

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 Akeegok
(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 Hickes
(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 Qammaniq
(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 Tattuinee
(Rankin Inlet South)

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

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, May 25, 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. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Craig Simailak, Mr. Steven Taqtu, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasie) (interpretation): Before we start, if you can open the meeting with a prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mike. Mr. Main. Item 2, Budget Address. Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Item 2: Budget Address

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon my colleagues, and to the people of Nunavut. And also my colleagues; some of them are back. I am very pleased.

Mr. Speaker, since taking on the responsibilities of Premier and Minister of Finance, I have spent a great deal of time listening: Listening in this House. Listening in meetings with full caucus and cabinet. Listening to Inuit organizations, municipal leaders, elders, front-line workers, and Nunavummiut in our communities.

And wherever those conversations happen, many of the concerns are the same. Families speak about the rising cost of groceries. I have heard from parents wondering how to keep up as the cost of food, fuel, and housing continues to rise. They speak about fuel and electricity bills that continue to climb. They speak about overcrowded homes, difficulty accessing care, and the pressure of trying to build a stable future during uncertain times.

(interpretation ends) Young people speak about wanting opportunity here in Nunavut, not somewhere else. Parents speak about wanting their children to grow up healthier, safer,

and with more choices than they had. And communities speak clearly about wanting a government that listens, works with people, and focuses on what matters most.

Mr. Speaker, this budget was shaped by those conversations.

(interpretation) Today I rise to present the main estimates for the Government of Nunavut for the 2026–2027 fiscal year. This budget is about more than numbers on a page; it is a statement about priorities. It reflects where this government believes we must continue investing, where we must remain disciplined, and where Nunavummiut most need to see progress.

(interpretation ends) The proposed main estimates total approximately \$2.47 billion in operating expenditures, representing an increase of approximately 8 per cent over the previous fiscal year. These are significant investments, but they are also necessary investments because Nunavummiut expect government to respond honestly to the realities people are facing today. Not with promises that sound good for a moment, But with practical actions that improve daily life over time.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, for many Nunavut families, affordability pressures are no longer occasional. These are constant. People feel it every time they buy groceries. Every time they pay for fuel. Every time they open a power bill. Many households are working hard simply to keep up. This government recognizes those pressures.

(interpretation ends) That is why this budget proposes to double the Nunavut Child Benefit, while also increasing it each year to help keep up with the rising cost of living.

>> *Applause*

The budget also proposes a \$4 million, or 2.9 times increase, in the Early Childhood Program Day Care contributions. This is direct support aimed at helping lower-income families manage rising costs, because even modest assistance can make a real difference for families where every dollar matters.

This budget also provides a \$23.3 million increase to Family Services to strengthen youth supports, poverty reduction initiatives, foster family services, and suicide response staffing.

The proposed budget sets aside contingency funding to review and top up existing programs that are meeting real needs but facing demand beyond current budgets. Because strong communities begin with strong families, And the earlier people receive support, the better chance we have of preventing hardship from becoming crisis.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, few issues are raised more often with members of this House than health care. Nunavummiut want better access to care. They want stronger local services. And they want greater confidence that support will be there when families need it most.

Too many Nunavut families know the stress of having to leave home for treatment. The disruption. The uncertainty. The strain it places on parents, children, and elders. This budget responds directly to those realities.

(interpretation ends) The Department of Health's operating budget will rise to more than \$663 million, an increase of \$82.8 million, or 14.3 per cent. This includes additional staffing to respond to Nunavut's suicide crisis.

This budget recognizes that the suicide crisis is about more than health care, and requires a holistic approach. This budget proposes additional resources and supports in Health, Family Services, and Justice to support Nunavummiut through difficult times. It also includes investments in physician services, long-term care contracted services, and operational funding to begin the phased opening of the new Aqqusariaq treatment facility so Nunavummiut who need help can access it closer to home.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, behind these numbers are real Nunavut families and communities. These investments affect whether Nunavummiut can access care more reliably and whether families feel better supported during difficult moments.

To continue providing family support to individuals receiving care outside of the territory, we are increasing the budget to allow more visits from loved ones.

>> *Applause*

At the same time, we continue building the long-term care infrastructure our territory needs. Planning and development continues for the Nunavut Long Term Care Facility in Cambridge Bay. Design work advances for the replacement health centre in Qikiqtarjuaq. And investments continue in modern diagnostic equipment and health facility upgrades across Nunavut.

This is long-term work, but it is necessary work because Nunavummiut deserve a health system that becomes stronger, more stable, and more dependable over time.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, every young person in Nunavut should be able to look ahead and see opportunity. Opportunity to learn, opportunity to build a career, opportunity to contribute to their communities while remaining connected to home.

Education is how we help create those opportunities.

(interpretation ends) This budget increases the Department of Education's operating expenditures to nearly \$310 million. This includes an increase of over \$6 million for teachers to ensure our wages are competitive, and we attract talented and passionate educators.

Construction is being completed on the new high school in Taloyoak, and major work continues at Sakku School in Coral Harbour. And design work advances for a new school in Arctic Bay.

This budget also provides an increase of \$14.5 million for the Nunavut Student Financial Assistance Program, to help more Nunavut students pursue post-secondary education and training.

We are also continuing investments in Nunavut Arctic College and workforce development initiatives, because Nunavut must continue building a future where more Nunavut jobs are filled by Nunavummiut.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) That work begins with education, because Nunavut must continue building a future where more Nunavut jobs are filled by Nunavummiut.

>> *Applause*

Let me speak in Inuktitut. I spoke enough English for now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, housing continues to affect nearly every part of life in Nunavut: health, education, mental wellness, family stability, economic opportunities.

When we discuss housing in the House here, we generally talk about it in terms of the number of units, and capital projects, but it is much deeper than that. If we think about the families that are waiting for housing, it is much more personal than that. It is about privacy. It is about stability. It is about finally having enough space for children to sleep, study, and grow.

When a Nunavut family receives the keys to a new unit and they are told this is going to be your home now, in this new house, there is a deep meaning to all of this, and it has to

do with not being worried any more, and it means rising up higher and having good expectations.

(interpretation ends) This budget increases the Nunavut Housing Corporation operating budget to approximately \$296 million, while providing \$87.2 million in housing capital investments this fiscal year. Those investments support:

- new public housing construction
- staff housing
- affordable housing initiatives
- homeownership programming
- mould remediation
- retrofits and modernization
- local housing organization improvements.

Housing progress does not happen quickly, but this government remains committed to continuing that work community by community across Nunavut.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have strong communities, we need to have strong infrastructure. We need reliable and ready airports, and safe water systems, we need to have secure fuel systems, effective waste facilities, and modern communications infrastructure.

Perhaps these investments may not always attract attention; however, communities depend on them every day.

(interpretation ends) The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's operating budget rises to more than \$281 million, an increase of 7.2 per cent. The capital plan advances major work including:

- the Rankin Inlet Air Terminal Building
- runway resurfacing in Rankin Inlet
- fuel tank work in Arviat
- water and sewer main replacement projects
- fibre connectivity upgrades and improvements
- airport upgrades
- and municipal water, wastewater, and solid waste projects across Nunavut.

These projects strengthen communities today, but they also strengthen Nunavut's future.

As national discussions continue around Arctic sovereignty and Arctic security, the government is coordinating with the Department of National Defence and other federal partners to continue ensuring its voice is heard clearly.

Our communities are central to the future of our territory, because Nunavut communities are at the heart of the Arctic discussion.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, community wellbeing also depends on safety and accessible support systems. This budget provides increased funding to the Department of Justice for RCMP crime-reduction strategies in response to criminal activity, and we want to make sure they keep up with rising operating and staffing costs, and additional suicide response supports.

(interpretation ends) Capital work continues on Ilavut Centre renovations in Kugluktuk, and courthouse renewal work in Iqaluit.

But safer communities are not built through enforcement alone. They are also built through prevention. This government is investing more funding in the Department of Justice to improve firearm safety.

Stronger communities are built through stronger family supports. Through mental wellness services. And through helping people earlier, before challenges become crises.

>> *Applause*

That broader approach continues guiding this government's work.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, Nunavut moves forward best when we work together. Progress requires partnership with Inuit organizations, municipal governments, federal partners, community leaders, and also public servants across government.

The Nunavut Tunngavik election is only days away, where they will be selecting a new president. Our government looks forward to, and we already know we have to work with the incoming president to advance shared priorities for the benefit of all Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) We are increasing our financial support for municipal insurance programs to help protect important municipal infrastructure in our communities.

Growing Nunavut's economy requires partnership. Government cannot do it alone. We must continue working closely with private sector employers and service providers in sectors such as mining, fisheries, tourism, and culture. When businesses succeed, our

communities benefit through meaningful jobs, more training opportunities, and greater prosperity for Nunavummiut.

No single institution builds Nunavut alone. This budget reflects that understanding. It also reflects our responsibility to ensure that government continues improving how it works internally. We are continuing efforts to strengthen how government reviews programs and measures results, as Nunavut prepares for devolution responsibilities and works to improve services across government. This work includes bolstering our internal audit team to ensure programs are effective and efficient, so we can spend our limited resources prudently.

Better systems inside government help deliver better services outside government. This budget includes funding for partners to deliver accessible transportation to our elders so they can continue to access the services they need outside of their homes. That work matters, too.

Mr. Speaker, this government also recognizes the importance of maintaining fiscal discipline. After two years of deficit pressures, we are working toward restoring stronger fiscal balance within the next three years. We are encouraged by an expected 11.4 per cent increase in net revenues, including:

- a 5.7 per cent increase in Territorial Formula Financing;
- a 41 per cent increase in third-party funding agreements; and
- a 15.7 per cent increase in local tax collection without increasing local tax rates.

These are positive signs.

But Nunavummiut also expect careful stewardship of public resources. That stewardship begins inside government. This budget prioritizes improving how programs are planned, investments are managed, and now services are delivered. By strengthening internal efficiency, we can focus resources where they will make the greatest difference for Nunavummiut.

That responsibility remains central to this budget.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I will be concluding soon. This budget does not pretend that Nunavut's challenges are simple to work on, and it does not pretend they can all be solved in a single year.

But it does reflect a government that has listened carefully to Nunavummiut. A government focused on practical progress, that can help. And a government investing where pressures are greatest. And a government committed to continuing the long-term work of building stronger communities across this territory.

Progress that families can feel. Progress that communities can see, and progress that creates more opportunity for the next generation, that will help the next generation.

This is steady work, and we have to work on it every day, non-stop. And this is shared work, as well. And this is the work of continuing to build a stronger Nunavut together. That is our foundation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. Item 3, Ministers' Statements. Mr. Simailak.

Item 3: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 13 – 7(2): Minister Absent from the House

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise Members that the Honourable David Akeegok will be absent from the House today, due to family reasons.

During the minister's absence the following ministers will be acting for the following portfolios:

I will be Acting Government House Leader;

Premier Main will be the Acting Minister of Education; and

Minister Healey Akearok will be Acting Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. According to the Orders of the Day, Item 4, Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Item 4: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 27 – 7(2): Recent Fishing Derby in Clyde River

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the board of directors who will be holding a fishing derby from May 15. It's a family

gathering and a time of wonderful activities and very useful presence. I just want to congratulate the hunters and trappers organizations in Clyde River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Member's Statement 28 – 7(2): Recognize and Honour Kugluktuk Graduates (Kuliktana)

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the House today to recognize and honour the following students that will be graduating from the Kugluktuk High School later this week. At this time I would like to congratulate the following students:

Colton Adjun, Kai Adamache, Patrick Akana, Kyra Aviak, Chloe Hokanak, Andre Ihumatak, Deagan Miyok, Josh Olson, June Stirret, and Claire Taptuna.

Without the support and from the parents and family, also from the community, we would not be celebrating the success of our graduating students. As you know, it takes a whole community to raise a child, and this also certainly follows in that area.

I would like to take this opportunity also to especially thank the parents for their commitment and dedication, and especially their tough love when needed, to ensure their child's dreams and goals are met.

I encourage the students to further their education to ensure they reach their goals and inspiration to make their mark in life and their footprints in our society.

I ask this House today to celebrate with me on their success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kuliktana. Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, MLA Qavvik.

Member's Statement 29 – 7(2): Volleyball Tournament in Iqaluit

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, and to the visitors in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today proud and honoured. Over the weekend the capital city of Iqaluit hosted a volleyball tournament in numerous Nunavut communities across the

territory, and I'm proud to say the Sanikiluaq volleyball team were the undefeated champions for the volleyball tournament for boys, and the girls placed seventh place.

And I want to thank the coaches, Saba Kokie (ph) and Mina Minook (ph) for their time with the students. I'm pretty sure most of the MLAs here got to watch the games, and know that Sanikiluaq is very competitive, friendly, and in a nice way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): We also congratulate the students who participated in that event and also the volleyball players from Cape Dorset.

Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Ms. Lyall.

Member's Statement 30 – 7(2): High School Graduates

Hon. Cecile Lyall (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) I rise to recognize an important accomplishment for seven students and their families in Kugaaruk. This past Saturday was the graduation ceremony for *Arviligruaq Ilinniarvik*.

I would like to recognize them individually. Congratulations to John Krejuark, Bradley Ittimangnak, Guido Anguti, Maria Nitavuk, Douglas Tigvareark, Sheryl Kakkianun, and Lillian Oleekatalik.

I would also like to recognize their family and friends for their dedication and guidance in helping the students along this path.

Again, congratulations on the achievements of this milestone, and we all look forward to watching you in your future endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 31 – 7(2): Public Safety in Communities

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, good day to everybody and to residents in Cambridge Bay that are watching, and I hope you all had a good weekend.

My statement today deals with public safety in our communities. Numerous constituents have raised this concern with me.

We are all aware that individuals charged with offences are sometimes not sent to a correctional facility upon being charged. Many are allowed to remain in the community under court-imposed conditions, while awaiting a further court date. They are supposed to follow the conditions that are imposed. If they do that, my understanding is that they can continue to remain in the community and continue to follow the conditions. If they don't follow them, they can be sent out to a correctional facility to await their next court appearance.

One example of a court-ordered condition might be for an accused individual to not possess or consume alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that this process is rigorously followed for the general people to feel safe in their community, and for them to see that orders are being followed. This gives a sense of security and knowledge that the law is being followed. When it isn't followed, then people start to not trust the system that is meant to protect them.

During question period, I will be asking the Minister of Justice a number of questions on this issue, including information regarding the number of individuals in our communities that are in this category, what the rate is for any that stay under these conditions until the court process is complete, and how many fail to obey the conditions and must be sent to a facility to await their next court appearance.

As I have alluded to, Mr. Speaker, public confidence in our court system is needed so that residents can feel safe in their community, so obviously my hope is that the responses that come will help to ensure this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Member's Statement 32 – 7(2): Remembering Moses Ataguyuk

Ms. Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon, (interpretation ends) colleagues, and Iqalummiuq who are watching the proceedings.

I rise today with the permission of the family to acknowledge the passing of a beloved community member, Moses Ataguyuk.

Many former students will remember Moses as a night-time support staff member at the Makivik residence, where he supported young Nunavummiut with kindness.

He later spend more than 25 years with CBC, and also proudly served as a Canadian Ranger.

Moses touched many lives in our community and he will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with his family, friends, former colleagues and all those grieving this loss.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. And our condolences to the family.

Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Member's Statement 33 – 7(2): Pangnirtung Hotel Renovation

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon people of Nunavut.

The people of Pangnirtung have renovated their hotel, and they have made an additional 15 beds and there are approximately 30 rooms available now.

On April 19, the Co-Op members opened the newly renovated hotel. This hotel is made out of modular rooms. They started constructing in November and has officially been opened.

It includes everything, because the rooms were sparsely furnished. It is now more comfortable for our visitors, and included in the working of this hotel, included in the construction:

Total of hotel rooms 15 regular rooms, 1 accessible room, 1 suite and 2 apartments.

New features and new service of the hotel: Container-based modular construction reduces waste and speeds up construction time at a lower cost. Guest laundry on every floor. Electronic key access and motion sensing lights throughout, to reduce energy waste.

Partners make it happened. Nine local Pangnirtung staff who participated in the project: Corner Cast Construction, Nunavut Sealink & Supply, Nunavut Eastern Arctic Shipping, Tessier Crane, Atuqtuarvik Corporation, First Nation Bank of Canada, Canadrill and Arctic Co-op Construction & Maintenance Development. Plus number of shareholders of Co-op, over 1,600.

Dividends total amount of dollars: over \$8.9 million in dividends over last five years to members in the community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. For Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Member's Statement 34 – 7(2): Arviat Community Leaders

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Diocese of the Arctic, (interpretation ends) a big congratulations to the Arviat Anglican Youth Committee. Thanks to Culture and Heritage, they received a \$15,000 grant to organize traditional skills camps for youth, people who didn't have experience hunting and butchering caribou.

Now as the weather warms up, local experts took groups of eight to 10 young people out for two-day trips to learn practical skills like navigation, to talk about good mental well-being, and to grow in the Inuit principles of *Ikajuqtigiinniq*, working together for a common cause, and *Pijitsirniq*, providing for the family and community.

Thankful to these Arviat youth committee leaders who are equipping the leaders of tomorrow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. I'm going ahead with the *Orders of the Day*. Item 5, Return to Oral Questions. Item 6, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Premier Mr. Main.

Item 6: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have quite a few people here in the House.

(interpretation ends) I would like to recognize some special visitors in the gallery. Today we have members of the 2025-2026 Parliamentary Internship Programme. Please stand up when I call your name.

I would like to welcome Shane Atienza from Burnaby, British Columbia; Oliver Batchilder from Cornwall, Prince Edward Island; Logan Breen from Saint John, New Brunswick; Lily Collier from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba; Divya Dey from Toronto, Ontario; Bridget Duimering from Drayton, Ontario; Mathis Filiatrault from Quebec City, Quebec, Bienvenue; Emily Gough from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia; Yara Idris from Ottawa, Ontario; Alexandre Moreau from Montreal, Quebec; Amy Topshee from Victoria, British Columbia; and Cloé Tourigny, from Drummondville, Quebec.

The Parliamentary Internship Programme is a non-partisan post-graduate program run by the University of Ottawa and House of Commons, offering young professionals and recent graduates the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in Parliament.

For ten months interns work directly with Members of Parliament assisting with research, writing speeches, and contributing to parliamentary activities. They also participate in legislative study tours in Quebec, Toronto, Belgium, the United Kingdom, the United States and Nunavut.

The Legislative tours allow interns to learn more about how different legislatures function within Canada and around the world.

The tour to Nunavut is of particular interest to the interns, as few people have the opportunity in their lifetimes to visit our incredible region.

I would also like to recognize Letia Obed and Chuck Sise (ph) from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, who are assisting with the parliamentary interns. It's a pleasure to have you in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut today. Tunngasugitti. bienvenue, welcome.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

I myself would like to recognize South Baffin delegates from Kinngait. When I mention your name, rise up. First, Catharine Pudlat (ph). And they will be our page this week as we sit. And the next individual, Clyde Eetook (ph). Welcome. They also have Kathy (ph), who escorts them here, and welcome you all.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 7, Oral Questions. First, Uqqummiut MLA, Mr. Kautuk.

Item 7: Oral Questions

Oral Question 22 – 7(2): Activities of the Nunavut Housing Corporation

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

As the minister will recall, she made an announcement Thursday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning the signing of a contribution agreement with the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated under the Build Canada Homes program.

The minister's statement indicated that up to 241 million will be provided for the construction of up to 725 new public affordable and supportive housing. Mr. Speaker, this is good news. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. If you can revert back to your question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: I apologize, I didn't reach my question and this is my question. (interpretation ends) Can the minister confirm when a copy of the contribution agreement will be made public through tabling in the Legislative Assembly or posting on the Nunavut Housing Corporation's website? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. As this agreement is between the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the Government of Canada, we would need permission from the government to be able to table or make public this agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Minister, for clarifying that. Information published by the Nunavut Housing Corporation in July 2025 provided an update on the status of housing construction in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. The update indicated that eight new public housing units for Clyde River were expected to be completed in late 2026 to mid 2027. Six new housing units for Qikiqtarjuaq were expected to be completed by the end of 2026, and one new modular unit for the use of Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Clyde River was expected to be completed by the end of winter 2025.

Can the minister confirm if there have been any substantive changes to these timelines? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. First, for Clyde River, for the eight-unit multiplex, there were issues with the completion of the piling for those units. Now, the new anticipated completion date for that eight-plex is the fall 2027.

And for the two modular units, they are expected to be completed in July of this year. Those multiplex units are anticipated to be utilized as accommodations for the construction crews and will eventually come back into the public housing portfolio.

Then for Qikiqtarjuaq, there are eight units at various stages of completion. There are the six units in the multiplex. The completion date, there were issues with the foundation, completion of the foundation for those units, which have since begun. The new anticipated completion date for that is May 2027.

And then two modular units are expected to be ready for occupancy in May 2027. Those modular units, again, are anticipated to be utilized as temporary accommodation for the construction crews, which will be eventually reprofiled into the public housing portfolio.

And also, for Qikiqtarjuaq, we anticipate four new single-family dwellings to be shipped up on this upcoming sealift. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved the Nunavut Housing Corporation 2026-2027 capital estimate during its recent winter sitting. At that time, the minister indicated that the Nunavut Housing Corporation “plans to execute construction for approximately 180 public housing and staff housing units in 2026.”

Can the minister confirm which company or companies have been awarded the contracts, and can she confirm the community allocation for new public and staff housing units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Housing, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question.

We are utilizing a variety of different companies for these units across the territory. We are still in the process of awarding contracts for a number of them. A majority, a portion of this would be contracts for modular homes on this upcoming sealift.

I will come back to the member with a breakdown of the individual communities and the number of units allocated to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 23 – 7(2): Arctic Security and Sovereignty

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the premier, and they concern the subject of Arctic security and sovereignty.

As the premier is aware, the federal government issued an announcement last Thursday which indicated that “the Department of National Defence has begun the projects of transitioning the Nanisivik Naval Facility site out of operational use after changes in operational needs and facility viability.”

As the premier is aware, this facility is located near the community of Arctic Bay, which is my constituency of Quttiktuq.

Can the premier indicate what the Government of Nunavut’s position is regarding this announcement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Nunavut’s premier, Mr. Main.

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

(interpretation ends) The Government of Nunavut, in terms of Arctic security and sovereignty, our overall message is that we welcome increased federal investments that promote Arctic security by supporting Nunavummiut.

What we have heard from Canada, the federal parties and our prime minister, we have heard the pledge to a whole-of-government approach to build up Canada’s defence, through federal investments in the north. And so that is the work that we are focused on, in terms of forward looking.

And with regards to Nanisivik, I did have the opportunity to discuss this with Minister McGuinty, and I think we appreciate the fact that federal ministers are making frequent trips up to Nunavut to engage with stakeholders. It is through those face-to-face dialogue where we can get on the same page between different governments.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, last week’s federal also indicated that:

“This transition will first start with the Royal Canadian Navy removing the Nanisivik Naval facility from operational use, placing the facility in a non-operational, caretaker status. Once this phase is complete, and should the site be later confirmed as no longer

required for the Department of National Defence purposes, a divestment process would formerly begin. This involves engaging with federal and Indigenous partners to assist, reuse potential, or transfer opportunities. This work includes the required environmental assessment and any necessary remediation measures to manage the site responsibility at its transition through the divestment process.”

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk recently about “dual use” infrastructure in the north. Can the premier indicate how the Government of Nunavut will be working with the Department of National Defence and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to identify potential uses for the Nanisivik site? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We are very interested in the potential for dual use infrastructure to benefit Nunavut communities, as well as Arctic security and sovereignty, whether it’s in transportation, infrastructure, whether it’s power generation, or other essential assets like healthcare, drinking water. We really see a lot of alignment between the needs of Nunavut communities and Department of National Defence.

With regards to Nanisivik, it is a project or an asset that we are learning more about. Information from the Department of National Defence indicated that they identified a need for major additional investments to keep that asset operational or to bring it up to par, and so they have made the decision to bring in the process, as the member has outlined.

I want to clarify that this was a decision of the Department of National Defence. It was not a decision of the Government of Nunavut. We are in support of additional infrastructure in Nunavut’s communities, and we will keep working closely with the Department of National Defence to make sure that opportunities are maximized for Nunavummiut when it comes to infrastructure. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Taqtu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week’s federal announcement also made reference to the new Northern Operational Support Hub Program. As the premier is aware, one of the new hubs is planned to be located in Resolute Bay, which is in my constituency of Quttiktuq.

Mr. Speaker, information published by the federal government concerning the program indicates that the new facilities will “support Canadian Armed Forces operational requirements and meet the needs of federal partners, territorial, provincial and municipal governments, Indigenous partners and northern communities wherever possible. These sites will provide long-term benefits to northern communities in the form of roads,

runways, sea ports, medical and power generation facilities that will benefit both Canadian Armed Forces and northern communities.”

Can the premier provide an update today on the Government of Nunavut’s role in planning for the new Northern Operational Supports Hub facility in Resolute Bay. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Interpretation ends) So in terms of our role in terms of the northern operational support hubs, we are a stakeholder and we’ve been in continued communication with the Department of National Defence about their plans, looking for alignment along what I mentioned in my previous response. We are looking for alignment between the needs of communities and the needs of Department of National Defence; and what the member mentioned in his question, there’s a lot of potential.

So with regards to Resolute, they’re in the initial stages of engaging with local partners and rights holders is our understanding. And I think the expectation at this point is for detailed engagement with local communities on infrastructure considerations; also on the dual use aspect. These are being planned for spring 2026, so we should expect to see those commence if they haven’t commenced already.

Our understanding is that these engagements will help inform program planning, understand the communities’ needs better, as well as dual use opportunities, and help to develop a timeline around the development of these new assets. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 24 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. I would like to revisit some issues that I raised during the Legislative Assembly’s winter sitting.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department’s 2026-2027 capital estimates include funding to undertake an assessment of Igloolik’s airport terminal building. I am very pleased that this work is being undertaken.

Can the Minister provide an update today on the status of the assessment?

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a number of different projects in the planning cycle, of which Igloolik is on the list. As we go forward through planning, we have to take a look at the different options from a design and materials' acquisition, the timing of the procurement and note to tender.

I can't give you a definitive answer today on when that planning process will be complete, but I will check in with my officials, and if there's any firm timelines that I can provide to the member, I will do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Attagutaluk: The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's 2026-2027 capital estimates also include funding to produce engineered drawings design related to the Igloolik airfield overlay. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question.

Again, we have a couple of different projects under resurfacing. I don't believe Igloolik is scheduled for this year or even next year. Again, I would have to go back to my notes, Mr. Speaker, on exactly where Igloolik is on that planning cycle from the business plan to where its implementation.

But again, I would have to confirm with my notes, Mr. Speaker, but I don't believe there's an actual capital project for that named yet. It's still in the planning cycle. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In March of this year, the federal Minister of Transportation announced the launch of the call for proposals under the new 1.0 billion Arctic Infrastructure Fund. Information published by the federal government indicates that it will consider proposals through infrastructure initiatives that will "enhance community connectivity and access to essential goods, services and emergency response."

When I raised this issue during the Legislative Assembly's winter sitting, the minister indicated that there were "a lot of questions concerning this new federal program," and his department was working to prioritize our needs.

Can the minister indicate what proposals the Government of Nunavut will be submitting under the new Arctic Infrastructure Fund?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister for Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I really do appreciate that question from the member. And to some extent I can say that one of the projects, because it was already kind of softly announced by the federal government during a recent trip to the territory, that the resurfacing of the Rankin Inlet runway is one of the projects that was brought forward.

We're in the process of making a couple other submissions, but Mr. Speaker, as they are not approved, and as we all know, our government and the federal government like to make these announcements together in conjunction with each other. So at this time I'm not able to provide the actual list, but I will say there's two other projects that we are submitting right away.

One of the caveats that the federal government has requested is that these projects are near shovel-ready. We do have a couple of projects that are part way, if not complete, through the planning phase, so that we can continue with design, and hopefully expedite these projects to meet the minimum or the thresholds for timing.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government wants these projects completed within three years, which as we all know, with our building seasonal limitations, that that's a very difficult challenge to fulfill. But we're going to do our best for preliminary applications to make sure that the planning we're ready to roll with tenders to be put out, hopefully with construction starting, if tenders can get out this fall, as early as next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Oral Question 25 – 7(2): Public Safety in the Communities

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As mentioned in my member's statement earlier today, my questions this afternoon are directed to the Minister of Justice.

My first question is: Can the minister indicate approximately how many individuals who have been charged with criminal offences in Nunavut are currently being allowed to remain in their community under court-ordered conditions while awaiting their next scheduled court date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the most recent numbers I have, which is approximately two weeks ago, there are 433 clients of Community Corrections Division, of which 116 of those are in the Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry, I don't have a community breakdown, but I will endeavour to look into that to get you those numbers from my officials, and I can pass that information along to the member of how many may be specifically to the Cambridge Bay or other communities in the region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for his response.

My second question is: When it comes to monitoring an individual's compliance with court-ordered conditions while they await their day in court, can the minister clarify who in the justice system is responsible for performing this responsibility, and can he indicate approximately what per centage of individuals fully comply with their court-ordered conditions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question, and I actually do thank the member for the question. It gives me an opportunity to differentiate a couple of different roles of people, previous offenders that are under probation orders, or supervision or other conditions.

There are two separate pathways, Mr. Speaker. One is probation officers are provided through the Parole Board of Canada. Those are, the parole officers are federal employees, and unfortunately we don't have an accurate number on that. I would have to go back to my officials to see exactly how we track returning offenders that are under probation on the federal program.

But community corrections officers, Mr. Speaker, is specifically where we do provide support, and as people are released back into the community and providing aftercare to make sure that people are maintaining the conditions of the release. I think it's very important, as the member brings to light, when people don't abide by the conditions of their release, they can be re-incarcerated if they are not meeting the conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge that there are diversions that we're looking into and piloting in some communities -- not Cambridge Bay at the moment, Mr.

Speaker -- where minor breaches can be dealt with through a community justice application or appeal.

I think it's a very important initiative, as was brought up by a previous member on how the community justice workers, or not the workers -- the board, the committees, how important it is to have that local knowledge and knowledge of the people that are in the communities, so that they can divert maybe from the judicial system where appropriate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking my final question on behalf of residents who want to feel safe in their communities. Will the minister commit to working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other partners to ensure that any individual who violates any substantive condition that the court has imposed on them is automatically sent to a correctional facility to await their next court date? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will commit as my department does work very closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but I will go back to my officials and highlight the member's concerns, and to make sure that they are followed up with, as far as recommending where appropriate that people that don't abide by the conditions of their release are dealt with appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Oral Question 26 – 7(2): Co-Operative Associations Act

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community Services. It is in regards to recently a tabled copy of correspondence in the Legislative Assembly I recently received from Pangnirtung Inuit Co-operative. The correspondence raised a number of concerns regarding the government's administration of the *Co-operative Associations Act* in respect to annual audit requirements and local co-ops.

Can the minister confirm if he has also received similar correspondence from the Arctic Co-operatives in his official capacity, coming from ACL or from the Pangnirtung Co-op? Can the minister confirm he has received the correspondence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister for Community and Government Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his questions around the *Co-operative Associations Act*. Yes, I have received correspondence from some co-operatives in the region in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. I would like to ask the minister. Again, this is not a new issue, and similar letters were tabled by a number of members during the previous Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the *Co-operative Associations Act* is jointly administered by the Department of Community Services and the Department of Justice. Can the minister indicate how the two departments of Justice and Community Services are working together to address the concerns raised by the Arctic co-operatives about the act? 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. Where financial reporting requirements exist, the Government of Nunavut has a responsibility to ensure accountability and consistency in how those requirements are applied.

So what we are looking at as well is doing it to make some amendments, doing it to make some changes. We're hearing concerns from the co-operatives. We're not trying to be closed-minded, but some of these audits, the acts are there for a reason. They are there to help protect the co-operatives, which I think was the reason behind the introduction when it was introduced, whenever it was in the past there, but we are looking at as Community Services, we're looking at perhaps amending it if we need to.

But we are listening, and we will listen to the co-operatives and try to come up with a workable solution that works for the act and the co-operatives. But that's where we're at. We're going to listen and look at it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for the response. This act has affected the co-ops in a bad way, especially financially because of the act, and something, a law has to be set up to amend the act.

The act right now, if they're going to, even if they try to follow it correctly, it affects the members. The members have to approve the financial statements at the annual general meeting, annually, and this is where it has adversely affected the co-op, and it has cost the

co-ops in Nunavut around \$500,000, if not more. And the minister is aware of the Arctic Co-operatives Limited have requested amendments to the legislation and the minister stated on possible amendments.

Can the minister introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly to act on the recommendations for amendments from ACL? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. I won't commit to anything right now. We will do the review and listen to the co-operatives and Arctic Co-ops Limited and other stakeholders, to communities themselves, to see where they sit and what they would like to see.

Coming from Community Services and supporting economies, we do want to strengthen the economy in Nunavut. We don't want to put up any barriers. In fact, we want to try to find a way to lessen the barriers, make it easier to help boost up the economy in Nunavut. It might create some more competition across the territory. It might lower the cost of foods, goods, drinks. It's springtime, so it might lower the cost of flour, klik, lard, what we used to go camping with.

So we're going to look at all of that. And we'll talk with the Department, we'll talk with the, continue the discussions with the Department of Justice and looking at the *Co-operatives Act* and see where we can go from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Ms. Angootealuk.

Oral Question 27 – 7(2): Water and Sewage Subsidy Program

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Community Services. I would like to call up on issues that I raised during the winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

As the minister will be aware, the municipal council of Coral Harbour passed amendments to its water and sewage rates by-law in January of this year. When I asked about the status of the by-law back in March, the minister indicated that his department was still revising it.

Mr. Speaker, it is May now. Can the minister confirm whether or not he has approved the new by-law? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for her question.

It's unfortunate it's a very slow process. It is in queue, I believe, to my knowledge. We are getting a bunch of by-laws from the various hamlets across the territory. That's where it's at right now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

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

(interpretation ends) I have been informed that the municipality has had to increase water and sewage rate due to various cost pressures on the municipality. As the minister is aware, his department is responsible for administering the water and sewage subsidy program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The department's budget for this program was \$8.347 million for the 2025-2026 year. This was the same amount as in the previous year. Can the minister indicate whether or not this amount will increase for the upcoming 2026-2027 budget year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for her question. The Water Sewage Subsidy Program is under review, and it hasn't been tabled yet in here as well, so I can't speak to it right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): My apologies, Mr. Speaker. I keep asking the questions.

(interpretation ends) The stated purpose of the water and sewage subsidy program is to "provide financial support to municipal corporations to assist with the provision of water and sewage services and to subsidize costs and reduce user fees for these services."

The program provides a maximum of 2.0 million per year to the municipalities. Can the minister indicate if his department is considering increasing this amount? 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 her question.

At this time for this current fiscal year there will not be an increase. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 28 – 7(2): Inuinnaqtun Language

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start I would like to apologize for not being fluent in Inuinnaqtun.

My question today is for the Minister responsible for Languages, and they concern the issue of the Inuinnaqtun language.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my late wife, Millie Kuliktana, who was a strong Inuinnaqtun language educator and advocate. She is remembered for her life-long dedication for the promotion and strengthening the Inuinnaqtun language.

Mr. Speaker, the department's approved 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the department's new translations policy will "place a clearer emphasis on Inuktitut for internal communications and focusing Inuinnaqtun efforts on legal obligations and language revitalization."

When I last raised this issue during our winter sitting, the minister indicated:

"We have a revitalization officer in Kugluktuk, and we will continue to work with our partners at Kitikmeot Inuit Association. We are still reviewing, and we will update after talking with Kitikmeot Inuit Association."

Can the minister provide a clear update today on the status of this important work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Technical interruption at 14:59 and House resumed at 15:24*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We can resume with our meeting. And we do apologize for technical difficulties. We had a temporary setback.

I would like to return to Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Do I have to re-ask my question again? Can the minister provide a clear update today on the status of this important work on the revitalization in Kugluktuk, working along with Kitikmeot Inuit Association? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister for Languages, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) The translation policy is still under review. Otherwise the version should be ready for this fiscal year. We continue to collaborate with Kitikmeot Inuit Organization, and they also receive funding from NTI, federal funding for the revitalization projects.

We will continue to fund community projects through our grants and contribution policy initiatives, that include language preservation. We will keep that dialogue open between KIA and the GN, Government of Nunavut, where we can support each other to maintain that Inuinnaqtun dialect. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: *Qujannamiik*. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, minister, for your answer.

On September 17, 2025, the minister of the day tabled the 2025-2028 Inuktit Language Training Strategic Plan in the House. Mr. Speaker, this strategy outlines the Government of Nunavut's plans to promote the Inuktit language in workplaces.

The plan indicates that the government will develop and deliver new Inuktit training programs with the end goal of making Inuktit the primary working language of the Government of Nunavut.

Can the minister confirm if his department will be developing and delivering Inuinnaqtun language training programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister for Languages, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The training program is being developed, and there are currently Inuinnaqtun programs being developed to this date. There's been approximately 554 different types of resources developed, adapted, or purchased, and 112 were in Inuinnaqtun, representing 20 per cent of all resources. So there's been some training programs developed so far. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, minister, for your response.

Mr. Speaker, the 2025-2028 Inuktit Language Training Strategic Plan indicates that one of its goals and priority areas is to promote opportunities and partnerships. The strategy indicates that

one of its outcomes is to “increase in number of opportunities for employees to engage in Inuinnaqtun language acquisition and promotion.”

Can the minister clarify what new Inuinnaqtun opportunities will be available for Government of Nunavut employees? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Languages, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for that question.

We’re working on the strategy (interpretation ends) there are different types of opportunities in Inuinnaqtun. There’s different courses for Inuinnaqtun. I can’t find anything at the moment. I can get back to the member at a later date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 29 – 7(2): Municipal Infrastructure

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community Services.

Mr. Speaker, the minister may recall Sanikiluaq’s community hall and arena were located in the same facility. This key piece of municipal infrastructure was the central gathering place for residents and played a vital role in the life of the community.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister might be aware, the facility was severely damaged by fire and is now unusable.

The Minister of Community Services is also responsible for the Office of the Fire Marshal. Can the minister indicate when the fire marshal’s final report on its investigation into the cause of the fire will be shared with the municipal council and the community’s member of the Legislative Assembly? 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 regarding the two fires in his community back for the arena and the community hall.

I believe, if I remember correctly, the first fire was in the fall of 2023, and just a little over a year later the second fire happened. So there’s two different fires that the fire marshal’s office has been working on to do up a report.

The fire marshal's office just submitted their review this morning to the department, and our staff is currently reviewing and going through the report from the fire marshal's office and looking at the recommendations and suggestions that came from the fire marshal's office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the update, Minister.

There are several MLAs within this Assembly who are seeking the final report from the fire marshal. I would like to ask the minister if he can describe how his department has assisted the municipality in the cleaning of the site? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the member for his question around the cleanup site of the arena and the community hall site area, after the fires.

The department is Currently working and has been working with the insurance provider. It's called NAMIX, and going through there with how we can do the cleanup process, ensuring who's going to work on funding some of the cleanup process. It is going through an insurance program and working alongside the hamlet itself.

We are trying to listen to what the hamlet's needs are, the requirements are, and that is what the department has been doing around the cleanup after the fires. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary question, Member for Hudson Bay.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Community Services has a budget for local government planning and design initiatives. I would like to ask the minister if he can indicate what actions his department is taking to ensure that a new community hall and arena for Sanikiluaq is added to the government's five-year capital plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, Minister Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank the member for his question around planning for the replacements.

We will work through the insurance process first about replacing or renovating portions of the arena that can be replaced or renovated, and if extra funds are needed, we will see what funding avenues would be available, whether it should be the Government of Nunavut's capital process or going through the municipal capital block funding that each hamlet has access to.

We will work with the hamlet to see what will be the best and fastest way possible to get their arena and community hall up and running again, as we know that every community that has an arena or community hall, it is a place of gathering, especially around Christmastime or the annual hamlet days. It brings people together. It enlivens the community again and brings people together and socialize amongst each other, which is why we are hoping to get these buildings up and running again as fast as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 30 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, Arviat's airport terminal building is in need of replacement. Information published by the minister's department indicates that:

“The existing airport terminal building is undersized, structurally compromised, and operationally inadequate for the demands of the growing community and the increasing frequency of climate-related disruptions.”

As the minister will recall, his department issued a request for proposals in January of this year for the design of a new airport terminal building in Arviat. The request for proposals closed in early March. Information published by the government indicates that a number of companies submitted proposals.

Mr. Speaker, it's almost June. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the procurement process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Hickeys.

Hon. George Hickeys: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question.

Mr. Speaker, the member is correct; the design tender did go out late winter, and it was recently awarded, and it is now currently under the design phase. We're hoping to get that

done and be able to go out for construction tender in the winter 2027. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: The information published by the minister's department indicates:

“The design phase is planned for 2026-2027, with construction anticipated to begin in 2027 and occupancy targeted for 2029. The design is required to ensure a minimum life expectancy of 30 years.”

Mr. Speaker, funding for the design and construction of Arviat's new airport terminal building was not included in the department's 2026-2027 capital estimates. Can the minister confirm that funding will be included in the department's 2027-2028 capital estimates, which will be introduced later this year during the Legislative Assembly's fall sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will have to follow up with my officials on details of when the capital appropriation will be requested. But just to update the members and the House, we did receive some money, some federal money for this project as well. So again I would have to confirm with my officials, but the design money may have been provided by the federal government, which wouldn't cause for an appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: I thank the minister for his response. 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's airports, including Arviat.

In January of this year, the minister's department issued a request for tenders for the construction of Arviat's new airport equipment shelter. The request for tenders indicated that the Inuit labour requirement for the project is 35 per cent. In March of this year, a contract was awarded to Pilitak Enterprises for this work.

Can the minister confirm the timeline for the completion of this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Transportation, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we are looking for Inuit employment targets, those are examined as the construction proceeds. But I can confirm, and am happy to confirm with the member that, as he mentioned, the award was, or the tender was awarded, and the construction is anticipated to begin this summer. So we're expecting materials on the sealift this summer and work to continue.

With regards to the target date on completion, I will have to confirm with the member, but I believe, just off memory, it's 2028-2029. But I will have to confirm with the member. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Porter.

Oral Question 31 – 7(2): Gjoa Haven Power Plant

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

(interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I spoke in the Legislative Assembly last week about a very challenging winter that the community and the people of Gjoa Haven have just experienced.

The three-day power outage that we experienced during a blizzard was very difficult. I want to express my appreciation to the Qulliq Energy Corporation frontline staff who were able to restore power to the community.

Mr. Speaker, the minister spoke in the Legislative Assembly last week concerning power infrastructure in Nunavut. Her statement indicated that

“The recent state of emergency declared by the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven highlights the real and immediate impacts that infrastructure limitations can have on our community and public safety.”

Can the minister indicate what actions the Qulliq Energy Corporation have been taking to review and to review the response of this emergency situation?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. And again, I wish to acknowledge the people of Gjoa Haven and the ways in which people work together to support each other through that difficult situation.

For Qulliq Energy Corporation's part, we launched our own investigations in terms of understanding the root causes of an outage and the determinants of an outage and then how we find solutions to that outage.

In this particular case weather was a factor, a significant factor in getting our technicians to the community on time, Mr. Speaker. And in fact, the technicians attempted six landings and then had to go to another community and attempted three more times the following day.

These are some of the circumstances that we seek to understand in our investigations, Mr. Speaker. And I hope that the member -- I'll continue to follow-up with the member on any further information that comes forward. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary question, Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and thank you to the minister for the response.

As the minister is aware, Gjoa Haven current power plant was constructed almost half a century ago and is in need of replacement.

In November 2024, Qulliq Energy Corporation awarded a contract for the design and construction of a new power plant for the community. When I raised this issue during the Legislative Assembly winter sitting, the minister indicated the civil and structural framing of the new power plant has been completed and that construction is underway.

Can the minister provide an updated timeline for the completion of the new power plant? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. On this issue I'm very happy to report that all mechanical and electrical material is expected to be delivered in the current 2026 sealift season, and the power plant commissioning is scheduled to begin by December 2026. I look forward to keeping the member and this House updated.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The second and final supplementary, Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Mr. Speaker, the Minister spoke in the Legislative Assembly last week concerning power infrastructure in Nunavut. Her statement indicated:

“Our vision is to transition the remaining first-generation power plants into scalable modular hybrid systems. This approach ensures dependable energy today, while creating the flexibility to integrate cleaner technologies as they become viable for our communities.”

Can the Minister indicate if Gjoa Haven’s new power plant will incorporate any renewable energy sources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. I don’t have those details in front of me, but I do commit to getting back to the member with a more fulsome response.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Amittuq MLA, Mr. Qammaniq.

Oral Question 32 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, the *Nunavut Airports 20-Year Capital Needs Assessment Update* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly March 10, 2023.

The report indicated that Sanirajak’s current airport terminal building was constructed in 1982, and is in poor condition.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department’s 2026-2027 capital estimates include funding to undertake an assessment of Sanirajak’s airport terminal building.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work?

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 2024 an application was submitted to do airside resurfacing rehabilitation and damage enhancements. We are still waiting for approval on that process. It was not approved under the funding envelope for the 2026-2027 year. I'll continue to update the member as that application process progresses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the *Nunavut Airports 20-Year Capital Needs Assessment Update* indicates that Sanirajak's airport terminal building requires an airside accessibility ramp.

The report also made reference to "a capital project to replace the airport terminal building."

Can the minister indicate when his department will decide whether or not to include funding in its capital estimates for the construction of a new airport terminal building of Sanirajak?

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said in an earlier response, I will continue to follow with the application process, but I can inform the member today that a quality assurance audit is scheduled to take place in Sanirajak this year. So that will help direct to see how airport operations has been proceeding and where any additional supports may be needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

(interpretation ends) In November 2025, the Government of Canada announced the creation of a new \$1 billion Arctic Infrastructure Fund. The federal announcement indicated that the purpose of the fund is to "support dual-use – civilian/community and defence – transportation projects that reinforce Canada's sovereignty, enable regional economic development, and connect northern and Indigenous communities."

As the minister will recall, I have tabled a number of documents in the Legislative Assembly concerning the need for increased infrastructure investment in Sanirajak to support our community's location as a hub for search and rescue activities, and other sovereignty-supporting initiatives.

Can the minister describe what discussions he has had with the federal counterparts concerning Sanirajak's infrastructure needs?

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you for the question. I know the common term of multiuse or dual-use has been floated around, and I prefer the term multiuse. I think the more advantages it can have for a community and the more infrastructure can be utilized by different sectors, I think it just brings increased value to the infrastructure that we are investing in.

Mr. Speaker, while I haven't spoken specifically on the Sanirajak project with my federal counterpart, Minister MacKinnon, one thing I have continued to address is, as the premier mentioned in his Budget Address today, when we talk about Arctic security and sovereignty, we talk about safe communities, we talk about communities that have reliable power, appropriate fuel storage, water and sewer, the basics that our communities need to be safe and secure, and to contribute to the security of the Arctic as a whole for this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the member's lobbying efforts, I will continue to bring forward initiatives, and hopefully Sanirajak will be one that will be explored down the road.

Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't be able to give a specific response to the member's question as of today, but as things develop, I will commit to keeping all the members apprised of how discussions are going with my federal colleagues. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. I believe every one of you have asked your questions of our regular members.

Orders of the Day. Item number 8, Written Questions. Item 9, Return to Written Questions. Item 10, Replies to Opening Address. Item 11, Replies to Budget Address. Item 12, Petitions. Item 13, Responses to Petitions. Item 14, Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 15, Tabling of Documents.

Item 15: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 22 – 7(2): 2026-2030 Business Plan of the Office of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

I have one document to table today, which is the *2026-2030 Business Plan of the Office of the Legislative Assembly*. Please look at the document carefully in its entirety.

Item 15, Tabling of Documents. Item 16, Notices of Motions. Item 17, Notice of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 18, Motions. Item 19, First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Main.

Item 19: First Reading of Bills

Bill 1 – Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027 – First Reading

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027* be now read for the first time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. Do members agree to Bill 1 being read for the first time?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Bill 2 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No 1, 2026-2027 – First Reading

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2026-2027* be now read for the first time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: (interpretation) Thank you. The motion is in order. Do members agree to Bill 2 being read for the first time?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker (interpretation): First Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 3 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act – First Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 3, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act* be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. Do members agree that Bill 3 be read for the first time?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Bill 4 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – First Reading

Hon. John Main: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member from Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. Do members agree that Bill 4 has had its first reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I believe they agreed. Item 20, Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Main.

Item 20: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 1 – Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027 – Second Reading

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, that Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027* be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill authorizes the Government of Nunavut to make operations and maintenance expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. Do members agree that Bill 1 has had second reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: The motion is carried, and Bill 1 can now be put in Orders of the Day.

Item 21, Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Before we proceed in Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 16:00 and Committee commenced at 16:29

Item 21: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Fred Pedersen): I call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following item to deal with: Bill 1. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to commence with the consideration of Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027* and the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement we first deal with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do. Thank you.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 1 – Interim Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027 –
Consideration in Committee**

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

For the record, Minister Brewster, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Joining me today are Megan Hunt, Deputy Minister, and Rene Tanga, Executive Director Corporate Services.

Chair and Members, I present to you today the 2026-27 main estimates for the Department of Health. Chair, for the 2026-27 fiscal year, the Department of Health is requesting a total operations and maintenance budget of \$663.2 million, representing an increase of \$82.8 million compared to the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Nunavut's healthcare environment is complex and evolving, where the cost of delivering health services continues to rise. It is vital that we persist to aim for quality, equity and accessible services that Nunavummiut deserve.

Healthcare costs are driven by increasing demand, higher staffing and supply costs, and steady reliance on contracted and specialized services, while continuing to combat ongoing infrastructure gaps across the system.

In alignment with Pillar 1 of the Government of Nunavut's new mandate *Ikajuqtigiikta*, this budget focuses on ensuring continued access to essential health services while promoting the wellbeing of families and communities across the territory.

The proposed budget includes targeted and important investments to address both ongoing cost pressures and key strategic priorities around mental health, support for elders and seniors, along with in-territory care. These investments support communities and families in the long term, by making certain the continued delivery of safe, effective, culturally appropriate and sustainable health services.

Suicide has a profound impact on entire communities, and is shaped by interconnected social, economic and cultural factors. These effects are compounded by historical trauma, a lack of mental health resources, and community disconnection.

In this budget, \$5.7 million is being requested to address the current suicide crisis in Nunavut through additional staffing capability, and for ongoing grants and contribution funding from the 2026-27 fiscal year.

The Government of Nunavut recognizes the importance of collaboration and social determinants of health in addressing suicide. This strategic investment will support a government-wide partnership approach to suicide prevention, recognizing that meaningful progress requires coordinated action across multiple sectors.

Through collaboration, coordination, and planning with departments, including Justice and Family Services, we will contribute to the implementation of the *Inuusivut Annirnaqtut* Suicide Prevention Action Plan, strengthening prevention, intervention, and community-based supports.

To better support our elders and seniors, this proposed budget includes an ask of \$29.7 million for long-term care contracted services to ensure our elders receive high-quality care in the Rankin Inlet long-term care facility, elders homes in Arviat and Iqaluit, as well as with Embassy West Senior Living in Ottawa.

Chair, the department faces unavoidable cost pressures in health service delivery, including increasing demand for out-of-territory hospital and physician services, mental

health and addiction services, and essential purchased services that support delivery programs. As such, this request includes an additional \$26.2 million to address the following:

- \$18.1 million for out-of-territory hospital and physician services for treatment and clinical services;
- \$5.6 million for mental health and addiction treatment for clients with complex mental health issues at out-of-territory specialized facilities;
- \$2 million for purchased services and medical supplies to support service delivery throughout the territory, the continued population growth and the inflationary cost pressure;
- \$500,000 for the security coverage at community health centres to address increased incidents of violence and protect staff, patients, and government assets.

In the 2025–26 fiscal year, and continuing into the 2026–27 fiscal year, Health is requesting \$4.1 million to provide enhanced incentives for group 5 health professionals, which are critical to retaining specialized staff, aimed at improving the recruitment and retention of nurses and other clinical professionals within Nunavut. This is vital to ensuring we remain competitive with increasingly aggressive recruitment and retention efforts in other jurisdictions across Canada.

This budget also reflects increased physician services contract costs, an ask of \$4.5 million, ensuring continued access to essential medical care across the territory. This is in response to recent rate adjustments to support recruitment and retention to ensure access to doctors across all regions.

Health is proposing an additional \$5.5 million in compensation and benefits budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year to reflect adjustments resulting from the newly ratified collective agreement.

Chair, the substantial completion of the *Aqqusariaq* facility is scheduled for this summer. The proposed budget includes \$4.7 million, required to ensure the successful launch and first-year operations of the facility. It is important to note that the facility will receive annual financial support of \$9.7 million from Indigenous Services Canada for the ongoing operations and maintenance costs.

Finally, \$2.5 million is requested to support increasing costs associated with clients' travel benefits, aligned with the updated client travel policy that provides better support to long-term care clients when receiving services out of their home community.

Chair, a significant portion of our fiscal pressure for Health stems from the rising cost of medical travel. I am happy to share with members that Health has secured \$230.6 million

for the 202526 fiscal year for the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program and supplemental funding for medical travel.

While we do not yet have a formal agreement in place for the 2026-27 fiscal year, our officials are working with Indigenous Services Canada to finalize a funding agreement for 2026-27 and onward. This remains a priority for the department.

Through discussions with our federal partners, our objective remains: to ensure the long-term sustainability of the medical travel program and to confirm that the financial responsibility of these essential federally mandated services are appropriately aligned.

Chair, in closing, Health works to provide effective, sustainable, quality health services for Nunavummiut while responding to increased costs and operational pressures in a responsible and transparent manner.

This budget demonstrates the government's commitment to provide more services in-territory. The budget positions the department to meet the needs today, while building a more sustainable and resilient health system for the future, ensuring Nunavummiut continue to receive safe, timely, and effective care, both within and out of the territory.

This concludes my opening comments, and I look forward to answering the committee's questions. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Health.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 operations and maintenance budget is \$663.207 million. This represents a 14.2 per cent increase from the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The number of positions in the department is increasing from 1,370 in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 1,396 in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Members raised a number of issues and concerns during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee.

During its winter 2026 sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$99.2 million in funding for the Department of Health to address "budget shortfalls" in a number of areas. The department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates of \$663.207 million are \$82.84 million higher than the 2025-2026 main estimates.

Members recognize the cost pressures facing the department, and are hopeful that the increase will reduce the need for supplementary appropriations during the upcoming fiscal year. Members recognize the need for the department to address ongoing shortages of health care professionals in all communities.

During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of March 11, 2025, members were informed that:

“Without a commitment to move forward in a manner that properly supports Nunavut and Nunavut Inuit, Health is prepared to transition the administration of Non-Insured Health Benefits back to Indigenous Services Canada in a way that minimizes disruptions to Nunavut residents.”

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to “encourage collaboration with the Government of Canada regarding the second phase of the Non-Insured Health Benefits phased modernization project.”

Members support the minister's efforts to ensure that the federal government fully meets its fiduciary obligations in this area.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to “establish a patient advocacy committee for the Kivalliq region by recruiting members, confirming terms of reference, and holding the first meeting.” The standing committee looks forward to updates on the work of this new entity.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to “complete community consultations and final report for the community health needs assessment project.” Information provided by the department indicates that the work has been underway in Arviat, Igloolik and Taloyoak. Members look forward to the final report being tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the number of positions in its Home, Community and Long-Term Care Division is increasing from 151 PYs in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 164 PYs in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Nunavut Arctic College's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to “expand delivery of the personal support worker certificate program into two communities, providing culturally relevant, community-based training.” Members encourage the Department of Health to collaborate closely with Nunavut Arctic College as it works to develop and deliver programs to enable Nunavut Inuit to gain the necessary training and certification to pursue careers at

the government's new long-term care facilities in Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit, as well as the new *Aqqusariaq* Recovery Centre.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that it plans to undertake a number of legislative initiatives during the upcoming fiscal year, including the development of new regulations under the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*, the *Mental Health Act* and the *Pharmacy Professions Act*.

The 2023-2024 annual report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner indicated that "Nunavut is one of only two jurisdictions in Canada without a privacy law for the health care sector." The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "complete policy options for health information privacy legislation." Members look forward to the introduction of a bill during the current Legislative Assembly.

The Government of Nunavut Drinking Water Strategic Framework was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2023. It indicates that "forthcoming regulatory changes in Nunavut are anticipated to reflect the Health Canada Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality ...most water treatment plants will need to be upgraded or replaced under the newly contemplated regulations."

The Department of Health's business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "finalize the municipal drinking water regulations." Members encourage the departments of Transportation and Infrastructure, Health, and Community Services to work closely together on this initiative.

During its September 2025 pre-dissolution sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$5.0 million in supplementary funding to "accelerate program enhancement and increase capacity to respond effectively to suicide and attain action items as set out in the *Inuusivut Anninaqtuq 2024-2029 Suicide Prevention Action Plan*." The department's 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the number of positions in the Mental Health and Addictions Services Division is increasing from 113.7 PYs in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 121.7 PYs in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Members look forward to ongoing updates on the implementation of the action plan.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that two of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year are to "complete the implementation of the organized colorectal cancer screening program in all Nunavut communities", and "develop and begin implementation of a pilot project for organized lung cancer screening in Iqaluit." Members support the department in its efforts to expand screening initiatives to as many Nunavut communities as possible.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Health. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Porter. Before we proceed to detailed page-by-page comments, do members have any general comments?

Seeing none, we will now proceed to page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 Main Estimates starting on page H-4.

We'll now review the Department of Health directorate branch. Total Operations and Maintenance, \$191,606,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the Directorate Branch budget for fees and payments is increasing from 94.284 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 112.384 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 19.1 per cent. What accounts for this increase? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The overall increase of -- in front of me -- \$23.8 million for the Directorate Branch reflects ongoing system pressures and targeted investments, primarily driven by collective agreements at \$1.2 million, increased costs for out-of-territory hospitals and physician services at \$18.1 million, and physician services contract services increase at \$1.5 million. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I remind members that during committee meetings you don't have to stand when you're speaking. Thank you. Any other questions under directorate branch? Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. Bill 79, *An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*, received assent on September 18, 2025.

Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicate that one of its planned action for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "begin consulting with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, stakeholders, and experts and Nunavummiut on behalf of the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services and Administration Act*."

What is the department's timetable for finalizing new regulations under this legislation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are currently, consultations are currently underway and we are aiming for 2027. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. During its recent winter sitting, the Legislative Assembly approved \$99.2 million in supplementary funding for the Department of Health to address budget shortfalls incurred during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The 2026-2027 main estimates of the Department of Health have increased by 14.2 per cent.

How confident are you that this will be adequate to prevent the need for supplementary appropriations during the upcoming fiscal year?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we've spoken about this before. While the increased funding improves the overall departmental forecast, the real need for the department's finances is that it doesn't completely eliminate the risk of additional supplementary appropriation requests, and that's due to the nature of the fluctuating needs of delivering healthcare services in the territory.

Our aim is to get to a point where we don't have to submit large requests for supplementary appropriations, and we're doing our best. And part of that is because we're not actually fully funded at the beginning of the year, and so that causes us to have to come back for appropriations. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Any other questions under Directorate Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Health Directorate Branch total Operations and Maintenance of \$191,606,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page H-5. Health Operations, \$220,397,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned action for that 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "draft regulation for enactment of the *Pharmacy Profession Act*."

What is the department's timetable for finalizing new regulation under the legislation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The regulations received Royal Assent, or the act received Royal Assent in June 2025, and Health has begun consultations with direct stakeholders on the regulations, and it anticipates drafting of the regulations to begin this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Any other questions on Health Operations? Gordon, do you have another question? Go ahead, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Chair. In April 2026, the Department of Health issued requests for proposal for “telepharmacy service,” and “territorial drug information service.” How would these initiatives enhance healthcare services in Nunavut communities? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I’m just looking up that briefing note. Mr. Chair, if it’s okay, through you I’ll have Deputy Hunt respond to that question. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Go ahead, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. These services will organize to enhance virtual ways to support the community level health centres. Having telepharmacy offers the important opportunity to do consultation, as well as medication education and management. So that will bring services closer to home, and make sure that we’re also falling within the guidelines for those types of services in line with the national standards. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Hunt. Mr. Kautuk, are you done? Go ahead.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Chair. Your department’s 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to “establish a patient advocacy committee for the Kivalliq region by recruiting members confirming terms of reference and holding the first meeting.”

How will its members be selected? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are going to put a call out for those potential committee members. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Next on my list I have Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to complete community consultations on final report for the Community Health Needs Assessment Project.

Information provided by the department indicates that the work has been underway in Arviat, Igloolik and Taloyoak. Will the other assessments be extended to other Nunavut communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a pilot project, and so we will decide later on if we extend it to other communities based on how the project goes. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kuliktana?

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Minister, for your response. When will the final report for this project be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The final report will be an internal document that we do not plan on tabling. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Minister Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. How will the committee's role and responsibilities differ from that of your department's Office of Patient Relations? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. And that's related to the Patient Advocacy Committee question. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Patient Advocacy Committee will be an advisory board to the Kivalliq Health Centre transformation work, with support and engagement from the hamlet, so it will be specifically looking at the needs in that area.

While the committee will provide patient and community perspectives, identify barriers to access and proposed culturally safe solutions, it will be based on, not necessarily based on what the Office of Patient Relations does, which is addressing individual areas of concern or complaints.

This committee will look at healthcare in the region as a whole, rather than about focussing on individual experiences. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. What is the status of establishing “patient advocacy committees” in the Kitikmeot and Qikiqtaaluk regions?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the moment we don’t have a plan to establish any patient advocacy committees in those regions. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Any other questions on Health Operations? Seeing none, do members agree with the Health Operations branch total Operations and Maintenance of \$220,397,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page H-6. We’ll now review the Department of Health Programs and Standards Branch, \$121,262,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Minister, and your officials. Under the action items on 2027, to explore options for the Qikiqtaaluk Long-Term Care Facility in Iqaluit, I would like to ask for an update on what efforts your department has explored for Qikiqtaaluk Long-Term Care Facility in Iqaluit, and what progress has been made towards addressing the growing demand for elder care in the region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you for that question. We have started looking at a site for that facility in the area of, I understand that the City of Iqaluit is now calling it -- what are they calling it? What’s the community, North of North? Cold Bay or something? So that area is being renamed. It will come to me.

There is a site selected, and our work will be progressing towards that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for your response. What specific models or facility options are currently being considered for long-term care in the Qikiqtaaluk region? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are focussing on using similar models to the ones that are already in place. Thank you, Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. What discussions has the Government of Nunavut had with the federal partners regarding funding and infrastructure support for a long-term care facility in Iqaluit, and what commitments have been secured to date? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time we haven't secured funding. We do have funding for the care facility that is planned in Iqaluktuuttiaq, but not the one in Qikiqtaaluk. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Any other questions, Mr. Kuliktana?

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a two-part question. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to continue conversations with the Government of Canada regarding the renewal of the second iteration of the 10-year Nunavut Wellness Agreement.

This current agreement expires on March 31, 2027. As of today, what is the status of these discussions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm looking here. We are hoping to finalize those negotiations in the next little while. I'm just trying to find the most up-to-date information. We are looking at, hang on, I'm finding my current status. Thanks for your patience.

The initial draft is expected to be ready for review by this summer, followed by a cabinet submission in late fall 2026 or early winter 2027 for finalizing that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister, for your answer. My second question: What specific changes to the agreement your department is working and hoping to achieve? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. Health is seeking some changes that includes a 10 per cent administration fee to offset the human resources required to oversee and manage the agreement. We're looking at greater flexibility and reporting requirements, and of course hoping for greater flexibility in spending eligibility as well. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Any other questions under Programs and Standards? Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "collaborate with the Government of Canada on the second phase of the Non-Insured Health Benefits Modernization Project focussing on improving the medical travel process."

What specific changes to the process are being considered? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm told that that section of Iqaluit is being renamed to Ice Cove. Thanks to whoever passed me the note.

Our Non-Insured Health Benefits Modernization Project is focused on improving the medical travel process by securing a very -- a much longer term and more comprehensive non-insured health benefits agreement, and we are focused on a 12-month phase of this project right now between April 2026 and March 2027.

The plan is intended to support Health and continuing the administration of the program while strengthening operational consistency, policy, clarity, data and analytics, and financial accountability.

What we're really focused on is preserving program stability, by ensuring that the Department of Health continues to administer that program. I think it is in the best interest of both the department and clients who avail of that non-insured health benefits to ensure that there's continuity in the delivery. We don't want to cause any disruption in the delivery for either clients or communities.

We are working really hard to develop evidence-based information in our negotiation position with Indigenous Services Canada so that both organizations have a much clearer understanding of what it actually takes to administer that Non-Insured Health Benefits Program, and creating access to data and information around that program delivery I think is really exciting and going to make a big difference.

we also really want to make it clear that the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program is a fiduciary responsibility of the federal government, and that we are an important partner in ensuring that they are able to deliver that program to Nunavut Inuit and First Nations people who are entitled to that programming. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair, and thank you for the answer. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "work with Non-Insured Health Benefits to access dental care service standards for children."

What specific improvements to current levels of care are being considered? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just looking that up. The work involves benchmarking current pediatric dental services against non-insured health benefit standards to identify gaps and establish clear territory-wide service expectations for prevention, routine care, and urgent treatment.

It also involves including coordination, data tracking, and in-territory delivery to enhance access, monitor outcomes, and reduce reliance on medical travel for children's dental care.

There is so much work that the Department of Health does in order to also help prevent the need for dental care for children, and our work in that area is as important as providing the service. And really important people in ensuring that children's oral health is as good as it can be; our parents, schools, teachers and of course extended family, so I encourage children and parents to take care of children's oral health. It's extremely important in ensuring that children don't actually need the higher level of care that we're seeing right now.

And that's our aim ultimately is to reduce the number of children who require that really urgent dental care, by promoting healthy oral care. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I don't have any other names for this section. Do members agree with the Department of Health Programs and Standards Branch total Operations and Maintenance of \$121,262,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page H-7. We'll now review the Department of Health Inuusivut Mental Health and Addictions Branch, \$108,194,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that two of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year are to "initiate a review of the funding allocation and reporting processes for suicide prevention and alcohol and drug prevention initiatives", and to review, implement and evaluate *Inuusivut Annirnaqtut* 2024-2029 action items by engaging the advisory group of the partners.

To what extent has the action plan had a measurable impact on the suicide rate in Nunavut? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just looking to see what information I do have, and I know that our deputy has pretty close to the front of her mind, so I'll ask if through you that the deputy minister can response to that question. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Taqtu, any other questions? No? Oh, sorry, Ms. Hunt, go ahead.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the very important question. Where we're seeing improvements is around relationships, coordination, accountability and planning, which is fundamentally an integral part of having all systems and partners working together towards a common goal.

The Suicide Prevention Action Plan has a number of areas that are led by different departments than Health, that are led by different Inuit organizations or partners. And so the establishment of a table where those groups can come together and provide updates and accountability to their action plan items. But also to be able to link to things like interagency tables for immediate response and coordination has also been an area that we've seen improvement for.

I think it's fair to say, though, we continue to see a high incidence of the completion of suicide in this territory. And so although we are continuing to work together and we're improving collaboration and we're moving our plans forward, we have to keep our foot

on the gas with that work together. And it takes an all of Nunavut, all of community, each one of us Nunavummiut working together to ensure that we're meeting people where they're at, that we're improving services to mental health, that there is coordination at all of the system levels, and that we're also bridging in our federal and other territorial and provincial partners to assist us in the important work of improving the lives and the well-being of Nunavummiut. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Hunt. Any other? Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that the *Inuusivut* Mental Health and Addictions branch budget for service contracts is increasing from 48.144 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 58.419 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 21.3 per cent. What accounts for this increase? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just trying to find the right bit of information. We've increased \$5.6 million to fund supported services provided by out-of-territory specialized facilities to Nunavut residents experiencing serious and complex mental health and addictions issues, and \$4.7 million for Aqqusariaq operational costs.

We are increasing suicide prevention staffing. There is funding to require to address compensation and benefits increases around 3 per cent resulting from the newly agreed upon collective agreement, the ratification of that \$1.6 million.

I'm not sure if my math is mathing with the question, and if it's not, I can supplement that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Kuliktana, any other questions? No. I don't see any other questions.

Do members agree with the Department of Health Inuusivut Mental Health and Addictions branch, total Operations and Maintenance of \$108,194,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page H-8. We'll now review the Department of Health Public Health Branch, total operations and maintenance \$21,748,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2025-2026 business plan indicated that "activities for tuberculosis immunization and sexual and reproductive

health were initiated, including a testing pilot for sexually transmitted infection.” What were the results of the pilot project? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutluk. Minister Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I’m just trying to find that specific briefing note. Bear with me. Sorry, I have my essential Health briefing note pulled up, and I’m just trying to find the information about the pilot project.

Certainly ensuring that there is an ongoing discussion about preventable disease and illness is really important. We want to ensure that people know that getting tested as often as possible for those two things. There’s the sexually transmitted infectious part of the question, and then the tuberculosis part of the question.

When people are sexually active or thinking about becoming sexually active, they should be making appointments to get tested on a regular basis, and that includes whether or not somebody is in a committed relationship or not, because we know sometimes it’s important to continue to be tested.

And being tested is just the first step. Well, actually, it’s part of a step, because I think the first step is really about prevention, which is negotiating condom use and ensuring that you’re protecting yourself. And then if there are infections, that it’s really important to get treatment for that infection, as well as to ensure that individuals are working with their health care provider to provide information about contact tracing in order to ensure that people are also tested and treated if there’s an infection in place.

And before all that begins, there is a very important aspect of taking control over having discussions about what healthy relationships are and ensuring that you’re having those discussions.

We work on resource development, staff training and community distribution of safer sex items, such as condoms and dental dams.

Point of care access to HIV and syphilis tests are being scaled up in communities experiencing increased sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection rates across Nunavut. The rate of syphilis has been steadily climbing, actually not just in Nunavut but in many other places since about 2012. And Nunavut, that infection rate continues to skyrocket here.

When it comes to tuberculosis, we spoke and I was given the opportunity to answer some questions about tuberculosis last week, and again, being tested is the first step for many people. Ensuring that school-aged children are taking part in the testing that’s actually being made available to them as well, because when we discover tuberculosis in children, often that leads us to discovery of tuberculosis within the family and community.

Reducing the stigma around tuberculosis I think is really important, as with STIs. People don't necessarily conduct themselves in a way that ensures that they catch it on purpose, so I think it's really important to ensure that people are being tested regularly, that they are receiving the treatment, to the full course of the treatment for whatever infection it is.

And I think what's really important to note is that in this jurisdiction in Nunavut, all of this testing is free. It doesn't matter if you're an Nunavut Inuk or not. Anybody can go to a health centre or a public health unit and receive testing for infectious diseases. And the treatment is also free.

I think it's really important that people avail of that in order to protect their own health, but also to protect the health of their family and their community as well.

I know that doesn't necessarily answer the question about the specific pilot, so other than that our testing has been scaled up in 12 communities.

Health is exploring options to scale up testing in other communities as well. I'm going to stop talking now because that was really long. Thanks for your attention, everyone.

Get tested, get treated, and of course treat your body well so that if you do come down with an infectious disease or illness, that you will be able to recover faster.

And I think really importantly, please try not to stigmatize anybody that does have an infectious disease or illness, because people don't necessarily bring that upon themselves. And getting treated is really important. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for the response. In October 2025, your department issued an announcement concerning tuberculosis in Nunavut. The announcement indicated that outbreaks in Pangnirtung and Pond Inlet were taking over, but outbreaks in Arviat and Naujaat were ongoing.

As of today, what is the status of these outbreaks? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Chair. The Naujaat outbreak between January 2023 and March 2026 had a number of individuals diagnosed with latent tuberculosis, and nurses are supporting tuberculosis screening and surveillance following that community-wide screening in the spring of 2024. The outbreak is contained. There's no ongoing community transmission. The last case was detected in January 2025, and the

outbreak will be declared over early in 2027, if no new case is detected. And it's okay if there is a new one detected, because our goal is to eradicate TB in that community.

So if you haven't been tested, please go and get tested and then get treatment. If you are found to have latent TB, there's no shame in that.

And then for Arviat, there was an offsite screening clinic held in the hamlet from April 28 to June 14, 2025, and the screening clinic that continued through the health centre ended on March 31, 2026.

Nurses are in community to follow up on patients and facilitate treatment of active disease and latent tuberculosis. Health is undertaking an internal evaluation of the screening clinic to support future work so that we learn from it.

And I can't see whether, I believe that is still considered active.

Of course, again, please go and get tested and treated, if you are found to be positive, because that's how we can end the outbreak. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. I have no other questions. Do members agree with the Department of Health, Public Health Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$21,748,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page H-3. Do members agree with the Department of Health 2026-2027 main estimates total operations and maintenance of \$663,207,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Health?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Any closing comments, Minister Brewster?

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, everyone, for your questions. The Department of Health looks forward to a hard working year ahead, as usual, and we certainly appreciate all of our health care workers and everybody that works at the department that helps to ensure the health of Nunavummiut. And we thank you for your attention and for your great questions. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Brewster. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials. Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress, and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? All opposed? The motion is carried.

I will now rise to report progress. The officials may leave the witness table. Thank you.

>>*Committee adjourned at 17:42 and House resumed at 17:43*

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Back to the *Orders of the Day*. Item 22, Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Pedersen.

Item 22: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Is there a seconder to the motion? Mr. Qavvik.

Orders of the Day, number 23, Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*, Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk: There will be a meeting of the Standing Committee of Government Operations and Public Accounts at 10 a.m. in the Nanuq boardroom tomorrow.

(interpretation) *Orders of the Day* for Tuesday, May 26:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. This House is adjourned for tonight and will restart tomorrow on Tuesday, May 26 at 1:30 in the afternoon. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:46*

