NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2026

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

Corrections:

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker
Hon. David Joanasie
(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 Akeeagok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)
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

Steven Taqtu
(Quttiktuq)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, May 27, 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, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>House commenced at 13:30

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasie) (interpretation): To start things off, Ms. Angootealuk, can you please lead us in prayer.

>>Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Angootealuk. Good day. To the *Orders of the Day*, number 2. The Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 21 – 7(2): Thank you, Governor General Simon

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to all my colleagues, and everyone that is in the gallery here.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend Nunavut's deep appreciation and admiration for Canada's outgoing Governor General, Her Excellency Mary Simon.

For the past five years, Madam Simon has made tremendous contributions to our country, and has shown true grace, determination and inspiration to millions of Canadians. Here in Nunavut, Her Excellency has been a true role model, demonstrating the power of representation for Inuit across the country.

Mr. Speaker, during her tenure, Governor General Simon showed us the vibrancy of Arctic culture, fashion, languages, how strong the language is, and artistry in everything that she did. She presented all that, and we are truly thankful.

On behalf of the Government of Nunavut, I wish to express our deep gratitude from all of us, and wish her all the best in her next chapters. I hope whatever she is going to do next runs very well.

(interpretation ends) With that, I also want to welcome the incoming Governor General-designate, Louise Arbour, who will assume the role on June 8. Madam Arbour has a formidable history of advocating justice and peace, and we look forward to hosting her in Nunavut at her earliest convenience. She will undoubtedly be a strong voice for our territory and Canada, as representative for His Majesty, King Charles III.

I look forward to the transition of the new governor general and ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Her Excellency Mary Simon, again.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. And we all thank Ms. Simon. Minister for Family Services, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 22 – 7(2): **Minister's Youth Action Team**

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to lay out for this House my vision for nurturing and empowering youth in Nunavut. The *Ikajuqtigiikta* mandate calls on us all to strengthen and uplift children, youth, families, and communities. Involving youth in developing programs and services meant to support them is critical for charting a future they see themselves in. Nothing for them, without them.

Mr. Speaker, I am seeking my colleagues' support for an 18-month pilot project that will bring together youth from across Nunavut. These young people will advise me on the programs and services they want to see developed, and will take part in mentorship, skill-building, and land-based programming that speaks directly to their needs. The pilot will help them build knowledge, deepen their love for our land and culture, and grow in pride and confidence about who they are and where they come from. Our youth are the future of our families, our communities, and our territory.

Existing engagement approaches often ask youth to share their concerns without providing tangible skill-building, mentorship, and follow-through. Our approach addresses this gap by creating a supportive environment where youth are compensated for their time, supported to learn and grow, and respected as partners in shaping solutions.

I plan to launch the Minister's Youth Action Team this fall by bringing together a small, diverse group of Nunavut youth to build skills, strengthen well-being, and provide advice. This is not a one-time consultation, but the beginning of a relationship, using a trauma-informed model that supports youth development and ensures their perspectives meaningfully inform programs and services.

Membership may consist of approximately 12 to 15 youth between the ages of 16 and 21, selected to reflect regional diversity, a mix of in-school and out-of-school youth, and varied life experiences.

Family Services will support these young people throughout the pilot. Informal wellness and community activities will be woven in to foster connection and a sense of belonging. Together, these elements will build confidence and leadership in each member of the team, while deepening our understanding of what youth need from us. The result will be a more responsive, supportive, and empowering government for young people across Nunavut, and a future our youth can see themselves in, happy and healthy.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

Minister's Statement 23 – 7(2): **Mental Health Week and Child and Youth Mental Health Day**

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month Nunavut recognized Mental Health Week and National Child and Youth Mental Health Day. These occasions remind us that mental wellness remains a priority for Nunavummiut.

Across Nunavut, many people face challenges accessing mental health supports close to home. I applaud communities across the territory for the resilience and commitment they continue to show in supporting one another.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health is working with partners, service providers, communities, and Inuit organizations to strengthen mental health services across Nunavut.

This includes the much-anticipated implementation of the Mental Health Act and the planning required to bring the legislation fully into force. The Department of Health is advancing the regulations and implementation planning required to support its rollout.

This is important work for Nunavut. The act supports a modern and culturally relevant approach to mental-health care, including Inuit-specific mental wellness needs.

Engagement across Nunavut with communities, elders, service providers, individuals with lived experience, and families helped inform implementation planning and reinforced the importance of respectful, culturally grounded mental health services.

Mr. Speaker, planning related to Aqqusariaq also remains underway with our partners. The department's focus is ensuring the facility is safe, operationally ready, and prepared to appropriately support Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I want Nunavummiut to know that our government remains committed to working with communities, Inuit organizations, and service providers to strengthen mental health services and supports across the territory.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Acting Minister for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 24 – 7(2): Community Based Pre-Apprentice Programs

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Arctic College recognizes the efforts of the many people in our territory working to create housing solutions. Whether led by the Government, Inuit organizations, or industry, we acknowledge and appreciate the collective efforts to build the homes that we need.

The Nunavut Arctic College is committed to supporting these efforts. In addition to the Red Seal Programs offered at Sanatuliqsarvik in Rankin Inlet, the College is excited to confirm it is continuing its efforts to create a community-based pre-apprenticeship program. This program is currently referred to as the "Nailed It!" Program.

This program is different from the pre-trades program the college also offers. The pre-trades program is a 12-week classroom-based program focused on preparing individuals to take the territory's trades entrance exam. The Nailed It! program is different in that it is designed to condense academic learning, and supplement learning through notable hands-on training. This program is aimed at recognizing the competencies of learners either working in construction, or for individuals with building experience looking to become

apprentices. The College believes that by providing a program that centres hands-on learning experience, students will build the necessary experience to engage with the classroom-based learning theory in a successful way.

The college is excited about the potential for this program. It will allow the college to deliver additional trades programs outside the trade school. This program is designed to be mobile, one that can be delivered in Nunavut communities.

The key to success for this program will be partnerships. Partnerships will be necessary to both build a group of learners ready to take this program and support learners in the communities. Please note, the college is working to begin this outreach to partners between now and fall.

The college anticipates piloting this program in fall 2026.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 25 – 7(2): **Tentative Agreement Reached**

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that on May 13, 2026, a tentative collective agreement was reached between the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the Nunavut Employees Union.

>>Applause

This tentative agreement applies to approximately 180 unionized employees working across the territory and contributing to the reliable delivery of electricity services for Nunavummiut.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of both bargaining teams, as well as the support provided through the Government of Nunavut's Department of Human Resources. Their professionalism, collaboration, and commitment throughout the negotiation process contributed to reaching this tentative agreement without labour disruption, mediation, or conciliation.

Mr. Speaker, maintaining reliable power generation and distribution across Nunavut depends on a dedicated and experienced workforce. The employees of Qulliq Energy Corporation play an important role in keeping homes powered, supporting local businesses, and helping public infrastructure operate in our communities.

While details of the agreement will remain confidential until both parties complete their respective ratification processes, this tentative agreement reflects the importance of respectful labour relations, constructive dialogue, and fostering a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and supported in their long-term success.

Once ratification is complete, the agreement will move toward formal signing, implementation, and distribution.

On behalf of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, I thank all parties involved for their continued commitment to working together in the best interests of Nunavummiut.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): (no interpretation) Mr. Koonoo.

Minister's Statement 26 – 7(2): Baffin Island Caribou Collaring Program

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on a research program led by our government to monitor and support the recovery of Baffin Island caribou.

Since 2021, this work has included the deployment of GPS telemetry collars on adult female caribou in key areas across Baffin Island. With the valued participation of members appointed by hunters and trappers organizations, the Department of Environment deployed seven collars in North Baffin in April 2021, followed by 29 collars across south and central Baffin Island in April 2023.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in April 2026, with the continued support of hunters and trappers organizations, we successfully deployed an additional 84 collars on adult female Baffin Island caribou. Of these, five collars were placed in the Kinngait area, and 79 across North and Central Baffin Island. This brings the total number of active collars to 111, strengthening our ability to monitor and support the ongoing recovery of the herd.

Mr. Speaker, the collars currently in use are significantly lighter than earlier models and are equipped with a remote-release mechanism to ensure they can be safely removed if they adversely affect the caribou.

Information gathered through this telemetry program helps guide additional research and provides valuable insight into herd movement patterns. This work represents an important science-based tool that complements *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*.

I would also like to thank hunters and trappers organizations for their continued participation in reporting harvest information, as well as for sharing their knowledge and perspectives, which are essential to the success of this work.

Mr. Speaker, grounded in the guiding principle of *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq*, respecting and caring for the land, animals, and our environment, and supported by our harvesters and co-management partners, we are committed to ensuring the continued recovery of Baffin Island caribou.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. Simailak.

Minister's Statement 27 – 7(2): Mining Symposium

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon colleagues, and to everyone on TV, back home, and to everyone visiting us today, welcome.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on the successful 2026 Nunavut Mining Symposium, which concluded on April 22 in Iqaluit.

The Symposium continues to be an important opportunity for government, Inuit organizations, industry leaders, communities, and partners to come together to discuss the future of mining and economic development in Nunavut.

This year's discussions focused on responsible resource development, Inuit employment and training, infrastructure needs, and ensuring Nunavummiut benefit from the continued growth of the mining sector.

Mr. Speaker, mining remains one of the most important drivers of economic activity and private-sector employment in Nunavut. As we move forward under devolution, there is a growing focus on ensuring Nunavut communities benefit from the development taking place on our land.

Throughout the symposium, there was strong discussion about the importance of balancing economic opportunity with environmental stewardship, community well-being, and respect for Inuit values and knowledge.

Infrastructure also remains a key priority for Nunavut's future development. Discussions included the importance of projects such as the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link, the Gray's Bay Road and Port Project, and the Steensby Inlet corridor in improving connectivity, supporting economic growth, and helping reduce long-term costs across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, a strong mining sector depends on a strong workforce. The Government of Nunavut continues to work with industry, Inuit organizations, and training partners to support Inuit employment, skills development, and long-term career opportunities in the mining sector.

This includes supporting training initiatives, educational opportunities, and partnerships that help Nunavummiut build careers in fields such as engineering, geology, skilled trades, marine studies, and environmental monitoring.

The symposium also highlighted the important role mining can play in supporting local businesses, creating regional economic opportunities, and strengthening communities across Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, our government remains committed to ensuring that resource development in Nunavut creates meaningful, long-term benefits for Nunavummiut. Through continued collaboration with Inuit organizations, communities, and industry partners, we will continue working to support responsible development that strengthens both our economy and our communities.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Going to the *Orders of the Day*, Item 3, Ministers' Statements. I wish to advise members that our colleague for Quttiktuq, Mr. Taqtu, be absent from the House due to personal reasons.

Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Item 3: **Members' Statements**

Member's Statement 38 – 7(2): Alberta Referendum on Separation

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to you all, and to constituents watching back home in Cambridge Bay, and those from Cambridge Bay here in the gallery today.

Today I'll be asking the premier about a topic that could have a major impact on residents of the Kitikmeot region. The topic is regarding the Province of Alberta, and apparent desire of the United Conservative Party for Alberta to separate from Canada. That province is gearing up for a referendum to ask that question to all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, if the results of that referendum are in favour of separation, it will have a drastic effect on services we in the Kitikmeot receive.

Alberta is a place where we go for complex medical treatment. Alberta is our place where businesses purchase their goods from. Alberta is a place where students further their education, and Alberta is a place where many residents travel for holidays with their families. Our region has a very long history of working with Alberta.

Although I am personally hopeful that the people of Alberta will vote against the idea of separation, one can never be sure. If it does happen, our government will need to have contingency plans in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Arvia South, Mr. Kablutsiaq.

Member's Statement 39 – 7(2): Arviat Community Planning

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

Mr. Speaker, before I begin, after the meeting yesterday on May 26, I apologize, Member for Aggu and Aivilik.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage all Arviarmiut to go out to attend a very important matter that relates to how the residents of Arviat want to see Arviat grow, moving into the future.

Although the advertisement was published through social media, Facebook page, as the member representing Arviat South constituents, I'll read out the details in the House.

For tonight, Wednesday, May 27, in Arviat, there will be an open house from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the hamlet office regarding new community plan, new zoning by-law from 2026 until 2046.

The key questions will be: How will Arviat change as it grows? How should the plan prepare for this change? Where should new residential, commercial, and industrial lots be located? What kind of development should happen around the university campus? What trails and open spaces are valued and should be protected? Where should new trail development happen? Which quarry site should be developed next?

So for tonight from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at Arviat's hamlet office, I encourage Arviarmiut to attend the important meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Member's Statement 40 – 7(2): 2026 Pangnirtung Halibut Fishery

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my regards to the people of Pangnirtung and the people who are present here.

At that time I had brought this up earlier in the winter session, regarding the fishing industry around the Pangnirtung area. Usually fishing starts in February and the fishing season in May, just right now.

I wanted to catch up on the halibut fishing. They harvested 1,256,364 tonnes, and the fishermen in total made $1,657,779.There were 74 halibut fishers and 77 employed in the fishing industry.

And on top of that, at the fish plant they made, from February to May they made $345,426. And the fishermen and the labourers in total made $2,003,205.

This industry is very important to the people of Pangnirtung, and even when the fishing it closed, they will be collecting EI until the next fishing season.

It's a very successful industry, and the reason why I brought this up is because the other communities also have the same opportunity to make that kind of a market.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list.

Going to the Orders of the Day, Item 5. I'm sorry, Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Member's Statement 41 – 7(2): Recognize Residents of Kugluktuk

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like the House to recognize a couple people from my constituency of Kugluktuk: Miranda Atatahak and Tanya Ongahak.

Not only do they provide essential services to our territorial residents, but they also contribute for the betterment of wellness for residents of Kugluktuk. They contribute many hours, have contributed many hours, so I would just like to recognize their efforts and their contributions to our residents of Kugluktuk. Thank you, Miranda. Thank you, Tanya and I would like to welcome you to the House. The House will join me in welcoming them to the House. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. To our *Orders of the Day*: 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Minister Healey Akearok.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 20 – 7(2): Activities of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplements an answer I gave during question period on May 22, 2026 concerning Mr. Kablutsiak's question about Qulliq Energy Corporation's power plant assessment project.

The corporation is conducting a total of eight plant assessments for Rankin Inlet, Arviat, Sanirajak, Resolute Bay, Coral Harbour, Whale Cove, Kimmirut and Pond Inlet.

Site visits have been conducted for all plants except for Whale Cove, due to weather cancellations. That site visit will now happen at the end of June.

Final reports for all other sites will be done in two batches, with Rankin Inlet, Arviat and Coral Harbour expected in mid July. Sanirajak, Resolute, Kimmirut and Pond Inlet final reports are expected mid-August. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on with the *Orders of the Day*, Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Iqaluit-Manirajak, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to recognize members of Family Services' hard-working career development team, who are in for their annual planning meetings.

The career development teams play a vital role in supporting Nunavummiut on their pathways to employment, training and long-term self-reliance.

Their work strengthens communities by helping individuals build skills, access opportunities and navigate programs that connect them to meaningful careers.

Their annual gathering in Iqaluit reflects their commitment to collaboration, continuous learning, and service excellence. Recognizing them in the Legislature honours their dedication that they bring to empowering Nunavummiut and advancing a stronger, more resilient workforce.

I'm happy to welcome you all to the House. Please rise when I say your name:

Mary Rose Kilabuk, Donna Sabourin, Emily Tagoon, Melody Anguhalluq, Zachary Mike-Mathieu, Angus Oqallak, Haily Ishulutak, Shauna Angulalik, Tanya Ongahak, Caitlyn Peterson, Cheryl Kaiyogana, Andrew Wong, Nathan Rhodes, Albert Servando, Matthew Jewis, Brenda Jancke, Miranda Atatahak, Rita David, Jonelle Lieng, Jens Jeppesen, Alexander Kadlutsiak, Angeline Sarpinak, Joanna Kilabuk-Evic, Haley Kennedy, and Vincent Gamboa.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Cambridge Bay MLA, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize the same members in the gallery today that are from Cambridge Bay. And again, please rise when I call your name.

Ms. Shauna Angulalik, Mrs. Brenda Jancke, Ms. Cheryl Kaiyogana, Ms. Kaitlin Peterson. Welcome to the House. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Iqaluit-Sinaa MLA, Ms. Brewster.

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that we're not really supposed to repeat recognitions, but I would also like to recognize my former babysitter and one of my closest cousins, Brenda Jencke. It's so nice to have her in the House.

She has been in the House with me nearly every single day that I have sat, sending me messages of encouragement and telling me to sing, because she knows that when I stutter, that if I sing it, I can say it. I'm so proud to have her here and so happy. Welcome to your House, Brenda. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): (No interpretation).

>>*Laughter*

Speaker: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I would like to recognize Melody from Baker Lake. You can stand. And I'm pleased that you are working with the community development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Attagutaluk for Aggu.

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to recognize some mentioned from Igloolik: Angeline Sarpinak and Alexander Kadlutsiaq. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Moving on with our agenda, Item 6, Oral Questions. Cambridge Bay MLA, Mr. Pedersen.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 41 – 7(2): Western Premiers' Conference

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are aware that the Western Premiers' Conference has just wrapped up in Alberta, and that the premier informed us that because of his duties here in Nunavut, he would not be attending in person. He did, however, mention that if time allowed, he would participate via the Zoom platform.

I did see that a communique has been issued, and I'm glad to see that the premiers supported trade corridors in western Canada, including specific mention to the Grays Bay project.

My question for the premier is: Can he share with us any other specific Nunavut priorities that he brought up to the western premiers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague. (interpretation ends) Appreciate the opportunity to provide some additional context to our participation at the western premiers' gathering.

Unfortunately, my participation was quite limited, due to other duties here in the House, but one of the topics that we did have time to discuss, and it wasn't mentioned in the communique, was of Arctic security and sovereignty.

I shared with my colleagues that from our government's perspective, the investments towards Arctic security and sovereignty are long overdue, that there has been an unfortunate history of under-investment in Nunavut, and that the investments that are coming through Department of National Defence towards infrastructure for hard security as well as dual-use or multiuse infrastructure, those are things that we're excited about and that we're looking to take advantage of.

There was some discussion around needing to make sure that mistakes of the past are not repeated when it comes to national defence in the north, that communities are not left behind, and that a balanced approach is taken.

That was one of the important topics that was on the agenda, and along with my northern colleagues, Premiers Simpson and Dickson, we were pleased to share some perspectives around that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary to your question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your response, Premier. During the conference it has been reported that had some premiers went on the record regarding their jurisdiction's position on Alberta's separation. My question to the premier is: Is he willing to say for the record what Nunavut's position is regarding this? And if he's not prepared to say so, then why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) There is some mention in the communique in terms of the importance of unity as a country, and there was some limited discussion around that.

As a government, we don't have an official position as of yet in terms of our positioning, as to essentially what is a regional jurisdictional issue within a province in Canada.

But I think where our position does become more important, or our preparations, potential preparations, is around what the member mentioned in his statement earlier, potential impacts to Nunavummiut depending on how things go in Alberta.

As a country we are stronger together. As a country we are under stress. Right now we're at a critical time, with tariffs and relationship issues with our counterparts to the southern border.

I think in a nutshell my position is that we are stronger together, and that it is quite poor timing to be talking about breaking up or looking towards breaking up our great country.

We have so much to be proud of as a country. And so I'm just sharing that I'm a federalist and I believe Canada is stronger together. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the premier for his answer and for getting that on the record.

In my member's statement of today I did mention how important the relationship between Alberta and the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut is, and for the many reasons. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if the results of the referendum are in favour of Alberta separating from Canada, then this government will have to start planning for contingencies.

Can the premier inform us if cabinet has discussed this scenario, and if any talks on contingency planning have been initiated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) At this point I'm not in a position to disclose anything that may or may not have been discussed by cabinet. But as a government, it is important for us to be ready for different contingencies, different scenarios, should they arise.

The important message I think that I forgot to mention in my previous response is that Alberta is a valued part of our country, from Nunavut, if you look at the health care services that are provided to residents of the Kitikmeot, you look at the economic linkages in terms of business activity, you look at the educational opportunities that exist within the jurisdiction of Alberta where Kitikmeot residents access, there is some specialized healthcare that is offered in Alberta that folks from right across Nunavut travel down there for.

It is a beautiful part of the country, and I would just want to send my appreciation and my gratitude to that jurisdiction. And not to mention, I think the Edmonton Oilers are also a valued part for some members here in the House.

But in all seriousness, we do want to be ready for contingencies, and Alberta does provide valued services to Nunavut residents, and we are very thankful for that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 42 – 7(2): Decentralization

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Human Resources, and they concern the issue of decentralization.

As the minister is aware, Igloolik is considered to be a decentralized community. Information published by the government in its current business plans indicates that it is working to review its decentralization policy.

Can the minister indicate how the Department of Human Resources is involved in this review, and can she indicate what options are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

The government is committed to maximizing opportunities for further decentralization through the development of the territorial labour force.

The Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and Human Resources worked on the collaborative development to responses of 15 recommendations made in the decentralization review.

It is important to recognize that our mandate is coming to an end and, oh, sorry, this is an old briefing note. I apologize.

The review has provided 15 recommendations to the GN under three categories: stabilized capacity and organization as a priority; grow people and communities to participate in government; expand GN opportunities to communities, without decentralizing entire offices, which means that we have an opportunity for Nunavummiut to work in their own communities when positions are advertised. There are a number of

them that will be advertised where people can work from anywhere. So I hope that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, during the winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I asked questions to the Minister of Environment about the positions in his department that are being moved out of Igloolik.

It is my understanding that the government's practice has been that when it moves decentralized positions out of a community, new positions are moved in, or are created to make up for the loss.

Can the Minister of Human Resources confirm what the new government's policy is in situations like this? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you to the member for the question, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. Apologies, I'm just reading my response. I don't have a response in front of me at the moment. I will get back to the member. Thank you. I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: We don't have a policy yet. The practice has been to replace, and it's still under consideration. We don't have an existing policy. Thank you. I hope that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Attagutaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, her department is responsible for administering the government's Nunavut-Wide Hiring Policy. The policy indicates that the government is "committed to Inuit employment and decentralization."

Can the minister indicate how many positions across Nunavut have been filled under this policy, and can she indicate how many of these positions are filled by residents of Igloolik? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

I don't have specific breakdown per community. I know that we have a significant number of vacancies: 60 per cent of the positions are outside Nunavut; 13 requests have come forward. I would like to inform the member that I'll take notice and get the information back to you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): According to the list of names, Oral Questions, Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Oral Question 43 – 7(2): The Kugluktuk Ilavut Centre

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of Kugluktuk's Ilavut Centre.

Mr. Speaker, the Kugluktuk-Ilavut Centre is a minimum security centre which operates as a halfway house since 2005. Ilavut Centre can accommodate up to 15 male clients.

Prior to becoming a member of the Legislative Assembly, I was one of the general electricians working on the renovations for the Ilavut Centre.

Mr. Speaker, I understand and recognize that Kugluktuk's Ilavut Centre is undergoing phase 2 renovations, and currently may not have clients in the facility.

Can the minister clarify what specific rehabilitation and reintegration programs the Ilavut Centre will offer to support future clients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for raising this issue with this facility.

There have been delays, as the member outlined. I appreciate his work on the facility. I think maybe they're missing you.

Mr. Speaker, as the member mentioned, phase 1 is complete. One of the issues with phase 2 is a fire safety system being installed, so I don't have a definitive timeline on when that work is going to be done, but I know my Justice officials are working very closely with the Transportation and Infrastructure officials to make sure that the scope of work is going to be done as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

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

Mr. Speaker, on March 17, 2026, the minister tabled the 2024-2025 annual report of the Corrections division. The report indicated that the Illavut Centre had 12 approved positions and 7 indeterminate staff in March 2025.

Can the minister provide an update today on how many positions are filled, and how many are vacant at the Kugluktuk Ilavut Centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, I didn't feel I fully responded to the member's first question as far as client integration back into the facility.

Like I mentioned, it will be dependent upon getting the fire safety system and some of the other work that needs to be done on the building.

But with regards to the member's supplementary question, yes, there are 12 person-year positions in that facility, of which ten are filled; of which of those ten, nine are Inuit. So thank you for the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

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

In March 2026 the Legislative Assembly approved $6.623 million in capital funding for the phase 2 renovation of the Kugluktuk Ilavut Centre.

Mr. Speaker, at that time, the department's project substantiation sheet indicated that the consultant would be undertaking a redesign of phase 2, in order to establish a full scope of work.

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

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question, Mr. Speaker, and I did not have time to go back to my other hat to get the actual detail.

But I know there were some concerns with camera locations and obviously with the sprinkler system, and as I had mentioned earlier, with the fire suppression.

Mr. Speaker, the member is taxing my memory bank quite well. I'm going to have to go into a little bit more detail outside the chamber, but I would more than happy to provide the member with an update of what actual scope changes were made to bring that phase 2 renovation project in line with the budgetary limitations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 44 – 7(2): Municipal Infrastructure

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community Services.

(interpretation ends) As the member will recall, I recently tabled a copy of the municipality of Pangnirtung's capital planning priority list. The list describes a number of important projects, including regulation of the Duval River Bridge.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the government's 2026-2027 capital estimates will be introduced during the upcoming fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister describe what changes are being made to the government's capital planning and prioritization process? When the Duval River bridge broke, Nunavut government had, it was done in England. (interpretation ends) Can the minister describe what changes are being made to the government's capital planning and prioritization projects? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Coming from Community Services, I can speak to looking at the priorities across the territory to see what should be looked at as more important, more urgent. We try to see what should come first, second, third, based on the needs and the urgent situations or what could be coming. We try to gauge, coming from Community Services in prioritizing capital projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you Mr. Minister.

As the minister is aware, the current Duval River bridge was installed in 2008, and it was a temporary setup, following the disastrous floods that destroyed the previous structure.

Sometimes the river in Pangnirtung is very strong. The bridge broke when the ice river broke. The structure was intended to be temporary.

Mr. Speaker, the municipality has identified the need for planning to be undertaken for a long-term solution.

Can the minister indicate how his department is working with the municipality of Pangnirtung on this project? 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 bridge in Pangnirtung. I believe I walked across that bridge in a previous life, when I worked with the Qulliq Energy Corporation. I had the pleasure of visiting your fine community for a few days there. They say it is beautiful. It is beautiful. But I must say, I think Baker Lake is a little bit more beautiful than Pangnirtung. I think a few of us would say yes to that.

Regarding planning for the Pangnirtung bridge replacement, the department has, I'm sure, been working with the hamlet to see what needs to be done, what kind of studies need to be done. Working with the hamlet, what would be their preference.

I'm sure those kinds of talks have been taking place since this happened before I came into this seat. But we will continue to do that discussion, dialogue. I'm hoping the member will invite me sometime to visit his community, as it would be a pleasure to visit that community once again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I presented to the House here the hamlet's capital plan for repairs and other things. The municipality of Pangnirtung has also identified the need for repairs and renovations to a number of buildings in the community, including the hamlet office and arena.

(interpretation ends) Can the minister indicate if his department's 2026-2027 capital estimates will include increased block funding that municipalities can access to undertake repairs and renovations of their buildings? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question around renovations, repairs to the arena.

There are a few different, a couple different funding opportunities that could be utilized. The member mentioned a municipal capital block funding. Those have been increased for all the hamlets recently, and each hamlet has the autonomy to save up those funds to go towards renovations, repairs of the hamlet-owned facilities.

There's also another funding avenue called the Sustainable Service Delivery Option, that hamlets can apply to our department to help with repairs. So if the hamlet would submit those applications; if they already didn't, we could certainly look into that and see how we can help with those renovations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 45 – 7(2): Legal Services Board

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the issue of Legal Services Board in Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, prior to becoming a member of the Legislative Assembly, I previously worked with the Legal Services Board in the Kitikmeot region headquarters in Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, back in March 2022, a fire destroyed the Government of Nunavut leased office building in Gjoa Haven. Since then the Legal Services Board headquarters acquired a new office space in Gjoa Haven.

Can the minister clarify how many positions are currently filled, and how many positions are vacant at the Legal Services headquarters in Gjoa Haven. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, the office building in Gjoa Haven is currently being replaced, so it has been a little challenging finding office space for the Legal Services Board.

Right now, as far as criminal law staff, there are 11 defence lawyers; seven are in the Legal Services office here in Iqaluit, three are in the office in Rankin Inlet, and one is currently in Cambridge Bay from the Legal Services defence team.

With regards to the office itself, I will have to supplement my response at a later time to be able to give those exact numbers from the office standpoint. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary question, Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 5, 2024, the 2021-2022 Annual Report of the Legal Services Board was tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The report highlighted the board's successful delivery of the Inuit Court Worker Program, and indicated that the board employed 13 full-time and 17 part-time Inuit court workers across the territory during the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

These positions help provide many services, including client intake, translations, community outreach, and more.

Can the minister indicate how many Inuit court workers are currently employed in the Kitikmeot region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

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

With the Legal Services Board, with the office there, there are currently five positions, and currently with the office space challenge that we're going through right now, all of them are vacant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and for the response from the minister.

Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly approved over 16.5 million in funding for the Legal Services Board as part of the Department of Justice's 2025-2026 main estimates.

Mr. Speaker, on November 5, 2024, the minister of the day tabled an annual report of the Legal Services Board for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Can the minister indicate why no annual reports have been tabled for the last three fiscal years? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's one of the questions that I know I have raised in the past as well, too, and I think it's very important from an accountability standpoint that all our entities table or fulfil their tabling requirements in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, not to give excuses, but with the fire that we talked about a little bit earlier, it put an incredible amount of challenge on getting historical data for the Legal Services Board to provide their reports.

I am happy to report to the House, Mr. Speaker, that I will be tabling during this sitting the 2022-2023 annual report, and have given clear direction to the Legal Services Board and their staff to continue to work to fulfil the obligations of the two remaining tabling requirements. Thank you.

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

Oral Question 46 – 7(2): Port of Churchill Plus Project

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I have questions today concerning the issue of the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project, and these questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, he and a number of other members of cabinet recently received correspondence from me concerning the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if he can confirm when he will respond and reply to my correspondence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of the Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we are currently preparing, and when it is ready, we will respond to your correspondence. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary question, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the correspondence reply from the members of the cabinet that I wrote the letter to.

Mr. Speaker, on April 14, 2026, the Prime Minister of Canada announced the signing of an agreement with the Province of Manitoba in respect to the proposed Port of Churchill Plus project. The announcement indicated:

"This project would modernize the Port of Churchill by advancing potential improvements, such as an all-weather road, rail-line enhancements, a new energy corridor, and strengthened marine ice-breaking capacity. Together, these upgrades would

establish a reliable trade corridor in the north, enabling Canada to export more resources to European markets."

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the "energy corridor" refers to increased shipments of liquified natural gas.

Can the Minister of Environment indicate what concerns his department has identified regarding the impact of increased traffic on the marine environment and waters surrounding the Belcher Islands and the community of Sanikiluaq and the Hudson Bay coast communities in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of the Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleague for the question.

(interpretation ends) Right now that project is quite new. We are still working on the project, and we are working with Manitoba to better understand the scope of the project. We could get back to you once we get more information. Thank you.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during yesterday's question period, the premier made reference to regulatory processes and bodies.

However, it is not clear to me how this project will undergo an environmental review.

I would like to ask the minister if he can confirm the extent to which the Nunavut Impact Review Board will be involved in the regulatory review process for the proposed Port of Churchill Plus Project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

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

Right now, because the project is very new, I can't really answer those questions. But the review and agreements, different agreements are in the starting stage. So because of that I don't really have much information on it as to how the planning will run for this project, for this proposed project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 47 – 7(2): Workers' Safety and Compensation Coverage for Hunters

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

As the minister is aware, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories has had a program in place for many years to provide coverage for hunters and harvesters. The program is jointly funded by the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Northwest Territories.

A memorandum of understanding is in place between the two territories concerning this program.

Can the minister indicate if any change to the program is currently being considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Minister Tattuinee.

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

At this point in time the only changes to the agreement is the years maximum insurable remuneration for harvesters. It has been increased to $57,900 for 2026. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary question, Ms. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It is important for Nunavut hunters to be aware of programs like the one that is administered by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

Can the minister describe how the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission works with hunters and trappers organizations to raise awareness of this program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Workers' Compensation Commission. Ms. Tattuinee.

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

The information is available on the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission website. We can also contact the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission claims representative and they would be able to provide the information to individuals that are wanting to apply for compensation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank. I keep forgetting to thank the minister for their responses.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the National Day of Mourning takes place each year at the end of April. It is an occasion for thinking about workers who have been injured or died on the job.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that hunters who are injured or passed away while providing for their families and communities should be recognized at this annual ceremony. Does the minister share my position? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for your question.

They do get recognized in that when applications are received and reviewed, then coverage is provided. I will have to determine whether they would be recognized officially on the Day of Mourning, similar to the individuals that are injured or pass away on the job, by accident, on an annual basis and their names are put in a book of remembrance. I'll have to ask that question of my officials and get back to you. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): I have no more names on my list. Item 7. I'm sorry. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak, and I do apologize. I recognize you.

Oral Question 48 – 7(2): Airline Sector

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

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Government of Nunavut announced in July 2025 that it had entered into a ten-year travel agreement regarding its contracted airline services for medical travel, duty travel, and Family Services client travel.

The government's announcement also indicated that it had, and I quote: "acquired an option from Exchange Income Corporation to purchase an equity interest" in Canadian North. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we would own a piece of the airline.

Mr. Speaker, when my colleague from Quttiktuq raised this issue during the Legislative Assembly's winter sitting, the minister indicated that the government was reviewing this option, and had not made any decisions.

Can the minister update the House today on the status of this review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was anticipating this question to arise during this sitting period.

Mr. Speaker, we are closer to a decision point. My officials have been working and collaborating with officials at other departments to bring forward an options paper to cabinet.

So until that happens, I won't be able to announce anything, obviously. And we haven't made a firm decision, but we're a lot closer to that decision-making point.

It is, as you can imagine, a very complicated process. There's a lot of different factors into making a decision along the lines to purchase an equity portion of an airline, as a government, so we want to make sure that we make an informed decision. So we are doing our due diligence at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year's announcement indicated that the government's agreement with the owners of Canadian North would provide it with "a meaningful voice in the oversight and delivery of contracted airline services, including medical, duty and Family Services client travel, as well as less-than-load air freight."

Mr. Speaker, I have recently noted that the minister's department has been trying to fill a new position to manage its contract with the airline.

Can the minister describe what specific cost savings and/or service improvements have been achieved over the past year through the signing of the agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it would be fair for me to sit here and say there are cost savings. As you can imagine, increased costs in air travel have been continuously ongoing, and the fact that we signed a ten-year agreement in the last year to solidify the costs associated with travel, government travel, whether it be duty, medical or within Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, one thing I would like to add to my response, though, is as far as a contract oversight, I think it is an important component that the member brought up that we are still, we have a team of people that still administer, to meet regularly with the airline officials at the assistant deputy minister level, and then that feeds into deputy minister level updates on a quarterly basis.

So there are ongoing meetings to make sure that the compliance and the conditions of the contract are being adhered to, as well as how often flights to communities. There are certain contracted obligations of so many flights per community that need to occur and to make sure that those are also adhered to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) One of the most common concerns that I hear from my constituents is the high cost of airfares.

Mr. Speaker, the government already faces capacity challenges in delivering core public services and running basic programs. It is probably not realistic to expect the government to take on the responsibility of managing the day-to-day operations of a commercial airline.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the longstanding Essential Air Services Program in the United States provides federal subsidies to commercial airlines to maintain service to remote communities in Alaska.

Has the minister considered lobbying our federal government to start a similar program to address the high cost of airfares for residents of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am familiar with that topic being raised in the past, and it hasn't been on my radar per se as of yet, but it is something that I can take back and work with my cabinet colleagues to see if there's an opportunity to explore that as an option.

It's kind of a coincidental timing; just at a meeting this morning we were talking about how Alaska has, their postal service has the same rate. I find it interesting that again the Alaskan comparison came up this afternoon. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Returns to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Replies to Budget Address. Item 11, Petitions. Item 12, Responses to Petitions. Item 13, Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 14, Tabling of Documents. Item 15, Notices of Motions. Item 16, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17, Motions. Item 18, First Reading of Bills. Item 19, Second Reading of Bills. Item 20, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters.

And before we proceed, we will take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned at 15:00 and Committee commenced at 15:29

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman: (Mr. Fred Pedersen) I call the meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 1 and 2. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue with the consideration of Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act 2026-2027* and the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you Mr. Chair.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Chair: Thank you. I'd like to as Minister Lyall: Do you have any officials you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Yes, I do.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, I am here to present the 2026-2027 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, a plan that reflects our government's focus on stabilizing the existing housing portfolio while advancing long-term supply solutions.

In 2022, the Nunavut Housing Corporation developed *Igluliuqatigiingniq*, or Nunavut 3000, as a whole-of-territory strategy to address the housing crisis by rapidly increasing housing supply. As we continue to advance the goals of *Igluliuqatigiingniq*, NHC is focused on delivering on the targeted 1,400 new public housing units across our 25 communities by 2030.

In 2026-27, we will continue the work of expanding Nunavut's housing continuum using a strategic, multi-pronged approach. This includes:

- Entering into innovative partnerships with local community organizations, Inuit associations, housing developers, and government agencies;
- Introducing policies and programs that improve access and reduce barriers to participation in Nunavut's housing market;
- Leveraging *Igluliuqatigiingniq* to create skills training and employment opportunities within the construction trades sector for Inuit and Nunavummiut; and
- Improving how NHC delivers public and affordable housing services at the community level.

Mr. Chair, housing remains a foundational driver of social wellbeing, economic participation, and community resilience in Nunavut. Through the 2026-27 Main Estimates and Business Plan, NHC is advancing the priorities of the Government of Nunavut's *Ikajuqtigiikta* mandate by strengthening governance, improving service delivery, and investing across the full housing continuum. Building on the momentum of *Igluliuqatigiingniq*, our approach emphasizes Inuit employment and training, community capacity-building, and integrated planning to ensure that housing delivery supports broader economic development and long-term sustainability for Nunavummiut.

Central to this work, Mr. Chair, is the strong and growing network of partners. The Corporation is working collaboratively with Inuit organizations, local community groups, housing developers, and government partners to accelerate housing delivery and maximize territorial benefits. Recent partnerships with industry leaders such as Agnico Eagle Mines Limited and B2Gold are helping to reduce costs and expand supply,

including support for modular housing in multiple regions. At the same time, innovative collaborations with Nunavut Arctic College, Pewapun Construction, and Arctic Fresh Projects are creating student-led housing builds that combine hands-on training with new unit construction, an approach that directly contributes to Inuit skills development and employment. These efforts, alongside ongoing partnerships with developers such as Birchcliff Development Limited, demonstrate a coordinated and resourceful approach to delivering housing solutions that reflect Nunavut's unique context and priorities.

Looking ahead, 2026-27 will be a pivotal year for the corporation. As a continuation of our *Igluliuqatigiingniq* goals, we are advancing the development of new and redesigned housing programs to better meet the needs of Nunavummiut at all stages of life.

Additionally, consultations are continuing to review our relationship with the 25 local housing organizations, including their governance model, to identify opportunities to strengthen accountability, improve consistency, and enhance service delivery at the community level. We will report back on the outcomes and next steps later this year.

Mr. Chair, I will now turn to the details of the main estimates for 2026-27.

The corporation is requesting $296 million from the Government of Nunavut for operations and maintenance in 2026-2027, an increase of $10.6 million from the previous fiscal year.

This increase is primarily driven by utility cost pressures, including higher consumption and the ongoing impact of prior-year rate increases, with electricity rates rising by up to 11 per cent in some communities. As such, $9.9 million of the increase is allocated to grants and contributions, primarily for utilities.

The remaining $0.7 million reflects adjustments to compensation and benefits, largely associated with the implementation of the collective agreement finalized in 2025-26.

The Corporation continues to actively manage cost pressures related to utilities, supply chains, and service delivery capacity while maintaining operational stability.

The total operations and maintenance budget for 2026-27 is $322.8 million, of which:

- $296 million will be funded by the Government of Nunavut;
- $17.8 million will be provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; and
- $9 million will be sourced from the corporation's own revenues.

Federal partnership through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation remains a key component of our funding framework, and enables alignment with national housing priorities.

This budget reflects a continued focus on sustaining our existing housing portfolio while advancing long-term solutions to Nunavut's housing shortage. These investments are intended to improve housing outcomes for Nunavummiut, including greater stability, reduced overcrowding pressures over time, and increased access to suitable housing.

Thank you for your time today. My officials and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding the Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026–2027 Main Estimates and Business Plan.

Quana, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Minister and your staff, welcome.

I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

(interpretation) The corporation's proposed 2026-2027 operations and maintenance appropriation from the Legislative Assembly is $296,022,000. (interpretation ends) This represents a 3.6 per cent increase from the 2025-2026 main estimates. (interpretation) The corporation's total operating budget will be approximately $322.8 million, (interpretation ends)

(interpretation) The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2023-2024 annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 6, 2024. Members look forward to the timely tabling of the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 annual reports.

In January 2025, the Government of Nunavut discontinued the practice of issuing (interpretation ends) letters of expectation to the boards of directors of the territory's five major public agencies, including Nunavut Housing Corporation. The Department of Finance's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "support the establishment of formal agreements with the five territorial corporations regarding their fiscal and governance responsibilities, relationship with the Government of Nunavut, and annual reporting requirements." The standing committee encourages the government to ensure that these new governance tools include strategic

direction to the relevant public agencies and that they be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The *2025 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut: Public Housing in Nunavut* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 26, 2025. The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held a televised hearing on the report from September 4-5, 2025. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's *Action Plan Improving Public Housing Delivery: A Response to the 2025 Performance Audit by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada* was published in September 2025.

Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of the corporation's implementation of the action plan.

The corporation's 2025-2026 business plan indicated that "in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, the corporation undertook a full review of the current local governance and delivery model to determine whether improvements can be made." (interpretation) The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that (interpretation ends) "19 local housing organizations operate as housing associations under the *Societies Act* with elected boards, while six operate as housing authorities under the *Nunavut Housing Corporation Act* with boards appointed by the minister. This decentralized governance model strengthens local representation, but also results in variability in administrative capacity, reporting practices, and policy application across communities." The standing committee recognizes that amendments to the *Nunavut Housing Corporation Act* would be required to standardize the process by which the boards of directors of local housing organizations are selected.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recently-tabled annual report indicates that there were a total of $52.160 million in public housing rent receivables owing to local housing organizations as of March 31, 2024. This represents an increase of almost 10 per cent since the 2022-2023 fiscal year, and over 33 per cent since the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2022-2026 business plan indicated that one of its priorities was to "monitor and review the impact of collections policy and procedures to reduce local housing organization arrears, and continue to develop and implement local housing organization deficit recovery plans." The standing committee supports measures being taken to assist local housing organizations in these areas, and notes that the corporation's collection policy has recently been updated.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that it is undertaking a number of initiatives to support homeownership in the territory. These include "launching a renewed tenant-to-owner program with updated eligibility criteria, financial counselling requirements, and defined purchase pricing model" and "implementing a renewed interim financing program providing bridge financing for

qualified homeowners." The standing committee looks forward to ongoing updates on the status of these initiatives.

The Government of Nunavut's current staff housing policy was approved in April 2019. It falls under the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "collaborate with the Department of Human Resources to develop and formalize alternative housing solutions for Government of Nunavut retirees who are at risk of being without housing options." Members note that this is an emerging issue in a number of communities that primarily impacts long-term Inuit employees.

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

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mike. Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, we will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 main estimates starting on page M iv-3. We will now review the Nunavut Housing Corporation Headquarters Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The *Status of Housing Snapshot 2022* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 8, 2022. When will the next status of housing report be tabled in this Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. We do have a number of different status of housing reports. Would it be okay if the member clarifies which report they are referring to? Thank you.

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

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you. Thank you, Minister, for your response. The Nunavut Housing Corporation 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the clinic for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "finalize the contribution agreement" with the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated under the Build Canada Homes program.

As of today, what is the status of this work and what issues are unresolved? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. We have finalized the bilateral agreement with Canada for Build Canada Homes.

We are still working with Canada and NTI for any additional agreements for the Inuit affordable housing builds that would supplement that agreement. Those builds would be done with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Igluvut Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. The *Status of Housing Snapshot 2022* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 8, 2022. When will be the next status of housing report be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. We are looking at having our status update on Nunavut 3000 and our annual report updated later this summer. We are also looking at finalizing the annual report for 2024-2025 in the coming days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you for your response. The *2025 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut: Public Housing in Nunavut* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 26, 2025.

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

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's action plan, *Improving Public Housing Delivery: A Response to the 2025 Performance Audit by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada* was published in September 2025.

When will the next update on the status of the action plan be tabled in the Legislative Assembly?

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. I can commit to tabling a status update to that action plan during this sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions for the headquarters branch? Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister, and your officials.

Under the Business Plan 2026-2027, the last bullet collaborated with the Department of Human Resources, Department of Family Services, and Nunavut Arctic College to enhance pre-employment training initiatives.

I would like to ask what training-specific programs are being developed to prepare individuals for employment opportunities within housing and construction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Qavvik. Minister Lyall.

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

This past spring, we had the opportunity to attend the opening ceremonies of the student-led builds in Rankin Inlet for the trade school. These builds were led by students of the trade school in partnership with Pewapun Construction, a Manitoba-based construction company.

Students within that program had the opportunity to come through the construction period from start to finish. One of those duplexes have since been completed, and the other two are on track to be completed.

That was a partnership between the Nunavut Arctic College and Family Services, and we are hoping that coming in with the new awards for contracts, we could have components of local training and capacity building within them, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister. Are you able to provide for the allocations of the housing constructions from the Build Canada Homes agreement? When is the latest? Are we expecting it by this summer? Are we expecting it by this fall? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. For this sealift we can provide that later this fall when we have all of our contracts finalized for this sealift.

As that funding agreement does not cover 100 per cent of the costs for these new builds, and we do rely on an appropriation from the government, that would still be planned a year over year pending the approval of a capital investment for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

The plans for the builds generally mirror the plans in Nunavut 3000 for construction builds, where possible.

There are also variances in there for land readiness and community readiness and the ability to have a contractor come into the community that falls within the budgeted amount. So there may be variances within that plan, but we do mirror quite closely what is in the Nunavut 3000 plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. The action item on fiscal year 2027-2028, develop an options paper to support employees in staff housing transition to private rentals, affordable rentals and home ownership, what specific options are being considered to help employees move from staff housing into the private market? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

Employees from the Government of Nunavut have the ability to apply into all of our home ownership programs. Aside from that, we have the Nunavut Affordable Housing Supply Incentive, NAHSI, which helps as an incentive to accelerate the construction of affordable housing units across Nunavut.

We are working with the private-sector Inuit organizations to come in and develop affordable rentals to fill in that gap within our housing continuum.

This is a forgivable loan if the affordability is maintained over ten years, minimum, for those affordable housing units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions for Headquarters branch? Do members agree with the Nunavut Housing Corporation Headquarters Branch?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page M iv-4. We'll now review the Nunavut Housing Corporation Debt Repayment Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I recall, what is the current debt within the public housing across the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Qavvik. Minister Lyall.

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

We have been working with the local housing organizations across Nunavut on their collections activities. Currently we're at approximately $50 million in rental arrears for public housing across the territory.

Right now we're working with a company to assist each of the local housing organizations in their rental collections, and helping them to help individuals build that plan to be able to pay back any arrears that they may owe.

Our priority is to trying to ensure that those are as up-to-date as possible, and trying to avoid terminations or evictions when possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Chair. In regard to debt repayment, you mentioned that the $50 million that still has to be collected in debt repayment.

Coming to the end of this coming fiscal year, the 2025-2026 fiscal year ended, what are your realistic numbers that you feel that you will collect in regards to this debt repayment of 50 million? Thank you.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question.

As of March 2025, the rental arrears of public housing tenants is approximately 50.7 million, down from the 52.1 million in 2024. Approximately 22.2 million are over seven years old.

And, again, we have the LHOs working with an independent organization in assistance in their rent collections activities. In fiscal year 2025-2026, NHC collected $6.7 million in rent repayments through the mandatory rent deduction program, where government

employees who are residing in public housing now have their rent automatically deducted, so we are seeing some of these rental arrears lessen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions for the Debt Repayment Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Nunavut Housing Corporation Debt Repayment Branch?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page M v-5, and we will now review the District Housing Corporation District Offices Branch. Do members have any questions? I don't have any hands up for this. Do members agree with Nunavut District Corporation District Offices Branch?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page, M-iv-6. We will now review the Nunavut Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Program Public Housing Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The local housing associations are required under the *Territorial Societies Act* to submit annual financial statements and items to the Registrar of Societies.

As of today, which of Nunavut's local housing associations are currently not in good standing, and what specific efforts are being made to address the situation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. Currently right now all of the local housing organizations are in good standing. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Lyle. Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister, for your response.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that in 2023-2024 fiscal year and also 2024-2025 fiscal year, the corporation undertook a full review of the current local governance and delivery model to determine whether improvements can be made.

Will amendments to the *Nunavut Housing Corporation Act* be introduced to standardize the process by which the board of directors of local housing organizations are selected? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that question. NHC did undergo a governance review and stakeholder engagement, and implementation planning regarding LHO governance and service delivery review.

No decisions have since been made regarding governance restructuring. Additional engagement activities will be required to reach that decision, and continued consultations with Inuit organizations, local housing organizations, regional stakeholders and community representatives would need to happen before a decision can be reached on this topic. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister, for your response.

I just wanted make a comment in regards to the longstanding. I would just like to commend the Nunavut Housing Corporation's efforts to ensure that the local house associations are in good standing, and I was quite shocked to hear that every one of the local housing associations is in good standing.

As we know, a lot of societies in our Nunavut territory are not in good standing. So I just want to make a comment and applaud the Nunavut Housing Corporation's efforts in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Kuliktana. Minister Lyall, would you like to reply to the comment?

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for that comment.

A lot of great work is happening at the local level, and within our local housing organizations, managing a housing stock for a majority of our communities, it's a majority of the housing within that community, so a lot of great work is happening at that local level. It is so important to recognize them, and I thank the member for their recognition of our local housing organizations.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions for members under the Affordable Housing Program Public Housing Branch? Mr. Porter.

Mr. Porter: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On June 1, 2020, the Nunavut Housing Corporation issued a request for proposal to undertake a review of the public housing rent scale. The report from the review was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 16, 2021.

Is the Nunavut Housing Corporation considering making any changes to the current public housing rent scale? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Porter. Minister Lyall.

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

We do recognize the escalated cost of the program due to increased utility costs and costs of living costs across Canada and the territory.

Right now we are not looking at any changes to the rent scale with all of the other programs that we have continuing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Mr. Porter? No? Good. Any other questions? Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2023-2024 Annual Report indicated that a total of 52.16 million in public rent total housing arrears was owed to local housing organizations.

As of today, what is the total amount of arrears? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. We might have heard that, but Minister Lyall.

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

As of March 31, 2025, there are approximately 50.7 million in rental arrears for the corporation. We're currently still within our audit phase for this fiscal year, and we can return with updated numbers for this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions from members on Affordable Housing Program Public Housing Branch? Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2022-2026 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities was to monitor and review the impact of collections policy and procedures to reduce local housing organization arrears, and continue to develop and implement local housing organization deficit recovery plans.

As of today, which local housing organizations are in deficit, and what is the size of each LHO's deficit? Thank you, Chair.

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

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

Currently right now, for individual local housing organizations that are in the deficit position, we do have four in a deficit position as of March 2025. Those are: Chesterfield Inlet, for an annual operating deficit of 85,000; Repulse Bay, with an annual operating deficit of 556,000; Whale Cove of 121,000; and Grise Fiord of 56,000. Sorry, that's a cumulative deficit, okay, of annual operated deficits.

So I ended off with Grise. Then Sanikiluaq of 385,000; the LHO in Gjoa Haven of 630,000; Kugluktuk of 189,000. Those are the LHOs with an annual operating deficit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: The Government of Nunavut's current staff housing policy was approved in April 2019. What changes to the policy are being considered? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. That question will actually come up under the next branch, so if you could save that for then. Mr. Qavvik, I believe you had a question.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can rule me out on this question whether it relates to, but it's in the business plan, so I'm going to ask anyway.

Out of the 1,400 targeted public housing constructions by 2030, I would like to know the current completion, construction and planned, plans for public housing builds for fiscal year 2027-2028.

And my question is, What's the number now out of 1,400, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the target?

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

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

Since the *Igluliuqatigiingniq* Nunavut 3000 plan, progress to 1,400 currently is we have 824. For completed units, we have 313. Public housing units under construction, currently we have 352. Public housing units with awarded contracts, we have 159.

And then for our targets for sealift 2027, we're targeting an additional 202 public housing units. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within those targets, is Sanikiluaq on the list for allocation and construction?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Qavvik. Minister Lyall?

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

We're within the targets for 2027 sealift. We have six units targeted for Sanikiluaq. Again, this is pending a capital appropriation and the readiness at the community level and having a contract signed for these units. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. During the life of this Assembly, I would like to see more than six units provided to the community. We're seeing 5 per cent of my constituency seeking a unit of their own.

Moving on to the action items, the first bullet, are you able to provide an update on the plans to implement a standardized territory-wide wait-list model within the new property management software, including how it will ensure real-time tracking and transparent reporting on housing allocations? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Qavvik. Minister Lyall.

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

Currently right now we're working with the local housing organizations on the development of this. There are a number of new software cloud-based applications that we're hoping to introduce in a short amount of time, and we're targeting an implementation date for Igluweb (ph), a new software system that would be utilized by all local housing organizations. So we're targeting an implementation date for March 2027. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The software will attract elders and persons requiring accessibility modifications. Will this new system include detailed tracking of

elders and individuals requiring accessibility modifications to ensure they are prioritized appropriately? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

Yes, there will be a section within the application that would track the accessibility needs of the individual with an application, or of elders in the community waitlist in there.

We are currently half way through our building condition assessments, where we are also tracking the number of accessible units within our current portfolio to be able to weigh that against the needs of the community, recognizing that this may be, it does take time to assess all of our units. We have it assessed about half to date, and that will also track how many accessible units we have to weigh with the number of applications that require accessibility. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions from members on Affordable Housing Program Public Housing Branch? Seeing none. Do members agree with the Nunavut Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Program Public Housing Branch?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page M-iv-7. And we'll now review the Nunavut Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Staff Housing Branch. I'll start with Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. The Government of Nunavut's current staff housing policy was approved in April 2019. What changes to the policy are being considered? Thank you, Chair.

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

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question.

The staff housing policy is managed and administered through the Department of Human Resources. The Nunavut Housing Corporation helps in the, manages the building portfolio of units. The policy itself, though, is managed by the Department of Human Resources. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Chair. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to collaborate with the Department of Human Resources to develop and formalize alternative housing solutions for Government of Nunavut retirees who are at risk of being without housing options.

What specific solutions are being considered? Thank you, Chair.

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

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

Currently NHC helps try and assist individuals retiring out of the Government of Nunavut, helps them to try and access public housing or affordable rental options that may be available within their communities.

We are having ongoing discussions with human resources on how we can maybe add additional programs in there, but those discussions are still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall. Any other questions for the Staff Housing branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Nunavut Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Staff Housing Branch?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page M-ii-3. Do members agree with the Nunavut Housing Corporation 2026-2027 main estimates, total operations and maintenance of $296,226,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded with the Nunavut Housing Corporation?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Any closing comments? Minister Lyall?

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Chair and members. And I thank the members for their questions and diligent review of our main estimates and business plan.

I would also like to thank all the staff members at the Nunavut Housing Corporation and our offices across Nunavut for the work that they do to support Nunavummiut in accessing housing.

I would also like to thank Peter Deegan, Vice President of Finance, and Jimmy Main, Vice President of Operations, who were not able to be here today.

I would also like to give a special thanks to our policy shop, including Adam Lightstone, our new director of policy, who's no stranger to this House; and his team, including Tatenda Chimhanda, for the work that they do behind the scenes to help prepare for appearances like this and all the work that we do in the House.

Lastly, I would like to recognize the work of our 25 local housing organizations that really push forward the delivery of housing across our communities, and for individuals at that local level. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Lyall.

>>Applause

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. There's a motion on the floor which is non-debatable. Those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? Motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

>>Committee adjourned and House resumed at 16:35

Speaker (interpretation): You may be seated. Item 21, Report of the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Pedersen.

Item 21: **Report of the Committee of the Whole**

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1, and I 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 (interpretation): Thank you. Seconder? Mr. Kuliktana. The motion is in order. Those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 22, Third Reading of Bills. Mr. Clerk, *Orders of the Day*.

Item 22: **Orders of the Day**

Mr. Clerk: Just a reminder there is a meeting of the Regular Members' Caucus at 10 a.m. in the Nanuq boardroom tomorrow morning.

(interpretation) May 28:

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: Thank you. As we adjourn for the day, just a reminder Nunavummiut Inuit, the Nunavut Agreement, if you are a beneficiary, today is the day you get to vote. If you haven't voted yet, this is your opportunity to vote today. You still have time. And we anticipate the new NTI president would be president. We'll know when that is.

Our meeting is adjourned for the day and reconvene tomorrow, May 28, Thursday, at 1:30. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:39*