

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. David Joanasié

(South Baffin)

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. David Akeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

Hannah Angootealuk
(Aivilik)

Edward Attagutaluk
(Aggu)

Hon. Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Hon. George Hickee
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Premier of Nunavut; Minister of Justice; Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut; Minister responsible for the Labour Standards Board; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal

Jamie Kablutsiak
(Arviat South)

Gordon Kautuk
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Brian Koonoo
(Tununiq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Simon Kuliktana
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall
(Netsilik)

Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board

Johnny Mike
(Pangnirtung)

Fred Pedersen
(Cambridge Bay)

David Porter
(Gjoa Haven)

Abraham Qammanié
(Amittuq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Hon. Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade

Hon. Annie Tattuineé
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

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(Quttiktuq)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 13, 2026

Members Present:

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk, Mr. Edward Attagutaluk, Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak, Mr. Gordon Kautuk, Hon. Brian Koonoo, Mr. Simon Kuliktana, Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall, Hon. John Main, Mr. Johnny Mike, Mr. Fred Pedersen, Mr. David Porter, Mr. Abraham Qammaniq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Hon. Craig Simailak, Mr. Steven Taqtu, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>*House commenced at 09:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasie): To start off this morning, Mr. Mike, can you lead us off in prayer..

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, people of Nunavut, everybody listening and watching on TV, and watching online. *Orders of the Day*, number 2, Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 35 – 7(1):2025 Employee Engagement Survey

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the successful completion of our 2025 Employee Engagement Survey which closed in December. I want to extend my thanks to every Government of Nunavut employee who took the time to participate.

With a participation rate of 60 per cent, representing feedback from over 2,600 employees, the results reflect a strong collective commitment to shaping the future of Government of Nunavut. A response rate of this scale clearly shows that our dedicated public servants care deeply about their workplace, their colleagues, and the quality of services they provide to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, employee engagement is the foundation of a healthy and effective public service. When employees feel heard, supported, and empowered, the entire government and Nunavummiut benefit. We see it in stronger collaboration, better communication and improved outcomes for the people we serve.

Mr. Speaker, employee engagement surveys are one of the most valuable tools we have to understand the lived experience of our public servants. They help us identify what is working well. They help us build action plans that are based in evidence, shaped by employees' voices, and focused on meaningful change.

In the coming months, Mr. Speaker, departments and public bodies will review their results and develop targeted action plans. These plans reflect our shared commitments to continuous improvement across our public service. They will guide efforts and strengthen leadership, enhance workplace well being, improve career development, and foster a working culture where every public servant feels valued, respected and empowered to contribute their best.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 36 – 7(1): Board of Directors - Update on Board Appointments

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Qulliq Energy Corporation currently has seven members in place on its board of directors. Chaired by Jeannie Ehaloak and vice-chaired by Martha Lenio, the board also includes Alex Cook, Nayab Khan, Robin Anawak, Paul Kaludjak, and Travis Kalluak.

The members bring a strong mix of expertise in renewable energy, finance, policy development, and human resources. This diversity supports effective governance and oversight of the corporation's operations and long-term strategic direction. I am pleased to note that five of the seven board members are Inuit, reflecting Qulliq Energy Corporation's ongoing commitment to strong Inuit representation at the governance level, a commitment we intend to maintain and strengthen.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to note that a public call for applications to fill current vacancies on the Qulliq Energy Corporation board of directors is currently open and will close April 1, 2026. Interested candidates can contact Qulliq Energy Corporation for information on how to submit their names for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the continued leadership and guidance of Qulliq Energy Corporation's Board of Directors as the corporation works to deliver safe, reliable, and sustainable energy to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Minister's Statement 37 – 7(1): Rankin Inlet Airport Terminal Opening Update

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to provide my colleagues with an important update on the new Rankin Inlet airport terminal building project. I am happy to report that we expect to have interim occupancy of Phase 1 of the new terminal by the end of the month, and final occupancy by the end of April 2026.

This means that passenger operations, as well as airline personnel and the NAV Canada Flight Service Station, will move from the existing terminal to the Phase 1 building that has been under construction for more than three years.

Mr. Speaker, this project is well past the halfway mark, with the most complex building elements now behind us. Once the ground has thawed this summer, the old terminal will be demolished and work will begin on the thermosiphon system for Phase 2. The contractor will use active freezing to allow the foundation to be poured without delay.

Mr. Speaker, the Phase 2 building shell should be in place by this fall, allowing work to begin on the interior elements.

Phase 1 alone has more than twice the floor area of the existing terminal, and will be a noticeable improvement for travellers departing from, arriving at or transiting through Rankin Inlet. But the full measure of what has been accomplished will come with the completion of Phase 2, which is scheduled for April 2028.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to this project, including the Hamlet of Rankin Inlet, which serves as the airport maintainer; Transport Canada, which provided over \$63 million in funding across the life of the project; and all the project managers and other Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut staff who continue to advance this project towards completion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: (interpretation) We shall see it when we pass by Rankin. Minister's Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Koonoo.

Minister's Statement 38 – 7(1): Qilaut Concerts 2026

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of Qilaut, a meaningful initiative that has celebrated and strengthened Inuktut through music and songwriting for the past decade.

This year, as we marked this milestone, we proudly brought Qilaut concerts to three communities, one in each region of Nunavut. In February, audiences in Pond Inlet, Arviat and Cambridge Bay came together to celebrate the talent of our artists. Attendance was strong in each community, and venues were full for every concert which was also available online though live streaming. Nunavummiut had the opportunity to gather, listen, and celebrate Inuktut through song.

Mr. Speaker, bringing these concerts to Nunavummiut was made possible by working in close partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. This collaboration reflects *Piliriqatigiinniq* and our shared commitment to protecting and promoting Inuktut.

Mr. Speaker, these concerts are especially significant this year as they take place during *Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq*, Inuktut Language Month, a time when we honour, promote, and revitalize our language. Music has always been a tool to celebrate and preserve language, stories, and culture across generations. Qilaut does exactly this by showcasing how Inuktut continues to thrive in creative and contemporary ways.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of Nunavut, I invite Nunavummiut to join us in celebrating 10 years of Qilaut and the ongoing journey of keeping Inuktut strong for future generations. The Qilaut CDs are distributed to the hamlets and the songs are available on the main online platforms.

Also, the CDs will be handed out to members here, so you can have a copy of the songs.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you as well. That's great. It was a lot of fun to watch them online. Minister's Statement. Acting Minister of Education, Minister Main.

Minister's Statement 39 – 7(1): Educational Staff Training for the 2025-26 School Year

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues, and good morning to Minister Akeeagok and his family.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Education continues to lead the design and delivery of curriculum development, and they cover a number of different topics. Looking at all of the things that they do in the school and that they are learning to become years. We want to make sure that they have a standard education.

(interpretation ends) We have already prepared and delivered the following conferences and training events for educators, including Regional Principal Conferences, Letter of Authority Teacher Training, Learning Coach, and Student Support Teacher Conference.

During the territory-wide Professional Development Week from February 16 to 20, the Department had delivered the following training opportunities:

- Inuit Educators Teacher Conference, delivered in partnership with the Nunavut Teachers Association;
- *Ilinniarvimmi Inuusilirijiit* in-person training for the Kivalliq Region in Rankin Inlet;
- *Ilinniarvimmi Inuusilirijiit* training delivered virtually for the Kitikmeot and Qikiqtani regions;
- Student Support Assistant Training, delivered virtually and available territory-wide; and
- *Sivuliaqtut*, the program for Principal Certification, in Iqaluit and Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to announce the continuation of training for the new Nunavut curriculum, which will take place in March. From March 16 to 19, all Grade 2 teachers across the territory will gather in Iqaluit to receive orientation and training on the new curriculum documents and supporting handbooks. The following week, from March 23 to 26, all Grade 3 teachers will participate in similar training.

(interpretation Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) our goal is to ensure the Nunavut curriculum reflects the language, culture, and lived experiences and realities of Nunavummiut, and responds to the needs of students, families, and communities.

Through these conferences and training initiatives, the Department continues to demonstrate its commitment to high-quality education, professional growth, and student success. We are proud to support our school staff and look forward to the positive impact these initiatives will have in classrooms across Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Minister's Statement 40 – 7(1): Honouring the Service and Legacy of Hercules 333

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues, and have a good day, residents of Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honour the retirement of the CC-130H Hercules 333, an aircraft that has provided critical support to Nunavummiut over many years of service.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Hercules 333 has been a reliable presence in the North, supporting emergency response and search and rescue operations in some of the most challenging flying conditions in the country. Throughout its service, this aircraft answered the call to assist communities across Nunavut, often when weather, distance, and limited access made response especially difficult.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's vast geography means that timely assistance can depend on specialized aircraft capable of operating in remote and austere environments. Hercules 333 played an important role in ensuring help could reach communities when it mattered most, reinforcing the principle that Nunavummiut are never alone in times of emergency.

Beyond its operational role, Mr. Speaker, the Hercules 333 represents dedication, partnership, and service. Its impact reflects the professionalism and commitment of the Royal Canadian Air Force aircrew, technicians, and support personnel who ensured the aircraft was mission-ready whenever it was needed in the North.

Mr. Speaker, the Hercules 333 completed its final flight on January 21, 2026, marking the end of a long and distinguished chapter of service. While this aircraft is now retired, its legacy lives on through the support it provided to communities and emergency operations across Nunavut.

On behalf of the Government of Nunavut and Nunavummiut, Mr. Speaker, I extend sincere gratitude to all those who served aboard and supported the CC-130H Hercules aircraft 333. Their dedication and service have made a lasting difference in the North.

Mat'na, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): We are grateful to the servicemen who have provided a lot of support and assistance to the communities.

Ministers' Statements. Minister for Status of Women, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 41 – 7(1): Engagement with Minister of Women and Gender Equality

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Mr. Speaker, I recently met with the Honourable Rechie Valdez, Minister of Women and Gender Equality, to discuss our shared priorities for advancing the well-being of women, girls, and gender-diverse people across Nunavut. Our conversation highlighted the strong alignment between federal initiatives and the realities faced in our communities, particularly in the areas of safety, economic empowerment, and culturally grounded support.

We discussed the importance of strengthening efforts to end gender-based violence. This includes the need for sustained support for frontline organizations, transitional housing, and community-driven prevention initiatives. I emphasized the unique challenges faced in Nunavut. Our high rates of violence and intergenerational trauma require flexible, Inuit-led approaches.

Minister Valdez outlined federal measures underway, including legislative reforms such as Bill C-16, which addresses coercive control, the abuse of women using AI-generated deepfakes, and mandatory minimum penalties for offenders found guilty of sexual offences involving children.

Our discussion also focused on women's economic empowerment. Minister Valdez shared information about federal investments through the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, as well as supports for small and medium-sized women-owned businesses that help increase access to capital, expertise, and networks. I highlighted the importance of ensuring these programs are accessible in Nunavut and responsive to the realities of our communities.

Federal funding frameworks must reflect the unique geographic, cultural, and economic realities of Nunavut. This includes recognizing the impacts of resource development, work camps, and infrastructure gaps on women's safety and community well-being. Minister Valdez expressed a strong commitment to continued engagement through Indigenous-federal-provincial-territorial forums, and Indigenous women's circles.

I look forward to continued collaboration and partnership with Minister Valdez and her department as we work together to support women's leadership, advance gender equity, and build safer, stronger communities across Nunavut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 3, Members' Statements. Rankin Inlet North and Chesterfield, Mr. Sammurtok.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 51 – 7(1): Chris Putulik

Mr. Sammurtok: Good morning, Chesterfield residents, and Rankin Inlet. I am pleased to say that when Minister Hickes mentioned earlier the longstanding issue of the airport terminal will be finally be changed, sooner than later. (interpretation ends) It's not going to be serving Kivalliq only, it's going to be serving all of Nunavut.

I'm thinking of the family and friends of the late Chris Putulik, as they are having a funeral service this morning. I'm sorry to indicate that I'm not there for that service, but you are deep in our thoughts.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Our condolences. Ministers' Statements. Cambridge Bay MLA, Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 52 – 7(1): Prime Minister's Announcement

Mr. Pedersen: Today I want to speak about the prime minister's announcements yesterday that he made in Yellowknife. I was very glad to hear that benefits for Cambridge Bay, the Kitikmeot and all of Nunavut.

Both Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet were announced to be new northern operational support nodes for the military. This will include dual use infrastructure. We will follow and we will now wait to see the details and the timing of when this will happen.

Also, Resolute Bay will be a northern operational support hub; again, more dual use infrastructure, and again we'll wait for the details and the timing of when that will happen. But good projects announced for Nunavut, for sure. Just those projects alone are over \$2 billion in investments.

Also, the Grays Bay Road and Port Project, which I was speaking about yesterday, is now being referred to the Major Projects Office and it's also now being called the Arctic

Economic and Security Corridor. That will allow for a new all-season road from Yellowknife to the Arctic coast to a deep sea port, so Canada's highway system will now include access to the Arctic coast in the Kitikmeot region.

I would like to congratulate West Kitikmeot Resources, the proponent of the project and Kitikmeot Inuit Association, who have been a huge supporter of the project, and have been pushing this project for over 20 years.

The projects will be transformative for both Cambridge Bay and for Nunavut as a whole, and as I mentioned, I look forward to seeing more of the details and timing of when these projects will move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Aivilik MLA, Ms. Angootealuk.

Member's Statement 53 – 7(1): Salliq Development Limited

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regards to SDL, I want to express my gratitude. For 40 years now they have operated, for 40 years now, to date. I want to congratulate the Bruce family. I did ask when they started on the exact date. He didn't know, but did say when the snow was melting when we started in 1986.

I would like to express my appreciation. Today they will be celebrating their 40th anniversary of its operation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on the list. To our agenda, Return to Oral Questions. Ms. Healey Akearok and Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Question 10 – 7(1): Gjoa Haven Power Plant

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two returns to oral questions today. Question 10 – 7(1):

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on March 9, 2026. The Member for Gjoa Haven asked how much of the power plant construction was funded by the federal government.

The Arctic Energy Fund will be contributing approximately \$25.8 million to the Gjoa Haven power plant construction.

The member also asked if the power plant will incorporate renewable energy sources.

The new power plant in Gjoa Haven will incorporate the latest technology and will be capable of connecting renewable energy projects to the grid. While the new generators in the design can integrate renewable energy, additional equipment is required to make this a reality.

Currently, there are no proposals for renewable energy projects in Gjoa Haven.

(interpretation) Thank you.

Question 11 – 7(1): Activities of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

And the second question is Question 11 – 7(1). Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave on March 9, 2026. The Member for Aivilik asked for an update on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's request for proposals on the assessment of power plants.

The contract resulting from the request for proposals was awarded in November 2025, and work is underway. As part of this contract, a full assessment is being conducted at several Nunavut power plants, including Coral Harbour. The consultant has completed the required site visit to the community, and the final report is now expected in June 2026.

The member also asked for an update on the Coral Harbour solar project. The Independent Power Producer proposal in Coral Harbour is a solar and battery storage project that has completed the connection impact assessment stage. The assessment identified technical requirements needed to safely integrate the project into the existing power system. The scale and cost of those upgrades are significant, and beyond what the proponent was able to take on. To address the cost challenges, the proponent is now investigating alternate solutions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Baker Lake MLA, Mr. Simailak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Major Sean Brinkema, please stand up. Detachment with Joint Task Force North in Nunavut who is with us in the gallery today.

(interpretation) Major Brinkema has served 20 years with the military, and has had many responsibilities and leadership within Canada and outside Canada.

(interpretation ends) In Nunavut he works closely with the Government of Nunavut, communities, and partner agencies, supporting emergency management, search and rescue, and other civil military operations across the territory.

I want to thank Major Brinkema for his service and his continued partnership in supporting the safety and well-being of Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for recognizing Major Brinkema; I was going to do it as well, but I have another Sean that I'm going to recognize in the House here, obviously no stranger to anyone in Iqaluit here, Shawn Lester, one of the owners of Baker Tilly Arctic here in Iqaluit.

Since he moved here in 2000, Mr. Speaker, he continues to give back to our community. Shawn has been involved with his church and as a member of a number of different boards and volunteer organizations, and I often see him at many different events around the territory. He has always been a very strong ambassador for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Please welcome to our House, Mr. Lester. Item 6, Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 39 – 7(1): Collective Agreement

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Human Resources.

As a former member of the Nunavut Employees Union, I want to pay tribute to the hard work that led to yesterday's signing of the new collective agreement with the government.

Can the minister highlight some of the main elements of the new collective agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question.

I just wanted to highlight there is a new Inuktitut language incentive policy, which provides incentives for different levels of Inuktitut ability that range from 2000 up to 6000, depending on the level of expertise being brought to the table. It's an encouragement to Inuit staff to use the language in public service when providing service to individuals. It provides a 9 per cent increase in salary and increases in northern allowances to public servants across Nunavut. Those are just a few of the highlights. Thank you for the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Legislative Assembly will be considering the government's 2026-2027 main estimates during the upcoming spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister indicate what the impact of the new collective agreement will be on the government's budget for compensation and benefits. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. In terms of capital investments, there aren't any at this time. That would have been part of the presentations during this week, had there been any. There are no intended capital investments at this time. Thank you for the question and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation's collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union expired in December 2024.

Can the Minister provide an update today on the status of negotiations between the corporation and the union. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you to the member for the question. The QEC collective agreement expired on December 31, 2024, as you said. The QEC negotiations are underway. Sessions are scheduled between December 2025 and April 2026, so they're in process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Question 40 – 7(1): Community Radio Grants

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

(interpretation ends) My question today are for the Minister of Culture and Heritage, and they concern his department's Community Radio Grant program.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Legislative Assembly representing the constituency of Aggu, I understand and recognize the importance of our community's local radio stations. Mr. Speaker, the department's Community Radio Grant provides funding to community broadcasting organizations to assist with their operating costs.

Can the minister describe how his department informs communities and organizations across Nunavut about this important program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Community Radio Grant program, it is made available from the Culture and Heritage department, and you can apply for it before the end of January by way of the hamlet council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, for many of Nunavut's communities, local radio stations provide a primary form of communication.

Mr. Speaker, radio stations offer a platform for educational information, weather updates, spread awareness about local events, and promote the use of Inuktitut.

Can the Minister confirm how many community radio stations received funding from this grant program during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) The radio grants are available to each community through an application process, and there are a few communities that need to be upgraded. I know some communities don't have radio station for a while. Right now I need to find the exact list of how many were approved, but it's always available for each community as application base. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, prior to being elected as the Member of the Legislative Assembly representing the constituency of Aggu, I was a long-time volunteer with Igloolik's community radio station.

Can the Minister confirm how many proposals have been submitted to his department under its Community Radio Grant program during the current 2025-2026 fiscal year, and can he confirm how many have approved.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a very good question. I can't tell you exactly how many were approved, but I'm looking for it. I can only say that the \$13,000 is available for the Community Radio Grant program, but I can't tell you how many proposals have been submitted. I'll return back to your question once I have the information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Question 41 – 7(1): Airport Infrastructure

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

(interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to note that the government issued a request for proposals in January of this year for the design of a new airport terminal building in Arviat. Our community's current building is in need of replacement.

Mr. Speaker, the request for proposals closed earlier this month and information published by the government indicates that a number of companies submitted proposals.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the procurement process.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're very excited about the new opportunity in Arviat to build that piece of infrastructure there. It has been long overdue, I think anyone would agree.

I don't have the current date on when the contract will be awarded. I'll have to check back and get back to the member on that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Mat'na*, (interpretation) Minister. Thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) The construction of Arviat's new airport terminal building was not included in the department's 2026-2027 capital estimates. Can the minister indicate if he expects to include funding in the department's 2027-2028 capital estimates, which will be introduced later there year during the Legislative Assembly's fall sitting.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is the anticipated time going forward. We do have to go through all the approvals here in the House and make sure that this project stays on the books for a capital project, but that is the anticipation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, the government issued a request for proposals in July 2024 for the design of new mobile equipment shelters at a number of Nunavut airports, including Arviat.

The request for proposals indicated that “Arviat will have a three-bay garage with a total building area of 260 square metres. Future site planning will be required for a future airport terminal building.”

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the project.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Yes, the planning study on that project is, from what I understand, nearly complete. We’re looking forward to the next phase through the capital planning process to get those contracts out to tender. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Question 42 – 7(1): Dust Suppression and Granular Materials

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

(interpretation ends) My question today are for the Minister of Community Services. Next week (interpretation) and I won’t be asking any more questions next week.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, it is important for the community to have adequate supplies of granular materials and related equipment. A long-standing concern in the community of Coral Harbour is the high level of dust that we experience during the summer months. The dust impacts our air quality and is a health problem. The very long road between the airport and the community is a major cause of this problem.

The municipality has indicated that it needs a gravel screener, which would help to address the situation. Can the minister describe what funding and support is available from his department for this equipment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your questions.

(interpretation ends) Regarding gravel screeners, each community’s municipality has access to their capital block funding, which the hamlets could used to procure a gravel screener. That’s one fund they have the possibility to use. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The municipality of Naujaat has indicated that it requires a rock crusher. This will help the municipality with the gravel supply issues.

Can the Minister describe what funding and support is available from his department to acquire this equipment, as it is important that both Coral Harbour and Naujaat have... (interpretation) I'm sorry, I made a mistake, sorry.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for her question.

Regarding the community of Naujaat procuring a rock crusher, I believe that's to make gravel, I think? Yes.

Like in the previous response, each hamlet has access to the municipal capital block funding. Going through that route gives each hamlet autonomy.

(interpretation) Each hamlet has their own. It is up to their discretion to apply for, (interpretation ends) use that funding to procure a gravel crusher for their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important that both Coral Harbour and Naujaat have supplies for (interpretation) gravel (interpretation ends). Can the minister describe what funding and support is available from his department to develop new quarry sites. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Community and Government Services Minister, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the member for the question regarding securing new quarry sites so that each hamlet can have access to gravel.

The department continually works with each hamlet to see what will be needed. Each quarry site is different in each community, because it might be a bit further, it might take more time to crush it. It depends on the material there, so the department does continually work with each hamlet to see what's available and provide funding options that might be available, working kind of one-on-one with each hamlet.

I will see what we can do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Taqtu.

Question 43 – 7(1): Nutrition North Canada Program (Taqtu)

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Health. As the minister will recall, she made a statement during yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning National Nutrition Month. The minister's statement indicated that:

“We recognize that the high cost of food and challenges with access remain some of the realities for many Nunavummiut.”

Mr. Speaker, this is very much the reality facing my constituents who live in Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, and Grise Fiord. These are the most remote communities in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister is aware, the former president of Nunavut Tunngavik was appointed last year by the Government of Canada to lead an “external review” of the federal Nutrition North Canada program.

Can the Minister describe how her department has been participating in this review.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Our health officials are always available to provide feedback and advice on issues such as this. I don't have details about how they are participating. I'll see if I can get them to you as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

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

(interpretation ends) As the minister will be aware, Nunavut's new Liberal Member of Parliament asked the question during the Wednesday sitting of the House of Commons about this issue. The federal minister of Nutrition North affairs responded to our member of Parliament by indicating that the federal government has invested \$200,000,000 to “support the evolution of Nutrition North.”

The minister also indicated that the Food Sovereignty Summit will be held later this month. Can the Minister of Health indicate her department will be participating in the Food Sovereignty Summit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Family Services has the lead on this, and there are Health officials who will participate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, regulations under the territorial *Income Assistance Act* prescribe the amounts that are provided to Nunavummiut as basic allowance to cover the cost of food and other necessities. These amounts have not been increased since the year 2023.

Can the minister describe how her department works with the Department of Family Services to review the adequacy of these amounts with respect to the cost of purchasing healthy foods. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Department of Health officials work with other officials across the government in order to create as much information as possible to make informed decisions. We have dietitians. We have other clinicians that have expertise in food security and the impact of ensuring that people are eating healthy foods, and they work with the Department of Family Services.

The bureau of Nunavut statistics, it's a hard word to say, but all that to say that health officials work with other officials across the government in order to make informed decisions and to advocate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 44 – 7(1): Resolutions Passed by Kivalliq Mayors

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health. As the minister will recall, at Wednesday's sitting in the House, I had the honour of tabling the formal resolution that were recently passed by Kivalliq mayors.

Mr. Speaker, the Kivalliq mayors approved the following resolution which I will read into the record:

“We resolve that the mayors of Kivalliq region support and formally request the reaffirmation of a medical boarding home in the municipality of Rankin Inlet to meet the health care accommodation needs of medical clients throughout the Kivalliq region.”

Can the Minister of Health indicate how she will be responding to the Kivalliq mayors' request regarding this resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated the other day, mayors and councils are very important stakeholders for all of us. To my knowledge, we haven't done a written response. However, I will say, Mr. Speaker, I'm really -- I would be very happy to go and meet with the mayors the next time they get together and to talk directly with them about their issues and concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has previously indicated that her department undertook a feasibility study on this issue. Will she commit to tabling a copy of this study in the Legislative Assembly prior to the end of our current winter sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not going to make that commitment right away. I'll get back to the member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Final and supplementary question, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Doesn't look too promising. Will the minister commit to travelling to Rankin Inlet prior to our spring sitting, so she can meet with the Kivalliq leaders in person to review the needs of the region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, if they invite me, I'll be more than happy to go and meet with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Question 45 – 7(1): Internal Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Community Services. Yesterday the minister informed the House that Nunavut has assumed, has taken the leadership role in advancing internal trade and a Canadian Free Trade Agreement, and also, that in 2026 Nunavut will be chairing that committee and also tabled the advanced priorities under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Can the minister indicate what changes are being considered under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. There are no changes to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, but under the internal trade we are looking at making it easier for certified professionals to do the work across the country, such as gas fitters, electricians, all these trades people. Under internal trade find ways to make it easier for goods and services to be provided across the country. That's what kind of work we're dealing with internal trade. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: (interpretation) Thank you. First supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for the answer.

Also the minister indicated that by chairing the committee on internal trade, Nunavut is hoping to shape discussions among the federal, provincial, and territorial governments.

He also indicated that this work is aimed to reduce regulatory barriers and improve alignment of standards, and also strengthen the labour mobility across Canada. Can the minister indicate, under Article 24, how will this work impact the government's NNI policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for his question. The work that we are doing should not have an impact on Article 24. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kuliktana, your second question.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for the answer, Minister.

Mr. Speaker, in late August 2026 Nunavut will be hosting and sharing the committee on internal trade in our territory. Will the minister consider bringing this committee to

smaller communities to showcase our territory? Most meetings come to Iqaluit, and that doesn't really reflect our vast territory that is beautiful. So I would like to see the minister hopefully take these meetings into non-regional communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question, and I agree, we do have to have other meetings across our beautiful territory. We have so much to offer in our communities to showcase our culture and how each region lives, because we all live different ways. We all have intricate ways or beautiful ways of how we live in our communities.

For a smaller meeting, we could definitely look at doing that. Unfortunately, for the size of this delegation that is coming in, it needs to be here Iqaluit for this upcoming meeting that I was speaking to yesterday. Unfortunately it's going to be here in Iqaluit for this one. But I will of course look at other meetings in the future to see if we can host them in other communities across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. I have no more names on my list.

Following the *Orders of the Day*: Item number 7, Written Questions. Number 8, Return to Written Questions. Number 9, Replies to Opening Address. Number 10, Petitions. Number 11, Responses to Petitions. Number 12, Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Number 13, Tabling of Documents. Number 14, Notices of Motions. Number 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Number 16, Motions. Number 17, First Reading of Bills. Number 18, Second Reading of Bills.

Number 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters: Bill 1, 2, 3, and 4, with Mr. Pedersen as the chairman.

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

>>*House recessed at 10:04 and Committee commenced at 10:30*

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

Chairman: Thank you for returning. I'll call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 1, 2, 3 and 4. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair. We wish to continue the review of Bill 2 and the capital estimates from the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Taqtu. Are we in agreed we first deal with Bill 2?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 2 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2026-2027 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Healey Akearok: Do you have officials you would like to have appear before the committee?

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Does the committee agree to have the ministers officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. For the record, Minister Healey Akearok, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am happy to be joined today by the I am presenting with Deputy Minister of Family Services, Mr. Jonathan Ellsworth, and the Department of Family Services Director of Corporate Services, Mr. Dwayton Tonge.

Mr. Chair, I am pleased to be here today to present the proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates for the Department of Family Services to the Committee of the Whole. The Department of Family Services is requesting a total of \$3.5 million in capital funding for 2026-27.

Minor capital funding of \$2 million will address critical improvements to Family Services' facilities and equipment across the territory. Most significantly, this funding will transform office spaces where staff work daily to rebuild the lives of our most vulnerable populations. For children and families already suffering or experiencing traumatic situations, the difference that safe and comfortable office space makes is immeasurable. These environments become places of healing, not additional stress.

The funding will also replace aging vehicles, ensuring children arrive safely for family visits, important medical appointments, and critical mental health supports. Funds will also be used to update outdated furniture and equipment throughout the territory.

The remaining \$1.5 million will boost capital projects initiated by local social wellness non-profit organizations working to address core operational gaps. These organizations face persistent challenges, securing office and programming space, as well as staff housing necessary for recruitment and retention. Through contribution agreements, this funding will support building purchases, improvements, and other critical capital needs, investments that directly expand access to desperately needed programs and services for children, youth, and families across the territory.

Non-profit organizations will be eligible to apply if their work aligns with the Department of Family Services' mandate and contributes to the outcomes of the Makimaniq Plan, including food security, life skills training, healing and well-being, family safety, and homelessness prevention. Maximum funding thresholds will be established based on organizational maturity: start-up, growing, and established non-profits.

Mr. Chair, the Department of Family Services is committed to strengthening the delivery of quality services to Nunavummiut. This capital request is critical for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of program service delivery in communities across Nunavut. It aligns with our priorities to strengthen family wellness, empower communities, and grow capacity.

I look forward to your ongoing support as we work to better serve communities across the territory.

I welcome any questions or comments that members may have as we proceed.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that, Minister Healey Akearok. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation), Yes, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Regular Members' Caucus on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates of the Department of Family Services. The department's proposed capital budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is \$3.5 million. This represents an increase of approximately 45 per cent over its 2025-2026 capital estimates.

The department's Not-for-Profit Capital Fund first received funding during the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Schedule A-15 of the department's *Grants and Contributions Policy* provides that the purpose of the fund is to "support capital projects initiated by local social wellness-focused Non-Profit Organizations working to address core operational

gaps.” The policy also provides that the program “will not exceed the term of the Makimaniq Plan.”

Section 11 of the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act* requires the minister to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on her department’s activities in relation to the statute and the implementation of the Makimaniq Plan.

The 2023-2024 annual report was tabled on February 25, 2025. Members encourage the Minister to continue to include detailed information on her department’s expenditures under its Not-for-Profit Capital Fund in future annual reports tabled under the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*.

Members note that the department also makes funding available through its operations and maintenance budget to support such infrastructure-related initiatives as domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, and wellness hubs. For example, the department announced in January of 2025 that it would provide “grants up to \$50,000 to non-profit societies, hunters and trappers organizations, municipalities and businesses for materials, labour and costs associated with building Ikur’raq Cabins.”

The department’s 2023-2024 annual report under the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act* indicated that “The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction’s Makimaniq Plan calls for strengthened support for community well-being and the establishment of community wellness hubs in every community. In partnership with the former Department of Community and Government Services and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Department of Family Services undertook community visits to Arctic Bay, Kinngait, Baker Lake and Kugluktuk to understand each community’s vision of what spaces they would like to see in a wellness hub.”

Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of these and related initiatives.

During its winter 2024 sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$450,000 in supplementary capital funding for the acquisition and implementation of the department’s new case management system. Given the importance of this system in addressing concerns raised by the Auditor General of Canada in relation to child and family services in Nunavut, members encourage the minister to provide regular updates to the Legislative Assembly on the status of implementing the new system.

This concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates of the Department of Family Services. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. We’ll now proceed to page-by-page review of the capital estimates, starting on page D3. Family Services, Corporate Management Branch, total capital expenditures, \$3,500,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Sammurtook.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the minister's opening comments on page 3, non-profit organizations will be eligible to apply if their work aligns with the Department of Family Services' mandate and contributions to the outcome of Makimaniq Plan, including food security, life skills training, healing and well-being, family safety, and homelessness prevention.

My question is, for the smaller communities like Chesterfield Inlet who don't have any personnel in Social Services, would the hamlet be able to do an application to get this funding? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. It's a really important one. As we know, some of our smaller communities don't have a number of non-profit organizations that are doing the work.

And so yes, hamlets are eligible to provide for the not-for-profit funds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Have you notified the Hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet that they would be able to apply for just funding, or any of the other smaller communities, are they notified at all? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the follow-up question. The program is advertised in public service announcements, which are shared throughout the territory. There is currently one out now as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. You're done? Okay, thank you very much. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's proposed 2026-2027 capital estimates include 2 million in minor capital projects. This represents an increase of approximately 120 per cent from the previous year. How was the amount of this increase determined? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question.

The increase to the minor capital is a reflection of the number of renovations that need to be undertaken. The budget request is for completing repairs and upgrades to several adult group homes, office spaces, a youth group home, and renovating an office space in Kinngait.

It also is a reflection of the need to upgrade and maintain the fleet of vehicles that are supporting the work of the Department of Family Services in several communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Next on my list, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. What minor capital projects are planned for the upcoming 2026-2027 fiscal year? *Mat'na*.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. Part of the minor capital budget allotment is for repairs and upgrades at the Isaccie Adult Group Home and youth group home in Iqaluit, for the renovations to the office space in Kinngait, and to office renovations to improve building security and workplace safety in Taloyoak, as well as a territory-wide contingency fund for additional requests that come up every year.

The other component is for vehicles. One is allocated for Arviat, one for Grise Fiord, one for Iqaluit, one for Kinngait, and one for Kugluktuk. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2025-2026 capital estimates included \$1.5 million for its not-for-profit capital fund. As of today how much of the funding has been spent? *Quana*.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the follow-up question, because we are very proud of this particular fund, as it does inject monies into our communities for a lot of the front-line service work that our community members are excelling at. To date, all of those funds have been spent. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Next on my list, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2026-2027 capital estimates included \$900,000 for capital minor projects. Your department's substantiation sheet indicates that the department is converting the Kinngait old health centre and Arctic Bay health centre into suitable office space using minor capital funds. As of today, what is the status of these projects? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. If you would like, I would like to ask Mr. Dwayton Tonge to answer this question.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Tonge.

Mr. Tonge: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Member for the question. For the Kinngait office space, right now there was a review that were being done for the office space to ascertain if it's suitable for use. There was a hazmat assessment done to the space, and the next step is to determine to do an assessment of the work that's needed for the conversion of the office space. That is where the project is at this point, for the Kinngait office space.

For Arctic Bay, we're working in close conjunction with the Department of TIN to do an assessment of the office space as well, to get an estimate of what it would cost to do renovations for office space. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tonge. Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair, and thank you for the response. Your department's *2023-2024 Annual Report on Poverty Reduction* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on February 25, 2025.

The report indicated that the "Makimaniq Plan calls for strengthened support for community wellbeing and the establishment of community wellness hubs in every community. In partnership with CGS and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Department of Family Services undertook community visits to Arctic Bay, Kinngait, Baker Lake, and Kugluktuk to understand each community's vision of what the space they would like to see in wellness hubs."

As of today, what is the status of establishing new community wellness hubs in these communities? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Tuqtu. Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the follow-up question, as the topic of community wellness hubs is near and dear to my heart.

We appreciate all the work that the communities have done up to date in partnership with the department. It's really important work. At this time we're exploring alternative funding models to make those community hubs a reality, and we look forward to keeping the Assembly updated as things go forward. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Do I have any other names? I don't have any on my list right now. Does anybody else want to ask questions? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Family Services Corporate Management Branch total capital expenditures of \$3,500,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree with the Department of Family Services total capital expenditures of \$3,500,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree we've concluded with the Department of Family Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the members for all of their questions today and their engagement.

I would like to thank my officials as well, because it's a team effort, and they are working extremely hard behind the scenes to make these dreams a reality.

I would also like to especially acknowledge Mr. Tonge, who will soon be moving on and leaving us at the department, and I want to thank him for his service to the department overall this time. Thank you so much, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Healey Akearok. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: As the committee business is concluded for the day, I will now rise and report progress to the speaker. Thank you.

>>*Committee adjourned and House resumed at 10:54*

Speaker (interpretation): Item 20, Mr. Pedersen, Report of the Committee of the Whole.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 2 and would like to report progress.

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

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Seconder, Mr. Mike. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21 Third Reading of Bills. Item 22, *Orders of the Day*, Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk: Just a reminder there's a meeting of the Striking Committee at 1:30 this afternoon for March 16.

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: Bills 1, 3, and 4
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. This weekend I hope you all relax and have your rest. But our meeting is wrapped up for today, and we will resume on March 16, 1:30.

>>*House adjourned at 10:58*

