in them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members be aware time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to extend our question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are none. Question period is extended another 30 minutes. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaerner.

Oral Question 1372 – 6(2): Clean-Up of the Old Rink

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for allowing to have this question period extended.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we were having a session, I asked the Minister of Environment about the rink that burnt down completely, environmental stewardship. Has the Department of Environment looked into or have they cleaned up, or started working with the hamlet to clean up the old rink? What has the

Department of Environment been doing in Igloolik in efforts to clean up the old rink and protect our environment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the large assets in the communities, whenever they burn down or if they get damaged in some way, the owner of the assets, this was the hamlet asset, would be the lead organization to direct the cleanup. But, Mr. Speaker, I can say that the Department of Environment and the government are always trying to work closely with the communities on hazardous materials that need to be handled properly. And when they need to be brought to the dump or sent out by ship, we get that going so that that can get started. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No work has started. I would like to tell the Department of Environment nothing has been done to clean up the remains.

I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, what has the Department of Environment done to do planning on hazardous material, like old batteries when they are hazardous to our environment. The minister was talking about environmental stewardship. Even though they are assets owned by the hamlets, how is the Department of Environment going to help with the cleanup process?

The minister just stated that waste metal and things like that can be shipped out of Nunavut. It looks like nothing has been done, so what are you going to do to support the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think there are some misconceptions at times where the Department of Environment is tapped, or there's an expectation that we clean up contaminated sites. I think it's more to do with who the owners or the asset is, or where the land, who is in charge of that land. In this case it's municipal land and asset. With that there's often the polluter pays aspect around when a contaminated site is being assessed.

But, Mr. Speaker, Environment, we do try to look at solid waste solutions. We do have partners with Nunavut Association of Municipalities. We have, for example, done oily waste back haul pilot project, for example, with one community per region, so we've been doing that and providing training for municipal service workers on how to safely

clean, crush, and transport oil waste and drums. This is an area that we want to continue onwards with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Mr. Speaker, yes, it is an asset owned by the hamlet. There were a bunch of fires that winter. The hospital burnt down and some houses became very smelly. It was an important happening in the community. So environmental stewardship is a big deal. When the hamlet is not assisted financially, they can only do certain things up to a point. I would like to really know what the Department of Environment is going to plan for environmental stewardship. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, contamination or things that need to be cleaned up, they are different things in the communities that are within or outside the hamlet boundaries, they have been reported. Up to now I can say that the Department of Environment does not fund cleanup projects.

However, as to how much money it will cost to clean up, we can help because they will need to know how much it's going to cost before they start the cleanup. And as I stated earlier, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, with them we have to keep on looking at those things and work at progressed. And we try to make sure contaminants don't get into our environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1373 – 6(2): Sanikiluaq's Community Learning Centre

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College. Mr. Speaker, one of my very first questions during the first session of this Assembly was regarding the status of the Sanikiluaq community learning centre. Mr. Speaker, you will be pleased to note that I will not repeat my mistakes from my infamous Mapgate incident, when I rose in this House to show a map, the original location of the 60-year-old building that was dragged to the community, and is currently being used as the community learning centre in Sanikiluaq. But I can assure you that the building is old, small, and inadequate.

I would like to ask the minister to clearly explain how Nunavut Arctic College evaluates the size, condition, and suitability of its community learning centres to ensure that local will adult learners have the learning opportunities they need to progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. In regards to the Sanikiluaq community learning centre, we look at the age of the building, what it's used for, and different parts of the building are reviewed and then we go through the capital process, and usually one of our staff goes to the community to look at the adult learning centre. I'm not exactly sure when the last time that this employee went to Sanikiluaq, but I do know that there has to be another review done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On my way to Iqaluit during the Spring Sitting, I was on the plane with a capital planner for Nunavut Arctic College, and it was a pleasure, an honour having him down in Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, Sanikiluaq's community learning centre is inadequate to meet the needs of the community. The lack of space limits what can be offered. There is no kitchen, so cooking programs are not possible. There is not enough floor space to properly run sewing and fur design programs. There's no office for the adult educator. There is no storage space. There's only enough room for one program at a time. And if it is a multi-year program like the teacher education program, other courses cannot be offered.

I would like to ask the minister to provide an update on the current status of delivering the Nunavut Teacher Education Program in Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. We recognize that the community learning centre is not adequate, either to be renovated or to replace it completely. But we will have to do a review of the building and look at other aspects of the program. It seems like there are some asset that don't belong to the government, but during the capital review and it is slated to be worked on. They were asking the community what types of programs they would like to see, but there was no response from Sanikiluaq. So that kind of put things backwards.

And if they are going to be offering more programs, then they would need more than one adult educator. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, 2022, the minister of the day stated in this House that "Nunavut Arctic College can

commit that for the 2022-2023 fiscal year Nunavut Arctic College has plans to introduce your community of Sanikiluaq into the capital planning process.”

It is now September 2025, three-and-a-half years later. We will shortly be considering entering capital appropriation request for 2026-2027, and the community learning centre project for Sanikiluaq has still not appeared on the capital plan. Can the minister explain why Nunavut Arctic College did not follow through with this commitment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. As I indicated earlier, we look at the urgency of any project while we’re doing the capital process, and we have problems, and it is not in the capital process, but we can review it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1374 – 6(2): Status of Collective Bargaining

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will say that my birthday wish today, and I’m going to say it out loud, is I’m really hoping that we get to have the new plan for the arts in Nunavut tabled before the end of this session. I’m just putting it out there.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for Minister of Human Resources, and I will start by congratulating the parties involved in the recent ratification and signing of a three-year collective agreement between the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Teachers Association. Congratulations to all. It’s good to have certainty.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is well aware, the collective agreement between the government and the Nunavut Employees Union expired a year ago in September 2024, and in July of this year the union publicly announced that both parties had agreed to voluntary mediation.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of the mediation process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it’s very timely that the question is being posed here. As of this week they are meeting with the mediator here, right now and the talks are progressing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to hear that. We know that this current Assembly dissolves within a matter of weeks, and at that point the government and public service enter a caretaker mode until the members of the next Assembly and government take office. Although it is to be hoped that an agreement can be reached before dissolution, it may not occur.

I would like to know, can the minister confirm whether or not the mediation and other talks between the parties will be suspended until the new government takes office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these are negotiations between the government and the Nunavut Employees Union. I'm hoping that those talks would continue, in terms of if there's any major request that is needed and that cabinet needs to provide directions to our negotiators. Yes, it would have to be caretaker mode, but if they are working within the perimeters of what needs to be negotiated, they would continue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's really important to be able to help our public servants to be able to rest assured that they have a negotiated agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, an important component of a healthy relationship between the government and its workforce is ensuring that there are appropriate avenues to resolve grievances and raise concerns about potentially inappropriate conduct in the workplace. I was concerned to note that the government issued an announcement this summer again seeking applicants to serve as territorial ethics officer, which is a statutory officer under the act. Can the minister indicate if a successful applicant has been found, and can he confirm who is currently fulfilling this position's statutory responsibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have not found a replacement yet. Joseph Murdoch-Flowers has agreed to stay on as ethics officer until one is found, and I really appreciate and want to give a great shout out for all the work that he has done to date, and he's going to continue.

I'm hoping that that recruitment process will happen and we will find an ethics officer in due time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1375 – 6(2): Financial Action Plan for Nunavut Arctic College

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my next question to the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, recently in the update on the financial assistance for Nunavut students on the action plan, there were 18 key issues identified with 35 recommendations, and without the minister needing to go into detail on the specific recommendations or key issues, I would first like to get a sense of the minister's comfort level with how things are progressing under that action plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. You know, this work has been ongoing as key priority within the Department of Education, I think since the term of this government, and really taking the whole-lens perspective of post-secondary support and doing a comprehensive review of the Financial Assistance For Nunavut Students program.

So we have been working to improve the ability to meet the needs for post-secondary students effectively and efficiently, and today's announcement has been one that's long going. We are excited for the post-secondary students that are attending school. So with this, the students are made aware. They have been sent letters of what extra supports are there, and I believe some of the students have already received the top-up funding. And we continue to do so.

The key highlights that I shared are basically to help support the overall benefit structure, the monthly allowances, as well as supporting each student and their dependent or children as well with their increases every month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the announcement today, and I have already spoken to the minister in her office. I had some supplementary questions that I am looking forward to receiving some further information on.

What I was looking for, basically in the findings and recommendations it says on page 7 of the FANS comprehensive review, it says if the 35 recommendations in this report are adopted, it will result in retiring a financially focused student assistance program and creating a student-centric, made-in-Nunavut post-secondary-student support program.

Like I mentioned I know there are 35 recommendations and 85 key issues. I know there were announcements in the fall. I know there were recent announcements as early as today. I wanted a general comment from the minister on how comfortable she feels with the progress that the department is coming to implement these recommendations. I don't need detail, just what is the minister's comfort level as we are nearing the end of this term on how things are progressing through the department and her officials. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I think it's out of pure excitement I kind of was sharing extra information.

Mr. Speaker, I am very confident for the Department of Education to continue on this work, and work on the key recommendations that are out there, and work with funding sources that are out there. This funding that we're utilizing is through knit funding, and it's through partnerships like that that we can really enhance and transform education and post-secondary training. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that response. I'm sure I'll be following up with other recommendations, but I do want to touch on one today that I think is very important. and it's recommendation number 2, the FANS staff complement. And 3, actually.

Mr. Speaker, I've said it often in the past. Especially when you're talking about central agencies or departments, they need to be staffed appropriately so that they can do their job of providing services to the rest of the government, like human resources, as an example. If human resources isn't funded, they can't provide the support to the other departments around the government.

I feel it's the same thing with the Department of Education, when we're looking at financial assistance for Nunavut students. The office itself, the recommendation is to determine the number of type of positions required to ensure Nunavut's post-secondary education students are provided with quality student-centric services, and it's recommended that the Government of Nunavut secure the services of third-party contractors for the administration and management of a number of financial assistance for Nunavut student functions.

I noticed with interest there was an RFP that just closed a few weeks ago, on administering the FANS-related student travel. There was a grant and loan disbursement,

there was loan collection, reconciliation of overpayments, student enrolment verification, the travel administration and management. That has already gone out to RFP.

Does the minister have any ideas on what other functions are being looked at short term to be explored to be contracted out, and a timeline for looming RFPs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for elaborating on that and the work behind the scenes that is happening to support the financial assistance for Nunavut students. We do have a number of initiatives that we are working on, and we are excited about, and we have had seven staff at the office in Arviat that have been hired on to support the additional need for staff in the department.

Every recommendation is being reviewed and the costing has all been done for those. I think one of the biggest ones that we're really looking forward to and are excited to is the travel piece. I know there have been issues around that raised by constituents across our territory, and we really look forward to hopefully streamlining everything for students and making it more well-rounded and more accessible and easier. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1376 – 6(2): Docking Facility for Naujaat

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I want to ask the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure regarding water port.

(interpretation) In Naujaat the community has requested to get a docking facility or a marine facility. I would like to ask whether they had reviewed this or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also thank my colleague.

With the question in regards to the docking facilities or marine facility, we reviewed all the communities, what needs they have, and how we can develop the marine facility. This is a long-term review to make sure all the communities that are expecting such a facility at this time, they are not included in the capital estimates to date.

Once we have moved ahead with the community of Qikiqtarjuaq, aside from that, the department of transportation can receive applications from the municipalities to apply for a marine facility, whether it's a boat, small vessel facility, or marine facility, they are able to apply for funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you Mr. Minister for your response. I know that the minister knows in Nauyasat he was able to meet with the municipality. The community has been requesting for their marine facility.

I will let the hamlet council know that they are able to apply for funding for the marine facility and provide support to them, to make sure that they can get their funding as soon as possible. I'll relay the information.

There's no marine facility or small vessel facility, and the community of Nauyasat has requested. That's just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: That just being a comment. Members be aware time allotted for extended question period is now over. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Return to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Petitions. Item 11, Responses to Petitions. Item 12, Report of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the chair of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts, Mr. Hickes.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present the Report on the Review of the 2025 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut: Public Housing in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, you tabled the report at the Legislative Assembly's sitting of May 26, 2025. The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held a televised hearing on the report from September 4-5, 2025.

The standing committee's hearing was held in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly and was televised live across the territory. The hearing was open to the public and news media to observe from the Visitors' Gallery, and was live-streamed on the Legislative Assembly's website. The transcripts from the standing committee's hearing are available on the Legislative Assembly's website.

Mr. Speaker and members, witnesses appearing before the standing committee included the Deputy Auditor General of Canada and a number of his officials, in addition to a

number of senior personnel representing the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited. The standing committee notes its appreciation to the witnesses.

Mr. Speaker, although the current Legislative Assembly will be dissolved within the next couple of weeks, construction projects and other work under the Nunavut 3000 Strategy continues. It will be incumbent on the members of the next Assembly and government to make fundamental decisions about the future of the initiative, in addition to issues related to the governance of the Nunavut Housing Corporation and local housing organizations. The testimony that was presented at last week's televised hearing will help to inform these decisions.

Mr. Speaker and members, the standing committee recognizes that the timelines for dissolution and the convening of the 7th Legislative Assembly preclude the presentation of a comprehensive report and a formal government response under Rule 91(5) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

Following the tabling of the Auditor General's report, the Nunavut Housing Corporation publicly announced that an "official action plan" would be developed and released during the fall of this year. This action plan was posted on the corporation's website earlier this month. Consequently, the standing committee's formal recommendation is that an update on the implementation of the action plan be tabled in the House during the spring 2026 sitting of the next Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, this will allow returning members and newly elected members to evaluate progress in addressing the issues that were the subject of our recent televised hearing.

I also note that the standing committee strongly encourages the Office of the Auditor General to consider undertaking a follow-up audit on this subject at a future date that also includes a detailed examination of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's procurement and contracting activities related to the Nunavut 3000 Strategy.

With that, I move that the report of the standing committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member has moved that the report of the Standing Committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: It is agreed. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Languages, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 436 – 6(2): 2023-2024 Minister of Languages Annual Report

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 2023-2024 Minister of Languages Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Ms. Nutarak.

Tabled Document 437 – 6(2): Letter to Lori Idlout re: Immediate Federal Funding Required for Critical Health and Infrastructure Projects

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a copy of correspondence that was recently written by the mayor of Pond Inlet to the Member of Parliament for Nunavut. I wish to thank Mayor Arreak for taking the time to raise a number of important issues facing Pond Inlet, including mental health services and community infrastructure.

I encourage all members to review the document with care, and I will have questions for this appropriate minister during our sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of Motions. Item 15, Notices of Motion 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 81, 82, 83, and 85 with Mr. Hickes in the chair.

Before we go to Committee of the Whole we'll take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 16:15 and Committee commenced at 16:39*

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

Chairman (Mr. George Hickes): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole he have the following items to deal with: Bill 81, *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-2027*. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to deal with Bill 81, *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-2027*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Thank you. Is the committee in agreement we deal with Bill 81?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I'd like to ask Mr. David Akeeagok, do you have officials you would like to have to appear with you before the committee, Minister?

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

Bill 81 – Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-2027 – Consideration in Committee

Thank you. For the record, Mr. Akeeagok, please introduce your officials and proceed with opening comments.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, on my right is Dan Young, Deputy Minister for Finance, and on my left is Carl Cousin, who is the coordinator for the Department of Transportation's capital projects. If we need to change witnesses or change officials, I will inform the Chairman when we need to do an official change. If I need to do that to answer a question, I will.

I am here to present Bill 81, *Interim Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-27* totalling \$26,054,000.

Mr. Chairman, as 2025 is an election year, our usual capital planning cycle is affected. Typically, we finalize the capital plan in the fall preceding the fiscal year. However, in election years, decisions on major capital projects are deferred to the incoming government.

Bill 81 provides interim funding to allow the Government of Nunavut to acquire essential mobile equipment and continue time-sensitive capital projects that cannot wait until the full budget is approved in March 2026.

There are nine projects in this Interim Appropriation. Although mostly for mobile equipment, some of the projects include ongoing life-cycle projects and the Cambridge Bay long-term care facility.

Delaying these projects until the full Capital Estimates are approved would reduce the time available for procurement and delivery by at least five months. This could jeopardize the arrival of critical equipment, such as fire trucks and medical gear, in time for the 2026–2027 sealift.

In addition to mobile equipment, the Cambridge Bay long-term care facility is included to ensure continued progress and to secure Vote 04 federal funding.

Bill 81 consists of the following items:

- \$7 million to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut's tenant improvement fund, transportation, equipment, and facilities;
- \$11.244 million to the Department of Health for minor capital (medical equipment), on-going life cycle and the Cambridge Bay long-term care facility projects;
- \$7.34 million to the Department of Community Services for fire truck replacements and mobile equipment; and
- \$470,000 to the Department of Justice for minor capital – vehicles.

We are requesting interim funding only for these nine projects, as delays would impact procurement, transportation, and project continuity. We have consulted with the Government of Nunavut's departments and are confident that other projects can proceed once the full capital estimates are approved in March.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks, and I will try to answer any questions posed to me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments to provide?

At this time I would like to ask members to go to Bill 81 in your legislation binder. *Interim Appropriation Capital Act 2026-2027*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, please go to schedule on page 2. Schedule, interim amounts appropriated for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027, Vote 02, capital. Item 1, Justice, \$470,000. Any questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just need some clarification on our briefing binder here. There's a bunch of vehicles which are capital that want to be purchased, but at the very bottom it's vehicle maintenance it's not a huge amount overall; it's 100,000 out of 470,000. Normally vehicle maintenance is operation and maintenance budget, so I

just if I can get an explanation why an operation and maintenance budget is within the capital budget. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, through you, could I ask Mr. Young to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Young.

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Generally, ongoing maintenance and repairs are part of operations and maintenance budget; however, there are times when there are upgrades to vehicles or major repairs that extend the life of the vehicle. In those cases, it would be appropriate to capitalize. It really depends what the department intends on doing with the money that is in this sub. So it could be that it is appropriate for capital or operations and maintenance, depending on the final use. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I'm going to ask is beyond the scope of the bill, but for clarity then, every government department owns vehicles. When the department is requesting for a vehicle, every department puts in their capital projects their vehicle maintenance costs in their capital purchases? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, not necessarily. Some of the departments have a very small fleet of vehicles, and so it varies. We are working on a tangible capital assets policy to show the difference of what is capital and what is operations, what falls under operations and maintenance, and that work has begun to help make decisions on what is capital and what is O&M to give directions to departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So when a department puts in O&M maintenance on a capital budget, it's like a slush fund just in case they need it? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, that's not the intent. The intent of what we get appropriated through this House is what needs to be expended. So oil change and that, then it falls under operations and maintenance. Sorry about that, Mr. Chair. So if it's under operations and maintenance, that's what the funds will be used for. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sometimes when I'm going to have a hard time saying factual stuff I I choke, too.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Savikataaq: Mr. Chairman, is there guidelines? Because I don't see in the substantiation sheet where it says, this vehicle needs major repair changing differential so therefore we are putting it in.

My last questions would be, you would think there would be some kind of, not a guideline but a policy if a certain vehicle is going to need major repairs that would be capital; the oil change would not be. But there's nothing in here saying we've four vehicles that need major overhaul and renovations; therefore we're budgeting it in as capital. That's my last question on that matter. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Yes, there are guidelines in terms of what needs to be capitalized and what falls under operations and maintenance. Those guidelines are followed. For a department such as Justice, that has a large fleet of vehicles, often some of the vehicles they need to capitalize, and so there's a difference in terms of what falls under capital and what falls under operations and maintenance. As I mentioned, we are working on a new tangible capital assets policy, that will help make this more understandable. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Maybe if I could follow up and get further clarification. Going forward, is it the intention of the government to add the O&M to the capital ask when equipment is being purchased? Or is this kind of out of the norm? There's a number of different departments that have a lot of vehicles; I'm thinking Government Services, Department of Health, Department of Family Services. There's a number of departments that have vehicles. One of the things that we try and do here is have that separation of capital to operations and maintenance.

So when we start blurring the lines, there's been a number of different things in recent discussions around here of what's capital and what's operations and maintenance. Maybe

if the minister can clarify what the intention of that policy going forward is going to contain. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Through you, could I ask Mr. Young to respond to that?

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Young.

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The intention of the tangible capital asset policy under development was to respond to those lively debates that have been held in this House over the last year, about what falls under capital and what doesn't.

There is a financial administration manual directive on what's capital and what's operations and maintenance, but there is a lot of grey area in there. The intention of the tangible capital asset policy is to clarify for departments, but also for the Legislative Assembly, what expenses go where. The intention going forward is hopefully to minimize some of that confusion and put everyone on the same page. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 23, the proposed replacements for old vehicles, some of them have a high maintenance cost now, and that's why some of them need to be replaced. The first question I would like to ask is, under number 5, about an inflatable boat, it states a boat in Inuktitut for the numbers. I don't understand the numbers. It just says a boat. Will it be just a boat with no outboard motor? Or will it have an inboard motor or outboard motor? It's supposed to land in Iqaluit at some point so that they can use it for Inuit cultural skill programs.

My question is will this just be a boat? Because they already have an outboard motor in stock. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. If I made any mistakes, one of my officials can correct me, but from my understanding, it's going to be like a retriever boat for Iqaluit, because they have a high tide and low tide in Iqaluit. So it will just be a little tender boat. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, and I thank you for your response. When there's a replacement in any of the communities in regards to mobile equipment, when the government replaces either boats, other transportation mobile equipment, at times

some of the equipment that are bought by the government are not being used by the communities. If a community does not use that equipment that was bought by the government, do you consider moving it to another community to be used? Or what will you do with that piece of equipment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. We have a policy where we have a replacement for equipment and usually we follow that policy. And it usually goes through our department. If we would fill the forms earlier, we can decide what we're going to be doing with that equipment or that mobile equipment. For example, we give first chance of refusal for the hamlet, or we can also put out a bid, so that's the process that we use. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you. It is something that the people would like to see. Going back to the inflatable boat, I have another question about the inflatable boat. Should there be a motor installed and because it's 3,588, around that area, and the estimates are quite high. Could you indicate whether this boat is going to have a motor or what? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. It doesn't indicate here, but we can get that information and respond to you by letter, whether that inflatable boat is going to have a motor or not. We're talking about those smaller outboard motors, looking at the price range. I'll write a letter to the chair person and let him know what's included in the item number 5. Thank you, Mr. Chair, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) I heard you say bid before with some vehicles. Does that big go to the community as a whole? Or just certain departments? Or private companies?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It goes to the hamlet first, and if they don't want it then they go to the non-profits, and other community entities if there's any.

Then if it's going to the public, then it goes through the surplus, through a tender – not a tender, but people can put a bid in to acquire that vehicle. That's the process that happens.

That is usually posted on the website and it's typically, the location is in there and typically, if it's from Kugluktuk then more likely the bids will come from Kugluktuk, but our website is open to anybody in Nunavut. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm pretty sure there's SUV vehicles, I'm sure there's quite a few in all the communities, and for Kugluktuk, we don't have a taxi service, and quite a few times there was a concern to get a taxi going and an SUV would be perfect for somebody starting a cab company.

The way you explained the way the bids go, like the local person with was going to be the last place to bid. And I wonder if I could put in a suggestion that like say Kugluktuk getting rid of SUVs and maybe instead of going through the order that you just gave me before, and if somebody trying to start a cab business they can get first crack at that. Because a lot of people have concerns with having no taxi there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I see the Minister of Community Services listening, so I'll take that as a comment and suggestion. It's not really within the scope of this Bill, but I'm sure the minister was paying attention to your recommendation. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq again.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for recognizing me again. I just, I had no more questions but Ms. Killiktee's question perked me here that number 5 there, the one strike or XL350 inflatable boat and the Minister of Justice is here so I would like clarification whether that comes with a motor or not, because the minister said they could get a letter and get back to us. But once the Bill is passed, the Bill is passed. It doesn't matter whether they have a letter or not; that budget number is there.

The reason I'm asking is that it's budgeted for 12,000 and I just googled it, and \$3,588 for boat only, before tax and before shipping. So if we can get clarification if that's with a motor. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. The Deputy Minister For Justice is excusing herself out of the House so she can make a quick phone call to our capital planner, so we'll get that clarification before this Bill gets passed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I bring this up is because generally the price of a product is fairly close to what is budgeted, and this one is extreme difference. I would like to point that out. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll take that as a comment. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll start off with, in the opening comments on page 2, the 7.34 million to the Department of Community Service for fire truck replacements and mobile equipment. My question is, Mr. Chairman, which community are we talking about for the new fire truck replacements? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: For the fire truck replacement it's quite long, 26, 27. Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove are the two that are listed for 2026-2027. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll move on to the ongoing life cycle budget when it comes to the 11.244 million to the Department of Health for minor capital medical equipment, which community will be receiving medical equipment? That will be my final question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Just for clarity.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. It won't be your final question, because you're not going to get an answer on this page. We're going Justice right now, for \$470,000. Item 1, Justice, \$470,000. Any questions? Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Looking at this appropriation sheet, number 8, for the vehicle maintenance there, just they say they are purchasing four vehicles, and the vehicle maintenance will cost over 100,000. Does that mean it is \$25,000 per vehicle for maintaining it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, no, this is for vehicle maintenance for all the fleets, for whatever needs to get fixed and that needs to be capitalized. It's not specific to a vehicle. This is their – this will be their vehicle maintenance that falls under capital. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I think the whole fleet of vehicles is the word the minister was looking for. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are we on Health now, on the Health side of the question? I just need clarity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. When we're finished Justice, Health will be next, so I'll put you first on the list for the next line of questioning. So taima for Justice. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the detailed information in regards to the funding request for Department of Justice, they are quite huge. Can the minister elaborate further how they are budgeted for. So if he can explain that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Yes, thank you. Like, for example, when we have to purchase a vehicle, like for the women's correctional centre, this will be used usually for security purposes, so they need extra security for the vehicle. So that's why there's an increase in the amount of the price. Like these are not public vehicles, the vehicles have to be retrofitted with security and to make sure that they are secure vehicles. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. We're not just talking about vehicles here on page 23; there are eight vehicles, there are snowmobiles included as well. If the minister can elaborate further, what do they do to make decisions? Like it's only not for vehicles. Like do you go through tender or not? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. They go through tender for fleets, whether it be snowmobile or a vehicle. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Minister for elaborating further on that. When they use tendering process, the actual price, like for example for a snowmobile, if it comes from the Northern Store, if it goes through the

tendering process, what additional money do you require for that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): I'm not sure whether I'm going to respond to your, I did not exactly get your question, whether it's Northern Store or the Co-Op store do they provide tender quotes. They already price their snowmobiles and the government also have detailed information as to what they require during the tender and what's being tendered. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok, did you want to supplement?

Hon. David Akeeagok: (interpretation) Thank you. In regards to the inflatable boat, whether it has motor or not, it is not motorized. There's no outboard on it on the price. It's on class D. The estimate is class D, in the information or on the briefing note. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Again, item 1, Department of Justice, \$470,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Item 2, Department of Health, \$11,244,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the clarity earlier. The ongoing lifecycle budget, when it comes to medical equipment, which communities are we talking about? Is Kugaaruk included on the life cycle upgrades? Yeah, that's my question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the lifecycle capital is tendered for all facilities that Health operates, which is every community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister just answered all my questions, so yeah, thank you. I got my answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I've got some questions on the Cambridge Bay long term care facility. First I would like to congratulate Department of Health on securing 94

per cent of federal funding on this major capital project. I just would like to reiterate a concern that we had with the similar project in Rankin Inlet in that with our lack of staff housing in all of our communities, and no line item in the budget to build staff housing, I think that is a significant risk with opening the facility on time and on target.

The first question I would like to ask, so given that this project will create 48 new jobs or positions, was there any attempt to incorporate new staff housing into the scope of the project? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For staff housing, we work closely with Nunavut Housing Corporation as significant building like this, as you mentioned, with the number of staff that are going to be there. The determination of how much staff housing is needed in that particular community should then go through that process, not necessarily tied to this project directly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair, and I appreciate the minister's response in the departments working with NHC to secure staff housing as new capital projects come online. However, working with NHC to secure staff housing is not a guarantee that sufficient staff housing will be available on the facility's opening date.

I was very excited when the project in Iqaluit had a \$10 million budget in the scope of the work to build staff housing, as it's obvious that our labour pool does not have the qualifications to fill many of those positions.

The substantiation sheet states that the Department of Health will work with a third-party service provider to run the facility and it will be the third-party service providers responsibility to house the employees, a similar situation as in Rankin Inlet's long term care facility. So I hope that the Cambridge Bay third-party service provider will be able to find sufficient staff housing to fill the positions on or before the opening date. However, it's unlikely that will be the case.

So I guess the next question I would like to ask was how did that turn out with Rankin Inlet, leaving the third party to secure staff housing to ensure the opening of the facility? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Through you Mr. Chair, could I ask the Minister of Health, Minister Main to respond to that? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I did see your gesture, but I have to go through you first. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you for recognizing the issue of staff housing. It's absolutely key to seeing high levels of Inuit employment.

With regards to Rankin Inlet Long Term Care Facility, it's still a work in progress. The contractor is a subsidiary of a larger development corporation that has a real-estate arm, and so it is a work in progress. I don't know all the details in terms of the numbers of units that are under development and the number of units that are under lease, but for Rankin Inlet I know we have pushed very hard on Inuit employment, and providing staff housing is one of the big incentives that the contractor is providing to hires. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you. I appreciate the Minister of Health's response to that. I'm very glad that the department was able to find a third-party provider that has a real-estate arm. It's quite convenient, and I hope that will also be the same case in Cambridge Bay.

My last question or topic for the Department of Health's capital budget, this is another major capital project in excess of \$100 million, but also includes a half-million-dollar power bill every year. The next question I would like to ask the department is whether or to what extent did the department incorporate or look into incorporating renewable energy power sources into this project. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have that information in front of me, in terms of whether that has been taken into consideration. Our Minister of Health may have that information, so through you, could I ask him to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Main, do you have information?

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

(Interpretation ends) I don't have any detailed information about the renewable components of the proposed facility. The detailed design work is just about completed, and while not necessarily incorporating solar panels or a wind turbine, many of the components in the new facility would be considered high efficiency, so high efficiency heating systems, high efficiency insulation on the building. There may also be

components around conserving water usage. So there is a green aspect to many of our newer buildings. But I believe the member is asking about solar panels on the roof. As far as I know, that's not part of the design work that's ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chairman, my questions are on the same topic here, too.

The amount that's requested right now for 2026-2027 and construction is expected to be started in August 2026. So I'm curious as to why funding is being requested now and the funding is not a large amount compared to the overall cost of the project. What's this amount going to be used for that it can't wait until the full budget is presented in the new year, in 2026, but before construction season? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, twofold. One is that this is to secure our federal funding, and that a huge part of the budget is coming from the federal government and we're very appreciative of that. And this is the portion, our share of that that needs to get done, and the other is that we want to get this into tender stage as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I understand about you have to commit money to get the money from the feds, but the ground is going to be completely frozen solid by next month in Cambridge Bay, so I'm not sure what kind of construction is going on. What assurance do we have that this money that we could or might or will approve will not just become a carryover? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. This is for 2026-2027, the fiscal year 2026-2027, the full year, and that's why we're trying to secure funds so that it can get it into tender and get that work started. That's one. That's the reason why we're asking to get this through our interim appropriation, is to capture that, and allow for time for sealift too. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I stand to be corrected, but I'll ask the minister: Isn't there going to be a full capital budget presented in February 2026? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, typically post-election, it's either February or March that it is usually the time capital projects are approved that aren't in the interim appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is just a comment, and that will be the last on this matter. I understand about approving funds so you can secure the federal funding, but the part about going to tender for construction sealift with the regular budget in February or March 2026, that would meet the requirement for the sealift, in my opinion. Thank you. That's it.

Chairman: Thank you. Just a comment. Department of Health, sorry, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page 34 indicates that Kivalliq Health Centre in Rankin Inlet is going to do some upgrading and went through the lists there. My question is that there are TVs in the patients' room, waiting room, and I'm just, due to the need of rewiring or from cable to digital, I'm wondering why it's not on the list at all. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I believe on page 34 the bottom, the very bottom one says exterior wall cladding, class D estimates. That's the one that would address what the member is concerned about. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Speaker: Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The one the minister is indicating about is exterior. I'm talking about on page, 34 top line. It says Kivalliq Health Centre Life Cycle Upgrades, Rankin Inlet for 1,200,000, and there's a list of what needs to be done. So I'm just wondering why the TV cabling is not included in there, because the health department has been aware it has been more than eight years that they have changed from cable to digital. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I ask to change witness? Thank you.

Chairman: Do members agree to allow the minister to change witness?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead. Just for the record, minister, introduce your new official.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, to my left is Megan Hunt, the Deputy Minister for Health. And through you could I ask that she respond to the question that was put by our member. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. Health will work to include or incorporate that into the scope of work. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Thank you. If only it were always that easy, eh, Mr. Sammurtok?

>> *Laughter*

Next name I have on my list, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you. On page 26, reading them, I have a question. I'm sure I'll get a response. The design phase and the planning phase have been approved and it's in the planning stage now. And in 2018 to 2019, looking at this, do you still believe or did you see that this has been taking too long and you wanted to get moving?

My question has to do with elders that would stay at the elder facility. There is an expectation in Cambridge Bay that the facility will be for communities close to Cambridge Bay, and probably from all across Nunavut as well.

My question, Mr. Chairman, how shall I say this, the elders, following what the elders expect and when this was being planned, it was a high priority and it would be built in Cambridge Bay.

The question I have about is about planning. Is this just taken to, was it the government's idea because this has been so long in the planning that they just want to proceed with what they have here? That's the question I have, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you to my colleague for asking that question. At the beginning of the 6th Assembly we wanted to outline our priorities, our three priorities, and the Rankin Inlet facility, thank goodness that has been completed and patients can move in. The other project was in Cambridge Bay in the priorities. They are almost finished with the design phase, and we got approval from the federal government for a lot of money for the project. And we want to make sure that construction can start right away. It's not that we're rushing it now; it has just been planned very carefully, and that's why it took a while.

The funding will come from two sources, the federal government and from the Nunavut government, and we've had an agreement with the federal government and they say they're going to provide some of the funds.

This was one of the priorities that we set on behalf of our elders, who are in the south facilities right now, so they can be moved back to Nunavut, at an elder facility in Nunavut. And it will be for all of the residents of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for explaining that very clearly. And I just thought of another question after hearing that, so that we'll all understand it properly.

The money from the federal government, you've requested money from the federal government for the project, and you got approval for it, and it was a substantial amount of money that you said. And because it's a substantial amount of money, I just want it to be very clear. That's why I'm asking my final question.

What if another problem came up and you had to change priorities? Did the federal government say that they will give you funding if it's for a particular purpose only, and not to use the money for anything else? That's just something I thought of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. I'll request from the federal government for funding for this, for construction of this project, and they reviewed our plan and approved the funding proposal and so when the federal government pays more than \$50 million, it always has to go through the Treasury Board, and it has passed that Treasury Board review. We want to make sure that we use this funding very properly, because we were very fortunate to get it. And it will help the elders a great deal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to refer to page 34, the Kugaaruk health centre life cycle upgrades. I made a member statement on this when it came to the generators. My question is, Mr. Chairman will the community for the health centre, will it be a new generator set? That's my question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair, it's for the generator.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel a lot more safer, now that the worker there will be safer now, when it comes to working with the generator now.

I'll most of on to another one, Mr. Chairman. It's on page 33. When it comes to the health centre fuel tank overflow spill, the remediation, my only question is, Mr. Chairman, it's stated that it will be done by August 2025. And my question is, Mr. Chairman, is it completed as of today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're looking at our other witness to see if it has been completed or not. We don't have it available right now, but we'll verify. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We'll wait for that little nod, and you can update the committee in a moment or two. Mr. Quqqiaq, taima. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Another one that caught my attention is about the old health centre apartment repairs. For the replacement of flooring and windows, painting kitchen and bathroom modification, as well as fire alarm panel upgrade, securing external doors, access control, and alarm. Expected to be completed by March 2026.

I just wanted a clarification: Are they on it as of now and is the target date still March 2026? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, they are on it right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: So just to confirm with that target date, I hate using the word ‘assume’ in this room, but I do it too often. Is it safe to say that the materials are already in the community to complete that project? Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. From the information that I got, some of the materials are already in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. I know it’s always difficult to plan these repairs. A lot of times, having to use airline to transport materials always adds even more to the ever-escalating costs of doing renovation. I’ll leave that as a comment, and I’ll go to the next name on my list. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Interpreter: We can’t hear you.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Sorry, I just left that as a comment, so that’s fine. I just wanted to acknowledge that the more we can utilize the sealift services to do these projects, it maximizes the economic impact on it. Do you want to comment on that? Minister Akeeagok, go ahead.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. That’s for member’s question on the August deadline. There is a delay on that, and that is due to the spill. That work is progressing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Sorry, just to get a clarification, is there an estimate on the delay? If it was expected to be done in August, is it a month, two months, three months? Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: With those delays, I don’t know if it would be fair to say how many more months, but we are working with the contractor in terms of trying to get that update. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. I do apologize for the confusion, Ms. Brewster. You can now proceed.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you’ve accidently discovered the fact that I really can’t see over this, and I can’t tell if my light is on or off.

I would just like to focus on the wait list for long term care centres and support. The briefing note on page 27 refers to continuing care in Nunavut 2015 to 2035, which was the report was done, or completed in 2015. On page 28 it goes on to say as of the times report was drafted, there were 68 beds in Nunavut long term care facilities, all of which were consistently fully occupied, and that at any given time there are approximately 20 seniors on the waiting list for long term care.

I'm just really curious about what the most up-to-date numbers are in terms of the wait lists in each region. If I could get a response on that I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, it's because of aging that you're not able to see the light now. It's on your birthday. But through you, could I ask Ms. Hunt to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hunt, go ahead.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. I'm doing this a bit by of top of mind because my other binder is to the left of my so I apologize.

Often the wait list is not necessarily looked at from a regional perspective, it's looked at from a territorial perspective. So our numbers around the average of 20 within the territory is still consistent with what we're experiencing. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm curious about how that impacts the wait list, because elders have made it really clear that they have preference of staying at least within their own regions. How has the opening of the new facility in Rankin Inlet impacted that? There's still the same number of people, approximately, on the waiting list kind of confuses me a bit, because that new facility was meant to relieve some of that. So if I could get some clarity on that I would appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. From the information we got, the wait list is there, and the numbers keep growing for the elders needing care. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. Maybe to just go a little bit deeper, if there are approximately at any given time 20 elders on the wait list, does the wait list fluctuate based on the level of care that they need, whether that's related to dementia care, or I can't remember the terminology. I feel like there's four different levels. And if I could hear about that and why, or what the foreseeable plans and future for eliminating that waiting list, or as much as possible, are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Could I have Ms. Hunt respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. I recognize the member is talking about a continuum, so when we think about elders, there's aging in place and things that are supported with that, like home care, then continuing care, all the way to long term care. As the population continues to increase and our generations are living into longer life in that continuum, we're doing the work to plan and support aging in place, continuing care, all the way to long term care.

And so that will fluctuate, one, with population; sometimes it fluctuates because we may lose elders, or elders who are at home getting home care and aging in place quite well, their health status might change. So we may have a couple or many elders at a period of time that their level of care and their care requirements change.

So those numbers and those requirements will vary at times. Based on some of the evaluation and research that we've done, we know by 2035 that we are going to need roughly around an additional 168 spaces between continuing and long term care to support our aging population. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just on the focus of evaluating programming and evaluating the current long term care facilities, is there a schedule for evaluation? Is it ongoing? I think being as informed as we can about making decisions is really important and this Continuing Care in Nunavut 2015 to 2035 is guiding us. However, we would serve Nunavummiut most well by being able to make changes that are evidence-based and knowledge-based. So is each facility being evaluated on a regular basis in terms of what the needs are? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. That's related to the previous question. I'll go directly to Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair, (interpretation ends) and thank you for the additional question. So ongoing review, reporting and evaluation is part of our standards for our facilities. We do that in partnership with our contract groups, and as part of the work in programs and standards.

So looking at what's working, aligning those to national standards, and starting to do the work and looking at standards that embed more Inuit societal values are part of the evaluation process. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to report progress if we could. Thanks Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. There's a motion on the floor to report progress. It is not subject to debate. All in favour. Opposed. Motion is carried. I'll now rise to report progress to the speaker.

My apologies. The witnesses can formally leave the witness table. Thank you.

>>*Committee adjourned and House resumed at 17:53*

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

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 81 and would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to.

Speaker: Motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Qavvik. Item 21, Third Reading of Bills. Item 22, Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a meeting of the Management Services Board at 6:15 this evening, in the Tuktu board room, as well as the Management Services Board tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

(interpretation) *Orders of the Day* for Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.:

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 the 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 Motion
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
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Thursday, September 11, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:57*

Appendix, September 10, 2025



Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts

***Report on the Review of the 2025 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut: Public Housing in Nunavut***

**2nd Session of the 6th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
September 2025**

Chairperson

George Hickes

Co-Chairperson

Alexander Sammurtok

Members

Bobby Anavilok
Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster
Joelie Kaernerik
Mary Killiktee
Adam Arreak Lightstone
Solomon Malliki
Karen Nutarak
Daniel Qavvik
Joanna Quassa
Joseph Quqqiaq
Joe Savikataaq
Craig Smailak

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Introduction

The 2025 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut: Public Housing in Nunavut* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 26, 2025.

The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held a televised hearing on the report from September 4-5, 2025.

The standing committee's hearing was held in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly and was televised live across the territory. The hearing was open to the public and news media to observe from the Visitors' Gallery, and was livestreamed on the Legislative Assembly's website. The transcript from the standing committee's hearing is available on the Legislative Assembly's website.

Witnesses appearing before the standing committee included the Deputy Auditor General of Canada and a number of his officials, in addition to witnesses from the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NCC Development Limited. The standing committee notes its appreciation to the witnesses.



Observations and Recommendations

Issue: Nunavut Housing Corporation Action Plan

On May 26, 2025, the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued an announcement in response to the release report of the Auditor General. The announcement indicated, in part, that:

“The Nunavut Housing Corporation is also in the process of implementing two enterprise information technology systems to support these improvements, including an asset planner to manage the lifecycles of the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s public housing inventory and property management software to improve the administration of public housing for existing and future tenants ... these proposed actions will be finalized by the Nunavut Housing Corporation and will be included in an official Action Plan in fall 2025, when it will be released on the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s website.”

The Nunavut Housing Corporation’s Action Plan was presented to the standing committee during its televised hearing of September 4-5, 2025. The action plan was posted on the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s website in early September of 2025.

Standing Committee Recommendation #1:

The standing committee recommends that a detailed update on the implementation of the action plan be tabled in the House during the spring 2026 sitting of the 7th Legislative Assembly, and that this update include a copy of the final report from the “full review of the current local governance and delivery model” that was referenced on page 13 of the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s 2025-2026 business plan, in addition to information requested by Members during the standing committee’s televised hearing of September 4-5, 2025.