

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Community Services;
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-Niaqunnguu)

*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*

George Hickers
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker; Chair of the
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*Minister of Finance; Minister
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the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis
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Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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

Solomon Malliki
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*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*

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Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

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Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-
Chesterfield Inlet)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, September 12, 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 Kaernerck, 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 9:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Mr. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): (no interpretation) David Akeeagok, please open with prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 649 – 6(2): Tentative Deal with Nunavut Employees Union

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. Good morning people of the high Arctic. I say hi to you all.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share important news regarding labour negotiations that affects many of our dedicated public servants and the services they provide to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) After a series of respectful and constructive discussions over the past year, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Employees Union have reached a tentative agreement.

>>*Applause*

This agreement reflects our shared commitment to fairness, sustainability, and the continued delivery of high-quality public services across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, this tentative deal is the result of the hard work and collaboration between the negotiating teams. It balances the needs of employees with the fiscal realities of our government, and it recognizes the vital contributions that our public servants make every day, in our schools, health centres, offices, and our communities.

I want to thank the union leadership and our Government of Nunavut negotiating team for their professionalism and dedication throughout the process.

Mr. Speaker, this deal will now proceed through the ratification process.

We respect that this will be a decision for the union members, and we remain hopeful that the outcome will allow us to move forward together in a spirit of partnership and progress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Minister's Statement 650 – 6(2): Launch of the Nunavut Arctic Sovereignty Strategy

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to all my colleagues on this Friday and all the guests, and it was great to hear the news about the negotiations. It's a very important matter.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to mark a historic milestone for our territory and for Canada: the launch of the Nunavut Arctic Sovereignty and Security Strategy.

This made-in-Nunavut framework is the first of its kind, rooted in Inuit values and perspectives. It grew from the Arctic Sovereignty and Security Summit that we hosted in June, where Inuit leaders, governments, and partners came together to shape a shared vision for the future of our territory. It was developed in full partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, reflecting our collective conviction that sovereignty begins with strong, resilient communities with Inuit at the heart of decision-making about our lands and waters.

Mr. Speaker, the world is turning its eyes north. Questions of sovereignty, security, and resilience are no longer abstract; they are urgent and central to Canada's future. Mr. Speaker, with this Strategy, Nunavut steps forward as a leader in advancing Canada's presence and priorities in the Arctic.

At the heart of the strategy are four Inuit-led nation-building projects championed by the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and they are: the Qikiqtarjuaq Deep Sea Port; the Arctic Security Corridor, or the Grays Bay Road and Port Project; the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link; and the Iqaluit Hydroelectric project.

Mr. Speaker, each of these are transformative initiatives that strengthen sovereignty while delivering direct benefits to Nunavummiut. They will improve connectivity, connect Nunavut to the rest of Canada and the world, unlock sustainable economic development, and reduce reliance on diesel. Together, they demonstrate how investing in Nunavut means investing in Canada's security and prosperity.

The strategy is built on five interconnected pillars: strong, resilient communities; sovereignty and security rooted in Inuit and Nunavut perspectives; Nunavut's role in the circumpolar world; economic opportunities; and climate change resilience. These pillars affirm a simple truth: Arctic sovereignty and Inuit security must advance hand in hand.

Mr. Speaker, the strategy reinforces a clear truth: Canada's sovereignty in the North is grounded in Inuit presence, knowledge, as well as stewardship. By investing in our communities and building in partnership, we are charting a path that will serve Nunavummiut today and inspire the next generation to carry that vision forward.

I want to especially speak to young Nunavummiut: this strategy is for you. It is for the future of our territory, for the opportunities that you will inherit, and for the responsibility you will carry forward as leaders of tomorrow.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 651 – 6(2): Back to School Welcome

Hon. Pamela Gross: Quana, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to everyone here in the House today along with all of the Nunavummiut listening.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to welcome back students, educators, staff, and families for the 2025–2026 school year.

Across Nunavut, more than 11,000 students are returning to class this fall. Alongside them are our teachers, student support assistants, ilinniarvimmi inuusiliriji, secretaries, custodians, and many others who make our schools run every day. Together, you create the spaces where learning happens.

This year, kindergarten and Grade 1 students are the first to begin learning through the new Nunavut curriculum. It is built to reflect our culture, language, and values, and will help students learn in ways that connect with their lives and communities.

Mr. Speaker, the start of a school year is always a time of excitement and possibility.

Learning doesn't just happen in books or classrooms. It comes through the relationships we build with elders, families, and each other.

I encourage all students to dive in, take part, and make this a year of growth, fun, and discovery.

Quana.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for Status of Women, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 652 – 6(2): Qullit Video Series

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, and everyone here please feel welcome. I am very proud of the work that you are doing.

Mr. Speaker, last fall I stood in this House to announce the first video in Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council's exciting initiative to inspire Nunavut's women, girls, and gender-diverse people to explore leadership and opportunity in our territory.

(interpretation ends) Today I'm excited to announce that that first video has become a series of six, with accompanying online and in-hand resources to help guide motivation. Qullit now offers these videos on a number of topics:

- First, Adriana Kusugak explores how she leads with compassion;
- Eva Aariak looks at her experience running successful election campaigns;
- Clara Evalik gives her advice on governance and being an effective board member;
- Bernice Kuutuu-Clarke shares her experience on building a brand;
- Myna Ishulutak provides her story on building a career based on cultural passion; and
- Annie Buscemi speaks about becoming a successful woman in trades.

Mr. Speaker, these videos are online at www.qnsw.ca, along with learning tools and journals, and will be on display in the lobby during our break this afternoon. I encourage you all to take a look and promote them in your communities.

Mr. Speaker, this project has been made entirely possible through funding by the Government of Canada's Department of Women and Gender Equality, and we want to give them our sincere thanks. We are hopeful that Canada will continue to fund this important portfolio properly, so that Nunavummiut have access to the important work of creating equity for women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Minister's Statement 653 – 6(2): Vision Care Services in Nunavut (Main)

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to all my colleagues, and especially those who are wearing glasses this morning, and Mr. Speaker, you wear glasses occasionally.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report on significant progress in the delivery of vision care services in Nunavut, a vital component of health care that supports the well-being and development of residents, especially children. The Department of Health is committed to ensuring consistent access to eye care services for all communities. We support the travel of vision teams, so that no eligible resident is left without access to these essential services. In 2024–2025, we provided a total of 5,977 eye exams across Nunavut. These numbers reflect our commitment to equitable access to care across all regions.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the Department of Education, which has helped facilitate new school-based eye clinics, and they are committed to doing that. In December 2024 in Kugaaruk, a pediatric clinic at Arviligruaq Ilinniarvik examined 114 children. Some children received their very first pair of glasses, and others were found to be legally blind without corrective lenses. These clinics are providing life-changing support.

Mr. Speaker, our goal is to host one school clinic in each community every school year. Clinics are already planned for Baker Lake, Kugluktuk, and Taloyoak this September, with monthly clinics scheduled across the territory until May 2026.

Vision care services, including eye exams and eyewear, are funded by Indigenous Services Canada through the Non-Insured Health Benefits program and administered by

the Department of Health through an annual contribution agreement. This agreement enables us to deliver services in alignment with the federal Vision Care Framework, which sets the benefit levels for eligible Inuit and First Nations residents. Our partners at ISC have also supported the need for additional equipment. Department of Health will be ordering nine new portable optometry kits for the 2025–2026 fiscal year. These kits will help ensure reliable service delivery with minimal maintenance.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, while we have made significant progress, challenges remain. Health did request an increase in service days for this fiscal year to further expand pediatric clinics, but this request was not approved. Nonetheless, we will continue pushing for increased access and improved services. I'd like to thank our partners, service providers, and community health centres for their dedication. Vision care is not just about seeing clearly, it's about ensuring children can learn, elders can live independently, and communities can thrive.

Matna, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 896 – 6(2): Planning to Run Again as Member for Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet North

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Good morning to the people of Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet. I would like to thank my constituents of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet North.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet North for letting me represent them for the last four years. I would like to give notice publicly that this fall I will be running again as a candidate for Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet North. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 897 – 6(2): Safety When Hunting

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, all. (interpretation) And people of Baker Lake, very good morning to you all this beautiful Friday morning, and please hunt safely. I'll be speaking English because this is for the young people.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, with the fall hunt happening again back home, I would like to speak directly to the youth.

Please, when you're going hunting, advise where you are going, which direction, when you expect to be back. Bring extra supplies. Bring a rope, a spot device. Qamani'tuaq Qiniqtiit have spot devices that are available to be lent out. Please reach out to them. Bring tire plugs.

And of course always keep an eye out for wildlife. As we all know there are wolves, wolverines, and bears that do not stop. They are always walking around scavenging, looking for food.

Please return home safely. That's all we want. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Member's Statement 898 – 6(2): Nunavut Employees Union Agreement

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so happy to be able to rise to congratulate both teams, the union leadership and the Government of Nunavut's negotiation team, on their tentative agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union.

I know that members will recall that I was very concerned when we had a strike early on in our leadership here, and I brought those striking members in, because when we put a face to the people that we are representing, then we help people to understand the importance of union agreements.

We can count on the Nunavut Employees Union to stand up for fairness for our workers, thus improving our communities and the lives of Nunavummiut.

Today when we have collective agreements that are fair, they help us to recruit and retain employees. And in the future, we know that when employees who are members of unions retire, the incomes earned from years of contributions into pension plans also provide more money to spend in the community, and importantly they provide income security, which means fewer elders having to rely on their families and social programs to get by.

I am so happy today to hear about this tentative agreement, and I do wish our unionized employees very good luck in their decision to ratify or not ratify this agreement, and I hope it is an agreement that Nunavut employees can get behind and ratified. So congratulations to you all.

And thank you all for your dedication and hard work. I know there are so many people here that I would like to name personally, but I know as you sit here you know how important your work is and why we're celebrating. So thank you all for your hard work and your dedication and good luck. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 899 – 6(2): Tribute to Robert Greenley

Hon. Pamela Gross: Quana, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to everyone that is listening, Mr. Speaker.

Today I rise to pay tribute to our respected leader colleague and a friend the late Robert, or as we know him, Bobby Greenley president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

Bobby was a man of quiet strength and deep commitment for our people. From his early years working on the DEW Line to his time with the Government of Nunavut to his service as the chairman of the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization, and ultimately as president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Bobby dedicated his life to serving his community, the region, and all of Nunavut.

I had the honour of working alongside Bobby and witnessing firsthand the care and compassion he brought to his leadership. He was thoughtful and lead with humility, always putting the needs of Inuit first. Even as he faced personal health challenges, Bobby remained focused on ensuring that the voices of our Inuit, our people, our community were heard and respected.

Mr. Speaker, over the past few days we have heard from so many in our community, from colleagues in this House, dignitaries, and people all across Nunavut sharing their stories about Bobby's legacy and the many contributions he made through his life. His passing is a profound loss for us all.

My thoughts are with his wife Patty, his children Mason, Gavin, Kathleen and Farren, as well as his grandchildren, the Greenley and Ivaliq families, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association board and staff, the community of Cambridge Bay, and the entire region during this difficult time.

Today they will hold a service for Bobby, and I know he will continue to be remembered not only as a leader, but as a kind and generous man who always carried himself with dignity. May his memory continue to guide us in our work to advance progress for our community, region, and all Nunavummiut. Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize if I mispronounce some names, but I would like to recognize the Nunavut Employees Union: Gail Lem. If you would rise, please. An individual who worked very hard for the Nunavut employees negotiation: Jason Rochon, Amanda Arsenault, Eunice Panigayak, and my friend, Marianne Uqayuittuq, Darren Pacione.

And from the Nunavut government there's Sandra MacKenzie and Cheryl Ramsay, Sandy Kownak, Peter Bennett, LeRae Muise, Jacek Janczur, Ibrahim Suleiman, Debbie Kamino, Julia MacDonald.

And from Toronto, mediator Lorne Slotnick, sitting across. And our community leader corresponding between us, very well known, my deputy, Alma Power and Deputy Minister of Finance, Dan Young. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my constituents in your House, Mr. Speaker. Her name is Eunice Laura Panigayak of Taloyoak, and she's a member of the Nunavut Employees Union. Mr. Speaker, she's the wife of our mayor of Taloyoak. That's Lenny Panigayak's wife, Mr. Speaker. I ask my colleagues to help me welcome her to your House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickers.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was expecting, a last but certainly not least name from Minister Akeeagok, I think a very important person in this whole endeavour of coming to an agreement is the president of the union itself, Jason Rochon. I would like to recognize him in the House, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors to the Gallery. Member from Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two Baker Lakers. The first one is no stranger to this House now, ADM of Family Services, Sandy Kownak, a senior bureaucrat with the Government of Nunavut, someone that I am sure a lot of people look up to back in Baker Lake. Sandy Kownak, please stand up. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

And the other is Marianne Uqayuittuq. She works with the Department of Justice here with union negotiations. I am proud to say both of them are actually my cousins. We have had fun over the years growing up a bit. They are a bit older than me, but not by much. We have had some fun hanging out and playing out and wiener roast and what not. Please welcome them to the House, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know I did say that I wouldn't mention names, and now I'm going to be repetitive because I am always really happy to see my friend Sandy in the House, and I know that she does a lot of really good and hard work for Nunavummiut. I'm always really proud to see you here, so welcome to your House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask Jason Rochon to actually stand, because the first two times his name was mentioned he didn't stand.

>> *Laughter*

I think that's why it reflects his humbleness. And I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, I'm also very proud to call Jason a friend, and I'm so proud of the work that he does for our really important workers. I want to welcome you to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member from Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although this individual was acknowledged and recognized, I do want to recognize her again.

When I was a member of the Women's Nunavut Association and also we worked with women quite a few times and we see many women doing the work with women and they are very capable. And also an individual who has been Assistant Deputy Minister Sandy Kownak she works very hard in the office, and also during, for any agreement process. They work very hard during the negotiation process. Many women work very hard trying to negotiate for the union, and also I'm very proud of women, no matter where they live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Being a Friday, I won't ask. Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake Mr. Simailak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 1392 – 6(2): Addressing Food Insecurity

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services, who is also the Minister responsible For Poverty Reduction.

Mr. Speaker, a number of my colleagues have raised the issue of food insecurity in communities across Nunavut. It is quite clear that the loss of the Inuit Child First Initiative funding is affecting our children, not only at their school desks but also at the dinner table.

In March the minister indicated that she had written to the federal minister with respect to the loss of the Inuit Child First Initiative. Just this week both the premier and the minister of education both indicated that they are also writing letters to their federal counterparts. Meanwhile, however, children and their families are going hungry.

In March the minister indicated that her department was looking at what options they have to address this issue.

Can the minister provide an update on what specific solutions her department has come up with over the past six months to mitigate the impacts on low income families since the loss of the Inuit Child First Initiative funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking that question as well. Yes, it's true, yes, we have sent letters out as a government department, and Department of Social Services and our premier have been giving support. Also, as I reported, I went to Yukon last month to attend a meeting for Nunavut Women Association had written a letter of concern in regards to Child First Initiative funding. When that was stopped it has impacted the communities and the homes.

Although this is not part of the social services, Social Services department annually was using \$900,000 a day for food initiative program. In 2024-2025 and also 2025-2026 we have been planning, although we didn't know at the time that the Child First Initiative funding was going to be stopped by the federal government but \$2,500,000, we raised it to that total amount for poverty reduction, and the charitable donations can be applied to by the municipalities. It was 62 per cent of the communities that applied for. Sixty-two per cent of the communities in Nunavut are below the poverty line.

We have been working very hard to make sure that we support, so we had raised the funds to 2 million for food funding for Nunavut low-income families, so that they can apply for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister for your response. Mr. Speaker, it seems that every day there are more and more people taking to social media such as Facebook looking for leftovers of food, juice, snacks, for themselves and especially for their kids. It is a worrying trend that seems to be getting worse.

Can the minister provide any information as to whether or not they are looking at pricing out what a basket of food would cost, and see if the funds being provided through income support or poverty reduction is meeting the needs to feed our families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question. It's a very good question.

Yes, we do hold the Poverty Reduction Roundtable annually, and sometimes we invite to talk about their concerns. The government did food basket measures, and they are also publicized as well.

As I stated before, no matter where we live, the food prices have increased in the past years that we had increased the funding for income support by 34 per cent, and we have been looking at ways how we can improve the situation. We have been applying to the federal government's Indigenous program to rectify the program.

We have been trying continually to deal with that, and we look for ways how we can provide more support through poverty reduction division and also through income support division. So we always look for ways how to improve and provide more support. So we always consider different ways how we can provide support. And we also apply and request funding for the federal government, that they need to acknowledge the price. It's more expensive to live up north. Thank you.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for the continued advocacy to seek more funds from the federal government. Hopefully it will be successful.

Mr. Speaker, if our government can afford to give \$1 million of public funds to a private entity to buy five vans that remain unused and are left to sit and gather dust, then surely our government can find enough money to provide community-based programs that ensure that Nunavut's children and families on low incomes have enough food to eat. One million dollars can buy a lot of food, especially if the government partners up with hunters and trappers organizations to provide country food, which can stretch the dollar ever further.

Will the minister commit to working with her colleagues to find real and immediate solutions to address the rapidly growing food insecurity in our communities and in the homes of Nunavut residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your additional question. In regards to the government funding we try to provide funding and make it available to Department of Education and also Department of Health and also department of Economic Development. Also, they provide funding so that they could have breakfast programs. I know that the government provides millions dollars of work to provide support for the children and for the families.

We will not stop advocating to the federal government, but we do try to look for ways and consider ways how we can improve, as we recognize that the Nunavut has been impacted negatively by Jordan's Principle and we will not cease to work on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1393 – 6(2): Iqaluit Schools Consultations

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to wish everybody across Nunavut that's watching our proceedings good morning. I would like to extend a very big welcome to our distinguished guests in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, today my question is for the Minister of Education and is regarding the schools in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, last year, approximately one year ago. The department held public consultations on the state of schools in the city. I would like to ask the minister, would she be able to provide an overview of the results of these consultations, including specific issues and possible solutions that were presented by the department, as well as any public feedback that the department had received. 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 his question. Yes, about a year ago we did hold consultations here in Iqaluit, last September, with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut alongside with Department of Education. This consultation was led by Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut consultants, who talked about Iqaluit-related elementary school infrastructure needs and possible options for renovation or new school construction.

The goal of these consultations was to understand the current state of the schools from each school community's perspective, also to collect feedback from each school community on the options presented to inform decision-making and recommendations on next steps, as well as to understand what elements the school community thinks are missing from the current learning environment and what could benefit students if incorporated into a new school; and lastly, Mr. Speaker, the consultations were opportunity to offer attendees to speak up with anything that they may have missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for elaborating on that.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year the department has yet to produce a report on the feedback received by Iqaluummiut. Mr. Speaker, some of the options, as the minister had indicated, was renovations, expansion, replacement, or amalgamation. While I appreciate that the department will evaluate these options through a professional approach, the community itself may have differing views and expectations.

I would like to ask can the minister clarify to what extent to which public input will be taken into consideration when determining future school projects in the city. 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. This work is ongoing. Consultations are still happening. We still want to hear feedback from stakeholders, the community, and encourage people to attend.

Mr. Speaker, the consultants are planning a videoconference with district education authority this month, followed by another public consultation in November. So stay tuned for that date, and I hope that people will be able to show up or send their information about this. The goal of these meetings is to discuss outcomes of previous engagements, current scopes of work and other topics, such as catchment areas and enrolment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the minister for that response. It is great to hear that a second round of consultations are just around the corner.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure one of the topics that came up during the consultation was the rollout of full-day kindergarten. Mr. Speaker, it's clear that there are very strong benefits to incorporating full-day kindergarten into the education system, and I understand the rationale for the department's first two phases of the phased approach focussing on low hanging fruit, the lesser costs to rolling out the full-day kindergarten in smaller communities.

However, Mr. Speaker, last year I had asked the minister and Department of Education to adjust their approach, and focus on implementing full-day kindergarten in larger communities, as the investment will benefit more students and more families.

Mr. Speaker, Iqaluit has a significant amount of child-care facilities, and it's an extensive wait list, Mr. Speaker, which would be alleviated by implementing full-day kindergarten, as well as ensuring every child enters grade 1 on the same level.

I would like to ask where does Iqaluit stand on the rollout of full-day kindergarten. 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. So Nanook School in Apex does offer full day kindergarten, as well as École des Trois-Soleils, the French school here in Iqaluit also offers full-day kindergarten.

For the elementary schools in Iqaluit, Mr. Speaker, we are planning for Iqaluit's potential elementary school renovations, or a new build, which will have considerations for full-day kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1394 – 6(2): Igloolik Power Plant

Ms. Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. I want to revisit the issue of Igloolik's new power plant, and I want to thank the minister for the statement that he made in the House yesterday concerning this subject.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, Igloolik's current power plant has been in operation for half a century. In April 2024 the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a request for proposals for the design and construction of a new power plant for Igloolik. In his statement yesterday, the minister informed the House that "the contractor has opened the site, begun land development and foundation work, and started pile drilling. Critical materials have arrived via sea lift to support the 2025 construction season."

Can the minister provide an update on the current budget for project, and can he confirm what the required level of Inuit labour content is on the project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of that ongoing work in Igloolik, we're very pleased to see the beginning of construction in Igloolik. We know it has been a long time that the community has been waiting.

In terms of the project budget as well as the Inuit labour requirements, those aren't details I have in front of me right now. I can get them in short order, probably within a minute or two.

I can speak to the importance of the Arctic Energy Fund, which came from our federal partners and is supporting construction of Igloolik power plant. If we didn't have that Arctic Energy Fund to draw on, we would be forced to take on additional debt or look at other ways to finance our capital projects through potentially increasing power rates even further. We know the cost of living is really high in Nunavut. We want to keep our power

rates as low as possible. That's why the Arctic Energy Fund has been so valuable to us and we're so appreciative that we can move projects forward like the one in Igloolik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. (interpretation ends) When I raised this subject during our recent spring sitting, the minister stated although the design of Igloolik's new power plant does not include any renewables as part of the project itself, he also indicated that the design will allow for the potential future integration of renewable power.

As I noted in the preamble to my first question, Igloolik's current power plant has been serving the community for decades. Can the minister indicate what the operational life span of the new power plant is expected to be. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

(interpretation ends) The new power plan in Igloolik is designed to be in use for a 40-year life span and we sincerely hope over that 40-year life span once the project is completed that we will see renewable incorporated into the Igloolik power grid. We are seeing incredible progress just next door in Naujaat. We're seeing incredible progress in Sanikiluaq so we sincerely hope in terms of renewables we will be seeing that in the future for communities like Igloolik. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Earlier this year the minister informed the House that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is "enhancing emergency power reliability across Nunavut. Emergency generator units have been successfully installed in Rankin Inlet and Sanikiluaq, with more installations coming for Coral Harbour, Grise Fiord, Kugluktuk, and Igloolik. These targeted investments provide essential backup power and strengthen community resilience during outages and maintenance periods."

Can the minister provide an update today on the budget and timetable for the Igloolik emergency generator project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for the question. She is asking about the Igloolik specific power plant.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) in terms of the detailed project budget, I can commit to providing that to the member at my earliest, the soonest I can. In terms of the update for the emergency unit modular installation in Igloolik, the unit itself, the generator has been overhauled. It is currently being stored on our contractor's site and we are planning to ship it to Igloolik on the first sealift next sailing season and hope to have it installed shortly after that delivery. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1395 – 6(2): Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre Project

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to my constituents and welcome, those who just came into the visiting gallery.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the (interpretation ends) Department of infrastructure concerning the Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre Optic project. Earlier this year the government announced that the federal Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission had approved the statement of work for the project, which plans to bring undersea fibre to four Nunavut communities, including Coral Harbour. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for his question.

Mr. Speaker, following the commission's funding approval, my department has advanced work on the project planning permitting design and towards construction. A request for proposal for the marine survey closed on April 22, 2025, and the contract has been awarded and work is underway. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister. (interpretation ends) In July of this year the minister's department issued a request for proposal related to the planning design of the Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre project. As I noted in my preamble to my first question, one of the four communities that will be served by the new undersea fibre connection in Coral Harbour, my constituencies are very happy about having the internet access that is on par with Canadians in other parts

of the country. Can the minister confirm what plans the government has expand fibre access to other communities, including Naujaat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Kivalliq Baffin connector project is one that aims to provide long-term value for Nunavut. The four communities identified through this specific project would be one of the first phases, and with that we are looking at connecting other communities and creating a redundancy network to improve service capacity and reliability of our networks.

Mr. Speaker, for Naujaat specifically, I don't have a target date for when we expect that community would have fibre, but again, we are looking at the first phase just to get fibre to the territory, and then eventually down the road other communities to link up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will expect this hopefully for all Nunavut communities.

(interpretation ends) announce that the federal Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission had conditionally approved \$270.0 million for the Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre project. Obtaining the support of Nunavut Tunngavik was a requirement for the funding to be approved.

Can the minister update the House on how Nunavut Tunngavik and the three regional Inuit organizations are currently involved with the Kivalliq Baffin connector fibre project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, while the department continue to operate within the budgets that we've been with approved with, there are cost escalations. It does remain a risk and this is being monitored and closely evaluated on a go-forward basis.

In terms of our partnership with Inuit organizations, that is still yet to be firmed up. We are still in ongoing discussion around the request that Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated had around having some level of ownership over this asset, once it gets built, so it's still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Before I go to next name on my list, I will briefly stop the clock to recognize and welcome the cast and crew of *Uiksaringitara*.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: They are just returning from the Toronto International Film Festival. Welcome to the Assembly. Back to Orders of the Day.

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

Oral Question 1396 – 6(2): Petroleum Products Division

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say good morning to the people of Arviat and have a great weekend.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask, I believe it is the right minister, the Minister for Transportation Infrastructure Nunavut, and it pertains to Petroleum Products Division. The minister and I have had a number of exchanges in Committee of the Whole about Petroleum Products Division selling bulk propane in Arviat, and I would ask the minister again if there's a new tank farm that will be built in Arviat, and if part of the plan could be to sell bulk propane, not refill, to sell bulk propane, 100-pounders, 40-pounders, or 20-pounders of propane, whatever it may be, if that could be included in the scope of the project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Arviat tank farm project that is slated for my colleague's community, we are still proceeding with trying to get that in order, but also if we're going to change the scope of that, I'll have to take that under consideration and talk with my officials whether or not we have the budget for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope it will be included. It's not really any different than selling naphtha, and naphtha is sold in all the petroleum product divisions in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavummiut are starting to switch more to propane than to naphtha and the government should be providing the service that Nunavummiut want. I don't see that there could be, would be much change in the scope of the work. It would be more storage. Would be as simple as a couple of sea cans.

I'll ask the minister again: Can Arviat be the pilot project to sell bulk propane, and if it works out good, then it could be spread to other communities. I've had my constituency ask me to bring it up, because more and more people are using propane. So can Arviat be the project to start selling propane starting next season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Speaker, between exchanges with my colleague on this, we have committed to look at Arviat as a potential pilot project. We'll see where we can take it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like a bit more firm commitment. It has been two years since the minister agreed Arviat could be a pilot project, two years now, and Arviammiut have been patiently waiting. I have been patiently waiting. Can the minister please give me a commitment it will be more than a consideration, that it will be high priority to have Arviat as a pilot project to sell bulk propane through PPD. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, where there is a market where the private sector already does sell propane, we do not want to impede on that. So considering those options and whether or not there's a plan to not sell propane there, those will be factored in.

And if there's other communities that are maybe close to Arviat, Rankin Inlet or other places, we'll look at this very closely. And again, Arviat has been quite vocal. My colleague has been quite vocal on this, and we'll try to prioritize where the highest needs are in relation to how much propane is being used across the Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1397 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Transportation in Infrastructure Nunavut. As the minister is aware, the Government of Nunavut recently

issued a boil-water advisory for the community of Chesterfield Inlet. The advisory indicated that:

"This is a safety measure due to operations in the water plant and insufficient water testing."

Mr. Speaker, safe drinking water is absolutely essential for all Nunavut communities. Can the minister indicate what action his department is taking to work with the municipality of Chesterfield Inlet to address these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department continues to follow and support our clients to follow the directions of the Department of Health to ensure our drinking meets or exceeds the current drinking water regulations. The department does conduct daily tests for turbidity and chlorine to confirm proper disinfectance. Also each month there's tests for coliform and E. coli, as well as once a year there's a full water chemistry testing done on both raw water source and the treated drinking water source. So all municipalities and their drinking water sources go through these. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important that all communities have water treatment infrastructure that is in good working order. Can the minister indicate what capital improvements to the community's existing facility are being planned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department is conducting a number of upgrades or plans to develop new water-treatment infrastructure across our territory, and we will continue to work with Chesterfield Inlet as well on where they stand in the prioritization.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are utilizing several hundred millions of dollars of federal funds towards this, but also our Assembly here has also approved funds previous years, so we've been fortunate with that. But again, there's going to be further investments required into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important that our hard-working municipality staff receive training and support to ensure that water testing is undertaken on a regular basis. Can the minister indicate how his department is working with the Department of Community Services and the Municipal Training Organization to provide training in all of the Nunavut municipalities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I agree that our water treatment plant operators do need the required training and certification to operate these, what are becoming more and more complex treatment plants. And with that we do work very closely hand in hand with our partners at Community Services. Of course, there are some treatment plants that are owned and operated by municipalities and some that are within Transportation and Infrastructure.

This past spring from March to June 2025 there was regional small systems and class 1 training and exams that were held here in Iqaluit, but also in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay, and operators from 18 communities participated, with travel costs covered by my department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1398 – 6(2): Clyde River Solid Waste Management

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to my constituents and everyone in Nunavut.

Right now I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to ask questions to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, and it has to do with, because as the minister knows, I am very passionate about having clean and healthy communities, and the need to have clean communities. We don't want any trash out on the road and that's why I rise today. I was pleased to note that his department issued a request for proposals in August of this year for upgrades to Clyde River's current solid waste facility.

Mr. Speaker, the request for proposals closes on Friday of next week. They only have a week to go.

Can the minister assure me that his department will keep the municipality of Clyde River fully informed as the work proceeds on this important project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for asking about the Clyde River solid waste dump. And from my understanding, the bundles, there are four communities that we are looking at, including Clyde River. We have to get more information from the hamlet of Clyde River as this project goes ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am referring to the solid waste facility, and I would also like to thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) Information published by the department in its request for proposals describes a number of plant improvements to Clyde River's solid waste facility, including improved perimeter fencing. The request for proposal also includes a list of optional upgrades, including the construction of an attendant shelter, the installation of power and lightning – lighting, not lightning.

>>*Laughter*

Ms. Killiktee: The purchase of a waste oil burner, and a new litter fencing. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support these additional features.

Can the minister indicate how his department will decide whether or not to include these optional upgrades in the final design. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department as well as working with other departments, we have been trying to look at what the what new design criteria will look like for solid waste facilities and the standards that we would apply, what skills and technology to use when we're disposing of our solid waste. And with that the scope of work that we had under the federal funding, the new Build in Canada fund, we had to adjust to look at possibly optimizing solid waste sites to make them useable for a longer period.

We will continue to see how the scope of work for each municipal solid waste needs are going forward and consider those options that are my colleague speaks of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I so agree with you that the foundations, and that things that are installed or constructed are in a well structured.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, one of the priorities listed in the Department of Environment's current business plan is to "finalize the waste management strategy" for the territory.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has a good working relationship with the Minister of Environment. Can the minister describe how the two departments have been collaborating on this initiative, and can he indicate when the strategy will be finalized and tabled here in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment and Transportation and Infrastructure do have a close working relationship around this initiative around solid waste across the territory, but also the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. There's a partnership there and other stakeholders implementing pilot projects that I highlighted earlier this sitting.

Also we are continuing to plug away at the strategy. We are looking at waste streams and waste audits being done and collecting data to inform the design study, for example incineration. So there's work ongoing in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1399 – 6(2): Community Aerodrome Radio Station Program

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, I tabled correspondence during last year's fall sitting that I had received from the municipality of Kugaaruk, concerning the status of weather observation services at the airport.

Mr. Speaker, when I raised this issue during our recent spring sitting, the minister acknowledged the importance of the community aerodrome radio station program, and informed the Legislative Assembly that his department would be "looking at longer term solutions" to address the issues raised by the municipality. Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department officials are in communications with Nav Canada and Transport Canada to advocate for more effective delivery of the Nav Canada's community aerodrome radio station programs in Nunavut, also known as CARS.

I also am aiming to meet with the Minister of Transport before the end of this government to draw more immediate attention. I thank my colleague for bringing this up before. This is not Taloyoak and Kugaaruk that are experiencing challenges with this important service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the municipal council of Taloyoak wrote correspondence to the government on this issue on early April of this year.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to tabling a copy of his reply to the municipality in the Legislative Assembly before end of our current sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our days are winding down, and I'll have to take that under advisement and see if we can make that happen in short order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware the, community aerodrome radio station program plays a vital role in Nunavut's smaller communities. Continuity of service and accurate weather observations are essential to supporting such things as medical evacuation flights.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities passed a formal motion at its most recent annual general meeting concerning the urgent need for 24-7 weather observer services at Nunavut airports. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to pay public tribute to the important work of the association, and to express my appreciation to all our mayors, councillors, and senior administrative officers.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate how his department responded to the resolution that was passed by the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: (interpretation) Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department, although we do not have direct control over the operations or the community aerodrome radio station program, we are committed to ensuring the continuity of airport services across our territory. I want to recognize and thank the Nunavut operators that are very dedicated and continue to provide these critical services in each of our communities.

Regarding the question with the response to Nunavut Association of Municipalities, I'll have to get back to the members and my colleague on that and see where it's at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Before I go to my next name on my list, first I would like to welcome to this House Mr. Speaker Paul Quassa.

>> *Applause*

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

Oral Question 1400 – 6(2): Launch of the Public Administration and Indigenous Governance Program

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome all the guests in the gallery I'm very much looking forward to the screening.

Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Human Resources on the topic of a minister statement that was made earlier this week on the launch of the Public Administration and Indigenous Governance programs.

Mr. Speaker, I've spoken often on the importance of having that northern perspective in the policy roles across the government, to make sure that that northern lived experience is included within policy development for Government of Nunavut programs and policies.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to ask how will participants selected, and is there a target number to make this program viable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very pleased to see my aunt here and all the other people who are in the gallery.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker this would be application-based, where employees that want to get into this program, they would apply through the application process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do realize I snuck two questions in there. I was hoping to hear a target number of what's going to make this program viable, but I'll move on.

Mr. Speaker, in the minister's statement, it was stated that opportunities to transition into policy-related positions will be the responsibility of the – I'm sorry, I'm asking if the transition interest policy related positions will be the responsibility of the student, or will they be a part of a pool of employees for departments and agencies to target for policy positions, or some other method, to accomplish their transition and/or advancement in their policy roles. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, respecting the House rules, I was taught to answer one question per question, so I was following the House rules on that matter.

This will be a combination of what my member colleague just mentioned. It could be a pool, and which departments they are coming from, we're hoping that there will be a good pool of folks that are going to go into this very much needed training program thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify for the record for those that may not understand the rules, there's nothing barring from asking the minister more than one question.

Mr. Speaker, participants will engage in a blend of online, self-directed and in-person learning. What types of accommodations are anticipated to make sure that their current job responsibilities aren't compromised by the additional responsibilities of these studies, and visa versa; making sure their studies are not compromised by their job duties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my Department of Human Resources will work very closely with the departments that are involved and look at the amount of the workload that the individual may have, and whether to have mentorship.

All those things to help support our staff will be in place for this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaerner.

Oral Question 1401 – 6(2): Arctic Sovereignty and Security

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, our guests, to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the minister, or to the premier, rather, in regards to the minister's statement in regards to Arctic sovereignty and security strategy, as he stated that this will be developed in Nunavut in partnership with NTI and also as he stated that they attended a conference, as his term of this government will be ending.

Do you expect to go down again and meet with the officials in regards to the launch of Nunavut Arctic sovereignty and security strategy? Will there be another attendance of the government officials attending a meeting in regards to this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague again for bringing forward the topic of Arctic security to me.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I do plan to be having bilateral meetings on Monday with a few very key federal ministers that pertain to the importance of Arctic security and sovereignty and nation-building, and a lot of the initiatives we continue to push, to try and influence the federal budget that will be coming just in a few weeks.

On Monday I am scheduled to be having my bilateral meeting with Minister McGuinty, who is defence minister. I will be meeting with minister Hodgson, who is the chair of nation-building projects through the cabinet, but also with finance minister, as well, with Minister Champagne. Those are the confirmed meetings I look forward to continuing to potentially have further meetings while I'm down there for Monday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Thank you for responding. The reason why I asked this question is because I do want my constituents of Amittuq to see that the Nunavut government has consideration for the Arctic in the smaller communities.

My next question is, as you had stated in your opening minister's statement, younger people is the future of our territory, and I know that they are very capable. As he stated, Mr. Speaker, when the premier is going to attend the meeting down there, because security strategy should be developed, made in Nunavut, as we don't have a university in Nunavut. The federal government had stated that there are two universities that will consider how they can deal with Arctic sovereignty and security strategy.

Can the minister state that since he stated that he will be going down to attend a meeting, as I keep stating in regards to Amittuq issues, if you can make sure that relay that information, to make sure on that location could be in Amittuq area. I'm urging the premier to discuss this, although this is not a question, and correct them.

There are 25 communities in regards to security strategy. My question is are you going to have a location for emergency location.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the question, because he has been advocating for this issue, yes. I have agreed with the member, every time I meet with the minister over there and I relay that information, that we lack a lot of programs in the north and we need to have a location for search and rescue. I thank him for being able to write a letter and advocating for this issue.

Soon I will say that I will tell them again how we need an emergency service location in the north. I will relay that information to the ministers and advocate that to the ministers as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps when you meet with the federal officials, if you can bring a local resident of Igloolik and a local resident of Sanirajak, to make sure to let them know and advocate that we don't have a high school, and so that they could at least see and visualize that we need the support for an emergency services location.

I believe the barrier we have is due to a lack of a university, and there's \$1.36 million for that. \$7.6 million is utilized annually for whole of Canada. We would like to see that kind of service that they are going to enhance economic development in Nunavut.

As the premier is going down, can you advocate can you bring individuals from Sanirajak and Igloolik? And I do want you to say yes, not a no. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. At this time I cannot agree with you, because I represent all of Nunavut when we are advocating. I will also take the member's comments as well and advocate these issues, because this is an urgent case that we need to develop the north, especially so that our children, so that they can have a good future. So I will continue to work hard on that.

But in regards to the member's question, at this time I will not be able to agree with you. Every time I go down, I represent all, the whole of Nunavut, the whole territory of Nunavut, so I advocate on behalf of them. I will keep what you had stated and I will take them down to Nunavut as we near the end of this Legislative Assembly.

The new government and federal government are now planning for their budget, so I will be going down to push and urge so we can get for Nunavut through Katujjiluta all the work that we have worked towards, and pushed for, are not new, and to make sure they become reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1402 – 6(2): Inuit Child First Initiative

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions will be for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs today, and they are related to food security.

Mr. Speaker, given that we know that food insecurity is well documented, and we are hearing so many questions from our colleagues. What I should like to know from the Minister of Indigenous Affairs is what specific actions have been taken to advocate for the reinstatement of the Inuit Child First Initiative, and why have they not been successful to this point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm quickly switching binders here.

I appreciate my colleague's question, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in the House a few days ago, we've written formal letters. I believe there were four formal letters, whether it's myself or whether it's my colleagues from the Minister of Health or Minister of Family Services, so we are doing everything that we can to advocate for the continued programming of CFI, or Child First Initiative.

Because we know the importance of food insecurity that we see in our communities. I've seen it firsthand when I travel to the communities, when I visit the schools, and the impact that program has had on our children and our communities. We'll continue to keep advocating for it, and I commit to continuing to advocate to the appropriate ministers the importance of sustainable, long-term funding to see that program continue for Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, it's really apparent that letter writing and providing rationales isn't working, and it's really concerning to me, because people are going hungry.

We talk about supporting Nunavummiut and their mental health; we had a day recognizing the impact of suicide on our communities just the other day, and we know that when people are hungry they become very destitute, and children can't concentrate in school and that people become hangry and that contradicts to violence in the home, sometimes, and outside.

I've talked in the past about the possibility of declaring a public health emergency on suicide, and I think that it's really important as well to consider declaring a public health emergency on food security and food insecurity.

I'll ask, then: Will the minister consider taking a monumental step in recognizing that food insecurity in Nunavut has gone beyond crisis levels, and is not a temporary issue, by declaring a public health emergency on food security? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I share the sentiment of the urgency and the importance of the particular initiative that we're discussing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize that just most recently that we were able to secure \$7.6 million over the three years between the Department of Education and the Department of Health for the school food programs, where we were fortunate to have the minister come here to Nunavut to announce through the National Food Program.

So, we are not just writing letters. We're continually advocating for programming to ensure that funds flow to the people that need it most. And so, I could continue to advocate for that.

Specifically, to the member's question, that's something that falls within the Department of Health, and I could commit to connecting with the minister on specifically the request.

I can't make that commitment right now without having had that conversation with the minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The value of declaring a public health emergency is that it creates advocacy for higher government action. It puts pressure on federal, provincial, and territorial governments to provide more resources and funding for programs that address food insecurity. It allows for innovative solutions.

One thing that that was drilled into my head as I was growing up during the land claims negotiations was if the people lead, the leaders will follow. I would like to know whether or not there are any, whether the city of Iqaluit or any municipality or hamlet has reached out to the Government of Nunavut to discuss their own options of declaring a public health emergency on food insecurity in their own communities, and if so, what if any action was taken; and if not, let this be notice to communities that a really important step that council members can take is to declare their own public health emergency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I want to thank my colleague for her strong advocacy around this. I know it touches all of us. I just wanted to acknowledge that.

At this point I am not aware in terms of any engagements. Further to that, a public health emergency would be a decision made by the chief public health officer, and as we know, it's really quasi, arm's length from government, and that's something that I have already committed to, to connect with the department to see if there has been any engagements, whether it's from Iqaluit. I know I have received correspondence from my other colleagues as well, specifically to the program. I can commit to looking into this and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1403 – 6(2): Activities of the Petroleum Products Division (Qavvik)

Mr. Qavvik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Welcome Igloolikmuit. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, infrastructure, infrastructure, and more infrastructure in Nunavut is needed, I think the theme today.

This morning's question is for the Minister Responsible for Transportation and Infrastructure who is responsible for the government's Petroleum Products Division.

Mr. Speaker, as you might be aware, we are rapidly approaching the end of the annual sealift and fuel supply season. Mr. Speaker, in recent years there has been concerns about communities running low on fuel before the annual resupply arrives. Our government does not have unlimited funds, as we all know, and we do not want to see them being spent on costly fuel air lifts.

I would like to ask the minister if he can provide a brief summary of this year's fuel resupply in Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's never enough infrastructure across our territory. We want to continue to make some headway, and I thank my colleagues for the investments that we've been able to make to date.

For the question on resupply, I'll talk a little bit about maybe the broader Nunavut-wide resupply planning delivery. Of course we do have a new five-year term contract in place between Petroleum Products Division and our Nunavut Fuels and Woodward's Oil. This year marks the start of that five-year agreement.

We have secured our 2025 fuel needs and regarding some challenges that have been experienced across our territory, including Sanikiluaq around either outages or low fuel, before the resupply ship comes, we do try to maintain flexibility. If a community is experiencing low fuel, we're able to divert the ship to those communities that are in most need. But we'll continue on this path. I think with the experience that we've had to date we want to build upon, and make sure that we don't come across those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the minister may recall an unfortunate incident that occurred last summer involving fuel transfers at the tank farm. It is important that our fuel storage infrastructure be in good condition and that staff and contractors working at the facilities receive adequate training and support.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what initiatives his department has been undertaking in this area in the community of Sanikiluaq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as part of my department's ongoing review of our facility management program, we have best practices and updates

have been made to our facility fuel system management plan. We want to ensure that our standard operating procedures are strengthened for when there's fuel transfer protocols being followed. These enhancements are being implemented through employee training and focus on updated procedures, again, building upon some of the incidences that we've seen in the last few years.

Again, we want to mitigate and try to address any spills or any incidences that we want to maintain integrity of our fuel systems across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in July of this year the minister's department announced the launch of a new fuel distribution and sales management system that is intended to "improve account management fuel delivery scheduling, invoicing, and fuel volume management."

As the minister will recall the Legislative Assembly passed a new *Fuel Tax Act* earlier this year. Can the minister indicate if and when new fuel tax rates will be announced under the new legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, fuel tax is a Department of Finance endeavour and it gets applied if we go through this it will be applied to fuel. As for when the implementation of that, I don't have a specific response on it today, but it's something that we're working with our colleagues at Finance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: We almost did it, but time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to rule 39(7), I seek unanimous consent to extend oral question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays.

A Member: Nay.

Speaker: There is a nay. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request that we revert back to item 5. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Quassa.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues. Here in the gallery I would like all of us to welcome them. They have just arrived from Toronto, to showcase a film they just conducted. The film director, Mr. Zacharias Kunuk.

>> *Applause*

Assistant Nattaq Uningnalak (ph), and actors Silas Attagutsiak (ph), Pierre Attagutsiak, Theresa Kapanyuk (ph), Martha Kowgak (ph), Emma Quassa (ph), Leah, Panimigak (ph), Aiden Angutingmalik (ph), Leon Amagoalik (ph), along with one of the supporters, Samuel, who had left who is normally the assistant. These are the film crew and they think they will be showcasing their work.

Also I would like to recognize my husband, Simon Quassa, and his older brother, Paul Quassa, and our son, Wendell (ph) Quassa.

>> *Applause*

Ms. Quassa: And just to make a brief comment in the month of February although a mother and a parent, in the month of February he will be going leaving for Japan for a whole year. And I'm very proud of him.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Although not everyone may know me, I rise Mr. Speaker, I am from Qikiqtarjuaq, Mary Killiktee. However, I've seen myself. I would like to attend this evening at 6:30. Yesterday I told my husband we will be anticipating for a 6 o'clock and now up to six, I will be going out I would like to be there at six and I want to be the first in attendance. My husband and I love to watch the film develop by the individuals by these individuals, and have a lot of impact to us although we live in another community.

We love Inuit culture being displayed, as we have all grown up in Inuit traditions and I'm proud and I'm very proud of you all Igloolikmuit, very talented individuals, and especially an individual who will be living in Japan for a whole year. My colleague's son, and Paul Quasa; welcome you all. And thank you for giving me the opportunity. I hope you are late, so we will have a seat, my husband and I.

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to acknowledge you all and recognize you are Igloolikmuit and Amittummiut. We're very proud of you. I recognize you all, and I would like to recognize Paul Quassa, who was a Speaker here in this House. Welcome. I'm very proud of you all and we can't wait for 6 o'clock. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me, too. I would like to warmly welcome, because they are opening opportunities for our descendants, not just through making movies but they are sharing stories, and I am very proud of everyone. I represent a person who has really represented Nunavut and even before Nunavut became a reality, he was involved and up to today he is involved. And Paul Quassa is who I'm talking about. He was not just a chairman, he was the premier of the Nunavut government, and also with the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. He has represented Inuit for such a long time. I wanted to make sure he's recognized, and because he lives in Apex, he has taught me a lot and shown me how to do things better. And it's great to recognize him. And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: (no English) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It must be a Friday because I'm amazed that the member said a person's name directly. And my aunt is here, Leah Atagutsiak (ph). It's great to see her here and her brother-in-law Silas and Sakulasie (ph) and Nata, and also Paul Quassa. Please feel welcome. And our MLA colleague's husband. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Welcome to your House. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Zacharias Kunuk (ph). Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy for what Zacharias does ISUMA.TV. Prior to becoming a Legislative Assembly member I was the channel 51 maintainer in Taloyoak. And not only that, Mr. Speaker, I was the leader in the Kitikmeot region for the programming of our local channels in the Kitikmeot region. And not only that, Mr.

Speaker, I'm very happy that what he does, it helped me to become a videographer, and not only that, I am a certified multimedia archivist, which the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

And not only that Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank John Main for opening the door for me to the video world. I do have video uploads on ISUMA.TV, and there are 51 video uploads that I did and what a coincidence; channel 51. It's great to see ISUMA.TV every day. Every day it's a learning experience for Inuit as a whole that want to learn the Inuktitut language and the Inuit culture. I am inspired by what Zacharias does, and I miss the media world. I miss doing video graphing. I miss editing. I thank Zacharias greatly, and it seems as though he opened the door for me to be here today.

And not only that, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to recognize my great friend. We've been great friends for a very, very, long time.

And also I wanted to recognize Paul Quassa, who is a great leader for many, many years who I looked up to, just like my Uncle James Eetooloo (ph).

And also my great friend, his brother, Simon. I wanted to recognize him also. He's always been a great friend for me, up to today. Thank you, Simon. *Qujannamiik*. And his son also, I wanted to recognize him, and welcome to your House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your House. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Back to Orders of the Day. 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 Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 442 - 6(2): Nunavut Arctic Sovereignty and Security Strategy

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I place Nunavut Arctic Sovereignty and Security Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 13, Tabling of Documents Hon. Minister of Human Resources Mr. David Akeeagok.

Tabled Document 443 - 6(2): 2024-2025 Nunavut Ethics Officer Annual Report

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 2024-2025 Nunavut Ethics Officers annual report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: 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, Bill 83 and 85, with Mr. Hickes in the chair. Before we proceed this Committee of the Whole we'll take a 10-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 11:07 and Committee commenced at 11:24

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

Chairman: Thank you I would like to call the committee meeting to order. Minister Akeegok, do you wish to have officials appear before you?

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, yes, I do.

Speaker: Thank you. Do committee members agree to have witnesses appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 83 and 85. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to commence review of Bill 83. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we deal first with Bill 83?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 83 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 3, 2024-2025 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, can you please introduce your witnesses and proceed to opening comments, please.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is Daniel Young, the Deputy Minister of Finance and on my left is Megan Hunt, who is the Deputy Minister for the Department of Health. I am here to present Bill 83, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 3, 2024-2025*.

(interpretation ends) This Bill seeks to increase the Government's 2024-2025 Operations and Maintenance appropriation by \$69.453 million, affecting four departments: Health, Family Services, Community and Government Services, and Economic Development and Transportation. These budget shortfalls became evident during the fiscal year-end closure and audit process.

The Department of Health is requesting \$48 million to address budget shortfall in the Health Care Service Delivery Branch.

The Department of Family Services is seeking \$12.353 million to address budget shortfalls in various program areas including the Income Assistance Branch, the Career Development Branch, and the Poverty Reduction Branch.

The Department of Community and Government Services requires \$7.3 million in new funding to address budget shortfall in the Local Government Services Branch.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation requires \$1.8 million to address budget shortfall in the Corporate Services and Transportation branches.

While operational costs continue to rise across the country, GN departments are actively working to re-profile existing funds to meet their needs.

This is the third 2024-25 Operations and Maintenance supplementary funding request that we have presented for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Do my committee members have any opening comments to provide? I'm seeing none. Before us we have Bill 83, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 3, 2024-2025*. Clause 1, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Clause 2, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Clause 3. Please go to schedule on page 2. Item 8 on page 4. Total amount not previously authorized Department of Health, operations and maintenance \$48 million. Any questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I have two areas of I would like to question today. Sorry it's been a long morning. So I guess first of all I would like to ask questions about is out-of-territory mental health addictions treatment contracts, which is on page 7 of the MLA briefing note.

The third bullet it states that Nunavut does not have staff resources to support the needs of all of its residents regarding serious complex mental health issues.

And it goes on to state that out-of-territory specialized facilities provide general treatment under the following categories: Long term mental health care, addictions, psychiatric care and non-acute mental health care.

With the Aqqursariaq addictions trauma treatment facility opening up in the near future, which of these five generic or specialized treatment categories will be able to be provided in territory, thereby reducing the need for out-of-territory mental health? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I ask Megan Hunt, our deputy minister to respond. Thank you.

Speaker: Please proceed, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. In terms of the new treatment and healing centre, a very cautious approach will be taken initially as part of the implementation. So starting with preparing for staff and making sure the training and capacity is built and then moving to an outpatient model to start.

An outpatient model is important to ensure that planning for operations or being able to welcome having in-patient services for addiction treatment is in place. So trauma and treatment are part of the complement of services.

We will still require, especially for those who have highly acute requirements, that out of territory services may and will be necessary, but this is an additional tool to complement services existing in territory to offer individuals different choices. And then to also continue accessing our partnerships with out of territory services for those who may require it. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you for that response, Ms. Hunt. So from your response, I gather that the facility will begin on focussing on outpatient, which is good for the community, given the amount of mental health needs here in Iqaluit. But it sounds like it won't have much of an impact on at least in the first year on the out of territory demand. I just want to get clarification on that. Thank you, Chair.

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

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the follow-up on the question. It's not a yes or no answer. I wish I could give you that. So it will – we will still, yes, require the services out of territory. What that means for in territory, in terms of reduction, I think that's part of the lessons learned in evaluation. Those numbers could go up or down, depending on what we're seeing, in terms of patient flow and assessment. Sometimes when we have more services in territory that are culturally safe and we're getting higher levels of access, that may require some out of territory specialization, which means those numbers could go up, but they could also go down. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Ms. Hunt. I'll move on to my second and final topic. Under purchase services it does make reference to transient housing, as a requirement for portion of the supplementary funding request. And last year, I over the last few years I have been asking Department of Health to provide additional information with regards to not just transient employees, but transient housing and associated costs.

So under the purchase services, the department is only requesting \$2 million. But with regards to the transient housing units and costs, I was wondering if we would be able to get an update for the committee on the total number of housing units that the department has for transients and the associated costs per year. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm trying to find the response. As soon as it becomes available. So I'll ask through you to get Ms. Hunt, to respond to that.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you give me a moment, I'll come back to that, if we want to continue with questions through you. *Qujannamiik*.

Speaker: Thank you. Just interject at an appropriate time when the information is available. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, on page 1 of the briefing binder there under medical travel that was budgeted for 32 million, and actual spending was 50.1 million which is 18.1 million over budget. I understand that medical travel expenses is hard to control or calculate, but one cost that is more controllable, I believe is more controllable, are escorts, as escorts is – a patient wants an escort, it has to be – I believe it has to be requested and can be approved, or it can be denied. Is there a breakdown of the 50 million, how much of that was used for escorts instead of patients? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, for 2024-2025 fiscal year, the totals I have is there's 33,684,000. Of that 45 per cent is under the escorts, so 15,267,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oh, sorry.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok, you wanted to correct something. Go ahead.

Hon. David Akeeagok: The number of people are 15,267 escorts. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: For clarity then, is it still 45 per cent the total cost of the travel budget, 45 per cent of it is still for escort travel? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This may be on beyond the scope of this Bill, but there might be a historical trend there. Is the amount of escort travel steady, increasing, decreasing? Just to give us an idea of if it's increasing, then maybe by next year it might be over 50 per cent of the cost, which is one-on-one, which means almost every single patient is getting an escort to date. So is there information in front of the minister to tell if you say there's a trend? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that information is inside the head of Ms. Hunt. May I refer that response to her. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Hunt, please.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the member for the question. From a medical travel and escort perspective, there are definitely very high demands to have escorts for many reasons, whether that's for people's health condition or requirements, they have – when they are travelling, first of all, whether they are elders, whether they have disabilities. And so we definitely continue to see a trend in medical escorts increasing. And as we have more people travelling for medical, and still catching up from the COVID pandemic, I suspect that that number may raise. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are there any guidelines as to who can be an escort? For example, if you need an escort, do you qualify to be an escort? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it's under the medical travel policy. It is defined in there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. So I'll go back to my question. If you qualify that you need to have an escort, because you can't do your medical treatment on yourself there, can you in turn in the future be an escort for someone? Because someone that needs an escort, do they qualify to be an escort? Thank you.

Chairman: So if I understand correctly, if you're currently a medical patient under your own care and you have a friend or relative that needs a medical escort for a non-related issue, can you be their escort? Is that what you're asking, Mr. Savikataaq?

Mr. Savikataaq: Okay, I'll think, Mr. Chairman I'll use myself as an example. Let's say I need an escort because I have a bad limp and I can't carry my own luggage, so therefore I should qualify for an escort. But if someone needs an escort, can I, who needed an escort because I can't carry my own luggage, do I qualify to be an escort for someone else? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you for clarifying that. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, could I ask Megan Hunt to respond to that. Thank you.

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

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question. That will depend. So when someone is on medical travel, they may require an escort. After their medical care is completed and they have returned to the community, they may be in a different situation than they were prior to their travel for medical when they needed an escort. So someone who needed an escort may be able to be an escort, because their health condition or challenge has changed.

And vice versa in the other way. So it's not a simple yes or no, because people's health status or their requirements change. And as part of the process, medical travellers receive recommendations from a physician to help understand what those many requirements are. So there is a process where we're receiving that information and someone may not have been able to be an escort for different medical reasons, but their health status has changed. Or we do know that sometimes people have been, you know, banned from airlines or from hotels, and that may play a role in whether they have the ability to provide medical escorting. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave that. But I was relating to that as a permanent limp, not temporary.

Anyway, staying on the subject, I don't know if this information was there, but I know at one time when the health minister was questioned that there was a good number of no shows, and those tickets are bought and paid for, and that's money just lost, because that patient has to still seek medical treatment.

We know that now that 45 per cent of the budget was spent on escorts. Of that \$50 million budget, like I said, I don't know if it's there, how much in dollar figure or in the number of patients were no shows and that airline fee was lost? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, we don't have that detail right in front of us, but we can definitely commit to providing that detail. That detail does get tracked, and we can definitely provide that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. And before I go to the next name on my list and interrupt their line of questioning, we're having to stop directly and recognize the clock. I'm going to use my authority as Chair, and I'm going to recognize the clock now, and we will adjourn this meeting for the day and I will rise to report progress to the Speaker.

Minister Akeeagok, you had something to supplement the last question. Go ahead.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The previous question was about the transitional housing. I remember afterwards. The total number of units that are under health is 140 units, and there are 285 rooms, across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. And I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker.

>>Committee recessed at 11:46 and House resumed at 11:48

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

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 83 and would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to get the report of the committee agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Ms. Clerk: *Orders of the Day*, Monday, September 15:

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 Monday, September 15, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 11:50*

