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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 18, 2018****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Julie Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Infrastructure.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 103-18(3):
MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories' Marine Transportation Services delivers essential goods by tug and barge to all marine-accessible communities in the NWT. Residents rely on services to receive such items as fuel, food, and household goods, while commercial customers also require fuel, mobile equipment, and building supplies to support their businesses and provide economic growth for the territory.

Mr. Speaker, Marine Transportation Services launched its second sailing season on June 20th this year from the port of Hay River. For the 2018 sailing season, the delivery of all scheduled cargo to seven communities was achieved. In addition, over \$20 million in commercial marine services contracts were secured. By the end of the season, a total of 41 million litres of fuel and 13,000 tonnes of dry cargo had been transported by tug and barge.

Marine Transportation Services also supports employment and training opportunities in the marine sector for Northwest Territories' residents. At the peak of the 2018 delivery season, Marine Transportation Services' workforce included 153 employees. Out of these, 72 were from the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories also partnered with the Nunavut Fisheries and Marine Training Consortium earlier this year by entering into a lease with the consortium to establish a Marine Training Centre in Hay River. The training centre, which operates out of the office complex of Terminal C at the Hay River shipyard, has already supported 29 individuals

through the completion of 130 training courses. New training courses planned for the fall of 2018 include the Bridgeway Rating Program, Small Vessel Operator Proficiency, and a Fishing Master's Program with 49 students registered to date.

As Members of the House are aware, Marine Transportation Services experienced significant challenges this year. The start of the sailing season was delayed as a result of high water levels on the Mackenzie River in late June, which caused driftwood from the Liard River to take Canadian Coast Guard navigation buoys out of position. Marine Transportation Services vessels had to wait until the buoys were replaced before they could depart.

Vessel departures were further delayed by a significant volume of fuel of the appropriate specification was not delivered in time to the terminal in Hay River. As a result of these issues, sailing departures and schedules were necessarily adjusted and deliveries to communities and customers were later than planned. The Marine Transportation Services division and the Fuel Services division worked with the fuel supplier to resolve these issues, and updated sailing schedules were posted to the Department of Infrastructure's website for the information of customers.

Vessels were also met with difficult ice conditions in the Beaufort Sea. Although the Canadian Coast Guard provided icebreaker escort assistance to our vessels, conditions worsened to a point that navigation became unsafe and the ice became impassable. For the safety of the crews, we had to make the difficult decision to cancel barge services to the communities of Paulatuk, Kugluktuk, and Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that customers of the Marine Transportation Services rely on us to find ways to deliver supplies they need and we have committed to covering costs to airlift essential goods to these communities. The airlift will provide a quantity of petroleum products sufficient to maintain inventories until next summer's marine supply. Airlift of fuels will amount to no less than 700,000 litres. A significant portion of the deck cargo for all three communities will also be airlifted and prioritized on

a commodity-by-commodity and customer-by-customer basis.

Mr. Speaker, appropriate budgets have been set aside under the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund for the airlift of petroleum products and the Marine Transportation Services Revolving Fund for the airlift of cargoes. Actual costs will depend on the aircraft that are chartered.

As a result of this year's challenges, Marine Transportation Services will be taking additional steps to help mitigate similar situations should they arise in the future. We will attempt to move schedules forward for community resupply and depart from the Arctic communities as soon as conditions are ice-free. Communications will also be improved by developing a closer working relationship between headquarters and operational staff. Additional customer service representatives have been hired for Marine Transportation Services and the processes are being established to improve response times for website updates and community outreach.

Marine Transportation Services is in contact with the Canadian Coast Guard throughout the navigational season and we regularly exchange information concerning weather and ice conditions. We will endeavour to strengthen our partnership with the Coast Guard to steadily continue to monitor conditions going forward. A working group has already been established with the Coast Guard, providing additional opportunities to cooperate with the federal government on marine issues such as improved navigation.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made a mandate commitment to strengthen connections with public sector partners in transportation infrastructure. This includes working with the federal government to maintain federal commodity resupply port facilities and marine services in the Northwest Territories, to restore safe marine operating conditions in the Port of Hay River and at key sections of the Mackenzie River Corridor, and to improve charting and navigational aids.

This month in Hay River, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Government of Canada announced an investment of \$19.5 million under the Oceans Protection Plan to procure four double-hulled barges. The addition of these four barges to the Marine Transportation Services fleet will optimize delivery to communities by providing an increased reliability and efficiency while providing enhanced protection to help mitigate risks to the environment. As well, the Government of Canada announced a significant investment in the harbour infrastructure in Hay River. This investment

includes the construction of new floating docks and an extension of the concrete marginal wharf.

These announcements advance our mandate commitments and mark an important milestone in the future of marine operations in the North. This funding will help to stabilize the cost of living, provide increased protection of the marine environment, and support the efficiency of resupply to the Northwest Territories' marine-served northern communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories remains committed to the safe and effective delivery of marine resupply services to communities. We will take this year's challenges as an opportunity to learn and improve our operations in order to prepare for a successful season next year. We will also continue to investigate additional opportunities to partner with the federal government to invest in the marine sector to capture economic opportunities, improve marine landings, enhance charting, and improve navigation along our key marine corridors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 104-18(3):
MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the key priority areas of our government's mandate was to address the needs of individuals affected by mental health and addictions. That is why we released Mind and Spirit: Promoting Mental Health and Addictions Recovery in the Northwest Territories. This is our strategic framework that helps guide our work in this area. I would like to provide an update on some important initiatives that we are taking to enhance and improve services in the mental health and addictions area.

One important achievement for our government when it comes to addressing the complex relationship between homelessness, mental health, and addictions, is the successful opening of our new Day Shelter and Sobering Centre here in Yellowknife.

This combined centre will reduce pressure on our first responders and emergency department. It will include links to services to meet the basic needs like obtaining identification and access to housing, but also the longer-term needs like employment, social supports, and long-term treatment. The new centre has more staff and more services and will allow clients and providers to collaboratively take the next step in improving health, wellness, and outcomes.

Additionally, this location will now offer flexible spaces that provide opportunities to leverage partnerships with organizations like the city of Yellowknife's Street Outreach program and the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation. These partnerships will enable the delivery of programming that is relevant to the people accessing the Day Shelter and the Sobering Centre in a familiar and trusting environment. This represents a positive step towards the delivery of person-centered, recovery-oriented services.

Mr. Speaker, another important achievement this year is the implementation of the new Mental Health Act, which came into force on September 1st.

The Mental Health Act is one piece of the overall service continuum for mental health, but it is an extremely important tool in how we care for some of the most vulnerable residents. The new act brings with it a number of improvements to the way we will provide care to individuals with mental disorders:

- The first is patient rights. This act contains a very strong focus on patient rights. The act and regulations outline specific ways that patients need to be made aware of their rights. At each step in the involuntary admission process, health professionals must notify and remind patients of their rights. They will do this verbally and by providing the patient written information. In addition, posters listing the rights of people detained under the new act will be posted in all health facilities.
- The second is the establishment of the Mental Health Act Review Board. The Review Board exists to provide better protection for individual rights. Any person being held under the Mental Health Act, who wishes to appeal a decision made by their health professional has the right to apply to the Review Board.
- Lastly, the new act has provisions for assisted community treatment. Assisted community treatment is a new option for involuntary patients. In cases where the physician has assessed it to be safe and where the patient agrees, involuntary patients can be supported to live outside of the hospital, in the community, according to a comprehensive, individualized treatment plan. While this will not be a fit for all involuntary patients, it does represent an important option that will provide a less restrictive model of care and enhanced safeguards.

Mr. Speaker, while these initiatives I have spoken about represent significant and important work towards an improved approach to the delivery of mental health and addiction services, we know that

there is still a lot of work to be done. As such, we are developing a Mental Health and Addictions Recovery Action Plan.

While the Mental Health and Addictions Recovery Action Plan is in the final stages of development, it will focus on activities that enhance community and land-based approaches to care, increase integration and collaboration, and improve access to mental health and addiction services. The action plan will also feature aftercare services and supports based on best practice approaches and direction from Members and from NWT residents. There will be an enhanced focus on aftercare services and supports in the Community Counselling Program and in community-based approaches with the recognition that recovery looks different for everyone. We will also continue to partner with non-government organizations like the Tree of Peace, who also offer individualized aftercare supports.

The action plan will be released in 2018-2019 fiscal year, and will guide the delivery of mental health and addictions recovery services for the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, in an effort to improve mental wellness services and supports for children and youth, the Departments of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment have created 42 new child and youth care counsellor positions and seven clinical supervisor positions territory-wide over a four-year period, beginning in 2018.

Child and youth care counsellors will spend the majority of their time in schools in order to be accessible to children and youth, but also to provide support to teachers and other school staff. They will reach out and offer assistance to parents and families to better equip them to provide support to children and youth. Our counsellors will also have a presence in communities to ensure youth have options when it comes to accessing services. Counsellors will work year round, meaning that they will be available during the summer and school holidays like spring break.

Mr. Speaker I am pleased to advise that implementation in the Dehcho and Tlicho is well under way. Child and youth care counsellors are currently in place in Fort Simpson, Behchoko, and Whati. The counsellor for Fort Providence started on October 15th. The position in Fort Liard and a clinical supervisor position based in Fort Simpson are currently vacant, as is a third position in Behchoko. The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority and the Tlicho Community Services Agency are actively recruiting, working together, for these positions, and they are anticipated to be filled later this fall. Until these

positions are filled, services to the schools are being provided by existing community counselling program staff and child and youth care counsellors already in place. The Departments of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment are also preparing for the planned rollout of counsellors in the Beaufort Delta and the Sahtu regions. These regions will begin to receive funding in the 2019-2020 school year.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to making sure that NWT residents and communities have access to a variety of programs and services that will support recovery from mental health and addictions issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 105-18(3):
SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, with over 90 per cent of the NWT's businesses defined as small businesses, this sector is essential to economic health of our communities and a primary driver of economic diversification across our territory. Support from our government is more important than ever before.

This is Small Business Week in Canada. It offers us an opportunity to celebrate the successes of small businesses in the NWT and our support for the people whose life's work is the backbone of our NWT economy.

The role of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is to foster the environment in which NWT entrepreneurs and small business owners can invest, take risks, and prosper. Our regional offices provide single-window access for a suite of policies, programs, and funding that we deliver with partners like the Business Development and Investment Corporation and Community Futures organizations.

ITI's regional economic development officers have access to field specialists in tourism and minerals, mentoring, business training, market assessment, and offer an extensive knowledge of support programs from outside agencies and organizations. Every year, they host, support, or promote entrepreneur-focused training events, from job fairs to How to Start a Business seminars and workshops on how to market and price home-based arts and crafts products.

Mr. Speaker, in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, \$17.6 million was provided by our government to individuals, entrepreneurs, businesses, governments, and groups with an economic interest across the NWT. It included, of course,

contributions made under our Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development, or SEED, Policy.

Our government made a commitment in our mandate to update our SEED programs to better align with the needs of NWT entrepreneurs and businesses, especially in our smaller communities. Last year, we increased the amount of funding available under SEED to better help northern businesses develop new products, build capacity, promote their services, or purchase needed equipment.

We also piloted a new Strategic Investments stream to allow for one-time contributions of up to \$75,000 for business proposals that directly increase the business and economic activities of a community.

We know that, for small businesses, accessing capital from mainstream commercial lenders can be challenging. Last year, the Department of ITI facilitated a workshop on this issue with CanNor, the NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation, the Business Development Bank of Canada, the Metis-Dene Development Fund, and several of our Community Futures Development Corporations. The department continues to evaluate and act on what we have learned from this opportunity, assessing that we are doing the right thing, what we can strengthen, and where there are overlaps or gaps.

Meanwhile, we remain committed to working with chambers across the NWT. One of many examples includes how the NWT and Yellowknife chambers plan the Opportunities North 2019 Conference to be held in Yellowknife next year. The chambers serve as advocates for entrepreneurs and business, and as such provide us valuable feedback on how best to grow business in the North.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to the principle that the NWT businesses deserve a leg up over southern competition when they do public business. We remain committed to the Business Incentive Policy and have defended it through successive national and international trade negotiations.

We are also working to ensure that, through our NWT Manufactured Products Policy, the manufactured goods that our government needs are sourced from NWT businesses who can get the job done. As the GNWT moves forward with investments in the Manufacturing Strategy which is under development, the Agriculture Strategy, Film Strategy, Commercial Fishing Strategy and Tourism 2020, we are working to ensure that the small businesses that drive these sectors are set up to succeed.

While I will be pleased to be a part of the events and awards that will mark Small Business Week, I assure Members of this Legislative Assembly that this sector is at the forefront of our approach to economic growth and diversification all year long, and will continue to be well into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Deputy Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 106-18(3):
PREMIER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Premier will be absent from the House today to attend the Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Minister's Statement 101-18(3) delivered by the honourable Minister of Infrastructure regarding Marine Transportation services be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Minister's statement 103-18(3) has now moved into committee for further consideration. Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MARY EFFIE SNOWSHOE – INDSPIRE AWARD
RECIPIENT

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate elder Mary Effie Snowshoe from Fort MacPherson. Mary Effie was recently in Ottawa to accept the Indspire Award for Culture, Heritage, and Spirituality.

At 82 years old, she grew up being taught the Gwich'in traditional way of life from her parents, hunting, fishing, trapping, preparing food, and tanning moose hides. Mary Effie continues to pass on her knowledge to family, as well as visitors to the community and visitors to her fish camp.

Up until 2003, Jijuu Mary Effie taught the Gwich'in language for 24 years, until she retired.

Retirement is not in her vocabulary, Mr. Speaker, as she continues to help with the traditional activities in the community and school, as well as playing host to numerous traditional teachings at her fish camp. Mary Effie has a wealth of stories to share, each with spiritual meaning. She is eager to take you by the hand to teach you on-the-land survival skills.

We are fortunate to have elders such as Mary Effie in our community. We have so much to learn, and we should take advantage of such wise women. Congratulations, Jijuu Mary Effie Snowshoe. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EXPANDING TOURISM PRODUCTS AND
OPPORTUNITIES

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Small Business Week, and to shine a light on small business in the tourism sector in particular. There is more we can do to build on and enhance their success and to enrich the experience and opportunities of visitors to the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I went to Iceland at the beginning of June for 10 days. Seven of those days were spent on a carefully curated knitting tour of western Iceland. The remainder was spent in and around the capital city of Reykjavik. The scenery was breathtaking, the people were hospitable, and the possibilities for activities, and purchases, were endless. I can't wait to go back.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT has a lot to offer on both the scenery and hospitality fronts, but we must find new ways to support small businesses that offer tourists more to do while they are here. The simple math is that, the longer visitors stay, the more they spend. The labour-intensive multiplier effects of this spending are enormous. Yellowknife is a popular destination, with tens of thousands of tourists spending millions of dollars here annually.

The limiting factor to phenomenal growth we have seen is the lack of things to do. It is at best a three-night destination for most travellers. Some active tourists may even say that length of time is too long. Aurora viewing and dog sledding are well-established in Yellowknife, along with day trips and various cultural activities, but additional indoor activities in and around Yellowknife are limited, especially at this time of year, when it is not summer and it is not winter, either.

Since tourism businesses are usually small businesses, they need a hand with research and development of additional activities for visitors. The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment has a program to meet this need, but it could be working more effectively. The Minister has said that submissions exceed available funds by a significant amount. The program's website says that it is not taking applications at this time. Clearly, this is a program that needs a bigger budget. Let me reiterate the need for a top-class tourism information centre. The lack of a centre is ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, Iceland has grown its tourism economy almost tenfold in 10 years, and that is in spite of the fact that it is an expensive place to visit. The Icelandic government has made investment in this sector a priority. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi, colleagues. The Icelandic government has made investment in this sector a priority, and the metrics of money earned and people employed are impressive. It is time for our government to increase its investment in product diversification, so that visitors will, as I said, stay longer and spend more. I will have questions for the Minister of ITI. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AND AWARDS GALA

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am happy to see the haze in the House has cleared from yesterday. Okay, bad joke number five.

Mr. Speaker, the Yellowknife Chamber's Small Business Week Conference was held earlier this week, and tomorrow night the business community will be honoured at the Chamber's Business Awards Gala. These events reflect on the importance of entrepreneurs and creators. These are people in our communities who take the leap of faith that their idea, new concept, or original breakthrough will pay off and create something of value, and no business idea ever succeeds without the basic component of hard work.

In the 18th Assembly, we have adopted a mandate goal of growing and diversifying the economy, and small business should be a huge part of that goal. My own riding is home to many small businesses that create a busy, thriving atmosphere. From

artisans to airlines to restaurants to tour operators, Yellowknife North is a busy hub of activity throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce, which works hard in support of the business community. This week's conference is only one of many activities the Chamber promotes. It sponsors the annual trade show, which brings together businesses from the whole territory to promote products and services from northern entrepreneurs. It sponsors networking and sharing opportunities to facilitate the growth of ideas and build connections. It supports apprenticeships and learning opportunities to facilitate learning and growth for young people entering the workforce.

As a government with a mandate to support economic growth and diversification, we must make sure our funding programs and policies ease the way for businesses to grow and prosper. We must ensure that our regulations don't overcomplicate and delay the processes for licensing, permitting, and building at a time that is crucial for the growth of a start-up. We must commit and recommit to supporting this vital economic sector.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this year's Business Awards received a record 143 nominations. I would like to congratulate all the award nominees for their dedication and hard work, and I would like to thank the Chamber once again for their ongoing support of the business community in Yellowknife and the entire NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN TU NEDHE-WIILIDEH

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about small businesses in the communities that I represent. First, I would like to share some employment statistics about the four communities in the riding. According to Stats Canada, in 2016 the average employment rate in Canada was 60.2 per cent, whereas in the NWT, it sat at 66.2. Comparatively, Fort Resolution's employment rate is 49.3 per cent; Lutselk'e, 45.7; Detah was 44.4; and Ndilo was 26.5 per cent. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, almost three quarters of your working-age people do not have jobs.

Mr. Speaker, with this dismal employment rate in these small communities, any type of work, whether it comes from small business or otherwise, is welcomed. Over the years I have been in the House, I have pushed for employment opportunities

to develop within the riding of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. While some of these opportunities have been realized over the years, many have not. Today I would like to reiterate some small business ideas that I believe will be beneficial to the communities I represent.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, I discussed the dire need for a daycare in Lutselk'e. Many people feel that there are various long-term benefits to children who attend daycare prior to attending school.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the entire riding of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh is in need of small businesses targeted at cleaning up the hundreds of waste and contaminated sites across the riding. To help facilitate the growth of such businesses, there will be a need to train heavy equipment operators and people that are skilled in determining when a waste site has been fully remediated.

Mr. Speaker, tourism is an industry that is booming in the City of Yellowknife. While it has a positive impact on Detah and Ndilo, some of these tourism opportunities should be afforded to Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all the communities in Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh will gain meaningful work from the commercial fishing industry. Arts and crafts and performing arts can also see an emergence in small communities, as we have many talented artists in our riding.

Lastly, but not least, Mr. Speaker, there are businesses that wish to get into the cultivation and distribution of legal cannabis. Yesterday was a good indication that small businesses need some sort of distribution centre. Additionally, I believe the soil conditions in many communities are ideal for growing cannabis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Small Business Week and the many challenges facing this community for continued stability and sound going concern while recognizing the many contributions created by our NWT small business community, right from household income to property taxes.

Mr. Speaker, aside from governments and industry, in my region, we have the small business. Isolation by itself, Mr. Speaker, is of huge concern. Isolation creates barriers of limitation to supply, recruiting skilled labour, and the marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, our government through strategic engagements is providing land access certainty, and I look forward to the capital inclusion of our physical framework. These, Mr. Speaker, would contribute to supports for our small business community.

Mr. Speaker, this Tuesday I will support small business by attending the Oscar and Bear River Bridge public engagement consultation meetings, opportunities by construction. Later, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's Small Business Week. Whether you need auto work done, a veterinarian for your little companion, landscapers, metal working, a building built, area cleared, or road built, Kam Lake is the economic engine of the capital city. With that in mind, our priority in this House must be to foster continued economic growth, remain competitive, and create well-paying jobs for the middle class and everyone working hard to join it.

The GNWT must remain committed to helping northern creators, innovators, and entrepreneurs target, explore, and take advantage of global opportunities in key business markets, just like the fine entrepreneurs of Kam Lake have done. I want to give a shout out to a few of these businesses, a non-exhaustive list. Energy Wall, Arctic Farmer, Polar Tech, Paul Bros NEXtreme, Boreal Garden, Ron's Auto, Fiberglass North, CR Enterprises are all fine examples of hard-working northern entrepreneurs that show they have got what it takes to remain resilient and economically viable and profitable in an often difficult economic market.

That leads me to my next point, Mr. Speaker, which is how the GNWT supports its business community through funding. The Minister earlier today spoke about the SEED program and the contributions from BDIC. BDIC has a budget of up to \$200,000 for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, and the SEED program is budgeted at \$3.866 million. These are great programs, and they are very popular, but they are often oversubscribed. In fact, in the North Slave region, ITI's SEED money has run out; BDIC's start-up money for entrepreneurs ran out within two months of this fiscal year. These are very concerning for entrepreneurs who want to get into the market. It's great that we celebrate them in this House on Small Business Week and throughout the year, but we need to do more than simply talk. We

need to put up the capital that they need to get going.

I am glad the Minister is working on this, but we need more than just a workshop. We need to put money into these budgets to further advance the conditions of economic growth that have been so successful in the past, so I will have questions for the Minister, and I hope he has good answers that are more than about studying the problem and actually investing much-needed capital into our private sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PERSIS GRUBEN - 100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saturday, October 20th is a special day for the community of Tuktoyaktuk. I am grateful to witness the 100th birthday celebration for Mrs. Persis Gruben along with her family, friends, relatives, and many people from other communities around the Northwest Territories. This day is a milestone for Persis, her family, and the community of Tuktoyaktuk. She is the first person who anyone knows who has reached the milestone age of 100 years old in Tuktoyaktuk.

Mr. Speaker, Persis has seen throughout her century on earth a challenging yet rewarding lifetime for her and her late husband Charlie Gruben. Together, they had 12 children who they raised and passed on their traditional knowledge and culture as Inuvialuit to their children. To date, Persis has a thriving, huge family from an estimated number of 60 to 70 grandchildren, 110 great-grandchildren, and over 65 great-great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Persis was born to Sarah Kay and her biological father, Lymin Koe, on October 20, 1918, at the Peel River. Lymin had tragically and unfortunately passed on in an accident before Persis was born.

Mr. Speaker, Persis is fluent in Gwich'in and Inuvialuktun and speaks both languages better than anyone they know. Her mother, Sarah, remarried an Inuvialuit man, Lennie Inglangasuk, whom she called "Dad" and loved him dearly, and he accepted and loved Persis as his very own. Mr. Speaker, Lennie taught Persis the Inuvialuit way of life and the language that she speaks today and orally shares her teaching of the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit cultures and traditions to all generations after 1918.

Mr. Speaker, she is the eldest of five children Sarah and Lennie had. Today, she still lives in

Tuktoyaktuk in her very own home, where she feels the most comfort and familiarity with her surroundings. Today, I would like to commend Persis Gruben for her almost 100 years on earth and the sharing of her knowledge, tradition, and culture to all who cross her path. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, October 20th, please take a moment to think about Persis as she turns 100 years old. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON K'ATLODEECHE RESERVE ACCESS ROAD

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the K'atloodeeche Reserve Access Road starts at the junction of Highway No. 5, just by the bridge over the Hay River, running along the east side of the river into the Hay River Reserve. As our only access point to the community when the Hay River is flowing in the summer months, our people rely heavily on the road. The road is our lifeline for seven months and is the only access from the community into the town of Hay River and the rest of the highway system. Mr. Speaker, [English translation not provided.]

As early as March 12th of this year, I made a statement in this House discussing exactly this issue, to which the Minister of Infrastructure committed to continue to have a look at it going forward. Mr. Speaker, it is now October, and we have not seen any improvements. In fact, the road, which was chipsealed in 2010, has completely broken up, and some sections have reverted back to gravel. Conditions have drastically deteriorated. This is a serious issue to our community and an embarrassment when we hosted guests for the annual hand games tournament and the Dene National Assembly this past summer.

Mr. Speaker, the access road is only a few kilometres long, a short stretch to Highway No. 5. I find it perplexing that our First Nations' needs continue to be overlooked. I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure later. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LIABILITY CAPS IN OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Our government passed mirror legislation and regulations for resource management that came into effect as part of the devolution process. In the Oil and Gas Operations Act, section 52 allows for the making of regulations under this legislation. The

Oil and Gas Spills and Debris Liability Regulations were made under this authority and set absolute liability limits of between \$10 and \$40 million, depending on the location of a spill or debris caused by oil and gas exploration and production. If damages exceed the absolute liability limits, then all parties may be responsible for the oil and gas spill, especially with onshore areas that we regulate now. This means that the GNWT and our taxpayers may be on the hook if damages exceed these caps. The same caps are in place in federal legislation for the offshore and have not been changed in 30 years. That means that, if we cannot prove fault or negligence, the public pays for whatever disasters may be created.

This is the offshore, but the Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico cost British Petroleum more than \$90 billion in fines and settlements. Lost tourism revenues totalled more than \$23 billion alone. In October 2011, the US Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Services was dissolved after it was determined it had exercised poor oversight for the drilling industry. Three new agencies were placed at separating the regulation, leasing, and revenue collection responsibilities, respectively.

Countries such as Norway and Greenland have no liability caps, and the Auditor General of Canada recommended in 2012 that the caps on the Canadian offshore be reviewed and changed.

Clearly, the liability caps set in GNWT regulations for oil and gas operations are not consistent with the polluter pays principle. They are outdated compared to other jurisdictions and international experience. Why on earth would Cabinet cap liability on damages that could run into the hundreds of billions of dollars? Why has the Minister not changed to remove the liability caps in more than four years since devolution?

I will have questions for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, who sets the regulations, manages leasing, and collects revenues from oil and gas development and is also the promoter of such development. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's Small Business Week. It's the time to celebrate small businesses and their contributions to our economy, and the perfect time to start discussing how to better utilize the untapped potential that this government has to help support our small businesses. We all know that we must

diversify our economy, and small businesses are absolutely essential to doing so. However, Mr. Speaker, it seems like, when it comes to big mining companies, this government is willing to bend over backwards, but it often seems like they are barely willing to lift a finger to help small businesses. An advocacy group for small businesses, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, agrees. The annual report card it produces has given the GNWT more failing grades than any other jurisdiction in Canada.

Now, don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to diminish the good work that the staff of ITI do with what little they are given. My concern is that one of the smallest departments in the GNWT seems to be the only one working to help small businesses.

The GNWT's motto is "One Government. One Voice." Well, maybe I have been working too hard or not getting enough sleep, Mr. Speaker, because I have been hearing multiple voices. Instead of a cohesive, cross-departmental approach to small business development, we have departments operating in silos, with most of them claiming that business development isn't in their mandate. In other words, "It's not my job." Well, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance handles payments and policies. The Department of Infrastructure and the Housing Corporation handle procurement. ECE deals with labour development and training. ITI has business support and diversification units. It sounds to me like small business development is everyone's job.

We have been told that this government has just proposed its biggest-ever capital budget. What better way to support small businesses than by spending hundreds of millions of dollars? Unfortunately, other than putting the projects out there, the government has done nothing to capitalize on this opportunity to help develop small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, it's time that this government develops a comprehensive, cross-departmental approach to small business development. Entrepreneurs are out there every day busting their backs to keep people employed, and it's time that this government stops taking them for granted and gives them the support they deserve. They don't get the opportunity to say, "It's not my job," and we shouldn't, either. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to the people in the gallery today with us; Mr. Ernie Bernhardt, former Member of the 12th Legislative Assembly for Kugluktuk region at that time. Welcome to our Assembly.

I would like to welcome some visitors here, as well. We have here with us Chief Electoral Officer for Yukon Territory, Mr. Max Harvey, who is accompanied by the Northwest Territories Chief Electoral Officer, Nicole Latour. Mr. Harvey is in Yellowknife to learn about the direction of best practices of our election management body. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Harvey and Ms. Latour to the House this afternoon. Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the mayor-elect of Yellowknife and my constituent, Rebecca Alty. I would also like to recognize Nicole Latour, who is also my constituent, and thank her for her ongoing work running elections in our territory. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank a couple of the Pages from Hay River North, Ms. Charlotte Buth and Ms. Josee Touesnard, who have been here with us all week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to start by recognizing a constituent, David Wasylciw. I would also like to recognize our new mayor, Rebecca Alty, who went through the Women's Campaign School. I would also like to recognize Nicole Latour, who actually helped facilitate one of our campaign schools. Campaign schools for women work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize a couple of Pages in the Assembly from Inuvik. We have Amber Lennie-Ipana and we have Kyra Buckle, who are both from Inuvik. I would like to thank them for the work they do, plus all the Pages for the work they do, looking after the Members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Ernie Bernhardt. Mr. Bernhardt has been one of the founders of the Northern Games in Arctic Sports and he has been an avid coach during Arctic sports through all the Arctic Winter Games and the Northern Games and the Circumpolar Games around the Arctic. Ernie, thank you for your traditional knowledge and what you bring to the games year after year.

I would also like to recognize the mayor-elect, Ms. Rebecca Alty, and also everyone else in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we are missing anyone in the gallery, welcome to our Chambers. It's always great to have an audience as part as our proceedings. Masi. Item 6, acknowledgments. Member for Yellowknife North.

Acknowledgments

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the life of Yellowknife North resident, Dusty Miller, who left us last summer at age 99.

Miller was the last remaining Veteran of WWII living in Yellowknife. He and his wife raised four children in the north, and served the Royal Canadian Legion for sixty years. He was a familiar face at Remembrance Day ceremonies, and recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013 for community service.

Members, please join me in applauding and acknowledging the life and contributions of Dusty Miller. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgments. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 412-18(3): INCREASING INVESTMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. The tourism industry, as we know, continues to grow, and spending more money on product diversification makes sense, but the budget for this program is over-subscribed and it is now currently unavailable. What is the Minister's plan to increase investment in this vital program? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, ITI has to work within the constraints of the budgetary process and the money that we are allocated. We have had a serious look at the SEED Program. This House knows that. We looked at it last year. We have changed things around to try to make things better for entrepreneurs by changing certain parameters around programs and having regional supports. We will continue to do that within the budget that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: As I understand that answer, two points are prominent. One is that it is our fault for not asking, and the other is that SEED is the alternative. Are those, in fact, the case?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I will get used to standing up today here. Yes, she could take some of the blame if she wants, the Member, for not asking. The budgetary process is done by all Members of this House, and we know how it is allocated. The budget that ITI has, that is what I have to prescribe to. I can make my case as we go through these deliberations with my Cabinet Members, but there is only so much money to go around for the whole Northwest Territories. That is what I have been allocated, and that is what I will continue to work with.

MS. GREEN: As the Minister knows, the Tourism 2020 plan is moving towards expiry. I am interested to know what work is taking place now to create Tourism 2025.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, 2020 is coming due, and we have made successful milestones. As all Members of this House know, we have already achieved probably what we wanted to there as far as number of tourists coming to the Northwest Territories and the amount of money spent in the NWT. We will continue to work on that. We will probably be releasing some of those numbers shortly, of last year's visitations and money spent in the NWT, and I think most Members will be happy.

We will be working closely with all proponents, being us and Members of this House, for feedback, as well as NWT Tourism to develop 2025. I just came back from an FPT on tourism, so I have some new information that was presented to us from various proponents across the country of challenges around tourism right across the country that we will try to implement in our new strategy as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have seen incredible growth in tourism during the period of the Tourism 2020 plan, and this sector of our economy needs more support than it currently gets. My question for the Minister is: will the new plan include more money for both community investment and product development than the current plan has? Thank you.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: We are a victim of our own success. I have said that in this House before. Build it, and they will come. That is what happened around tourism, and that is what is happening particularly in the region of Yellowknife.

The numbers are increasing every year. There are all kinds of challenges around that, but as we move forward with the 2025 plan, we are going to have to have deliberations around budgets and stuff, and I am going to have to make the case going forward for what tourism needs in the Northwest Territories. I will have to make the case in a significant way that the Finance Minister and Cabinet Members will divvy up the money accordingly. This is a priority for the Government of the Northwest Territories for all of the Members in this House, and we will pursue that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 413-18(3):
SEED PROGRAM INCREASED FUNDING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is good to see that we have gotten into a discussion around ITI's available funding for entrepreneurs. I want to talk about the SEED program.

The Minister has spoken about increasing the funding criteria for entrepreneurs, but the Minister didn't actually make more funding dollars available, which means that the complete allocation is being spent, but fewer businesses are receiving funding. In fact, the funding for agriculture, film, and manufacturing strategies have been taking it out of the SEED program. They don't represent new funding. When is the Minister going to put new funding into this program and start to grow the economy even more than we have already managed to achieve? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have mentioned, there is only so much money that this government has. We have our processes and deliberations on how we want to spend that money, and everyone in this House is included. This is what I have been allocated, and I

will continue to fight for more money for my department, but as the Member quite knows, there is not enough money to go around for everything this government wants to achieve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: It seems that, when we have an immediate need, we can find the money. We can find money for barges; \$16 million conjured out of thin air. I wonder if the Minister can answer this question: does he think it is acceptable that available funding for entrepreneurs is running out within two to three months of the fiscal year?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: This money is to help entrepreneurship. It is not to support a business and keep them in business. This is to help support business. Let's make it quite clear. Businesses are an entrepreneurial-driven thing. The Government of the Northwest Territories is not in the business of being in business. Let's make that very clear.

I am one of the few people in this House who is a businessperson. My whole life, I have been a businessperson. I understand this file probably better than anyone in this House. Yes, some of these programs are stretched to their limit, but we only have so much money. What do you want me to do? Do you want me to just print money? I can't print money. If you want us to put more money into this program, I will need the support of committee; I need the support of Members on this side of the House and the residents of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to caution to the Members that the last question was asking the Minister's opinion. Be careful around that area. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be cautious around the Minister's opinions. The statements he is making around not having enough funding, I mean, he sounds more like a deputy minister than a Minister, but is the Minister prepared to make a submission to the Financial Management Board during the next round of budget deliberations to increase the available SEED funding?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I can make that submission. That is not an issue. I have already brought up the issue around the shortfall of funding from our department. We will make our case, and I will continue to do that. When it comes time to deliberate the next budget and when I have a look at the data from the SEED program, I will certainly make that decision at that point.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The data is old news. We have all known that this program is oversubscribed. I know the Minister said he can make the submission; will he make that submission, based on the debate we are having right now, and based on what he already knows, that this program is oversubscribed? Will the Minister make that submission? Yes or no? Thank you.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, I will have a look at the information when this comes up in the next budget session and make that decision going forward. I am going to have to have a hard look at this, and the Member has to have a look at this. If we are going to put more money into the SEED program, which would be great for myself, it has to come from somewhere within this House. Do you want to take it from Health? Do you want to take it from Social Services? Where do you want to take it from? Maybe the Member can give me that feedback back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 414-18(3): SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS IN SAHTU

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I liked the Minister's earlier statement there: build it, and they will come. Mr. Speaker, this is Small Business Week, and I appreciate the Minister's words about small business in his statement today. I would, however, like to ask the Minister some questions about the government's support for small business in the Sahtu region. Can the Minister give me examples of how ITI is supporting businesses in the Sahtu? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I highlighted in my statement today, we have spent \$17.6 million with the government this last year to help support individuals and businesses and governments and groups across the economic sector.

In his particular riding, we have spent \$1.6 million, but at the same time, we realized that there was a downturn with Line 21 being shut down and a lot of pressure on the small businesses in that Member's riding. We have worked very closely to realign those businesses and what they need to do. They have to target different products, services, and customers. As such, the department has worked very closely with them.

This coming week, I think it is this coming week, the Department of ITI is going out to communities outside the Member's riding of Norman Wells to all

of his smaller communities, and we are going to have an information session about how to start a small business in his region. Staff is there to assist them. In particular, our department also takes great pride in small communities in how we support and strengthen the traditional economy. We want to meet with all eligible trappers and what type of assistance is available for them, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: That leads me to my next question. The Minister mentioned the SEED program, or the SEED policy. The government's mandate for the 18th Assembly commits to updating SEED programs to better align themselves with the needs of entrepreneurial and small business owners. Can the Minister provide an update on this work?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I said earlier in my statements, we had a look at the SEED program and we realized that there were some pressures on it, and rising costs around some of these things. We got feedback from a number of NWT businesses, so we looked at changing this up. Our budget still is \$3.86 million. That is what we talked about earlier already today, and that hasn't changed at all.

What has changed is individual applicants have increased for most of our programs, so one of the changes that we made is the individual contribution under the entrepreneurs stream. The entrepreneurs support stream has increased from \$15,000 to \$25,000. Individual contributions available under the business intelligent networking stream have increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000, and entrepreneurs capped out on their contribution under the micro-business stream are now eligible to reapply in three years instead of five years.

We are also piloting a strategic investment stream in 2017 that we have renewed for this year which allows one-time contributions up to \$75,000 for individuals to meet criteria based on the mandate of increasing economic growth and diversity.

MR. MCNEELY: My next question is: the government's mandate also commits to implementing the economic opportunities strategy. That's not something we have heard about lately. Can the Minister update the House on this work?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: In fact, we were planning and providing the Members an update on this later in the session, but I'm happy to share some information right now with Members. The reason the Member hasn't heard about the economic opportunities strategy is because most of the recommendations that were made in that document become part of our mandate, and we've talked about the work as this mandate commitments. In fact, the strategy's 117

recommendations now have been addressed, and more than 70 per cent have resulted in ongoing improvements and initiatives by our government. We have begun to work investment and revitalize the Great Slave fishing industry. We are implementing the Northwest Territories immigration strategy 2017-2022. We are advancing a Northwest Territories agriculture strategy with new funding and partnership. We're developing a manufacturing strategy. Thanks to the rebate program, our film sector is thriving and generating benefits from many of our sectors of our economy.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is around the role of BDIC. It is also to be a developmental leader and to flow funding to the Northwest Territories' businesses, and that is needed most. Like the small communities in my riding, what is the GNWT doing to ensure that the BDIC provides the best value to the NWT? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: BDIC is a valuable contributor to the NWT economy. One of the things that has come up in this Assembly is the BDIC Act. It has a program review written into it every five years, and that's what we're doing right now. We're having a serious look at that. ITI is leading that work along with BDIC and its stakeholders. That work will continue, and I think most Members have a bit of an understanding of it because they have been briefed on it. The terms of reference have been finalized already, and we've shared them with standing committee. It has three main focuses, and they are: they will consider how well BDIC has achieved its objectives over the last five years; they will include an environmental scan to identify future challenges and market conditions; and consider what services and programs BDIC should have in place for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 415-18(3):

K'ATLODEECHE FIRST NATION ACCESS ROAD

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every day the Minister gets up, has his coffee, and looks across the river. Has the Minister of Infrastructure ever driven the access road to the Hay River reserve? If not, I invite him to do so, so that he can see for himself what my constituents have to endure on a daily basis. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the question is, "Have I ever driven the road?" Of course, I've driven that road. I

live in Hay River. I've been over there probably every month. I see the condition of the road. This Member has asked me questions about the road conditions there before. I've stated in this House the work that has commenced on there around drainage and these types of things and some geotechnical work. That work has been completed. That will feed into what our next plans are to do with that section of highway. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: I, myself, recently made a trip to the Hay River Reserve, and I have noticed, and I think everybody noticed that the ditches, parts of the road have been dug up, and piles have been on the side of the road for some time. In response to my questions from March 12th, the Minister committed to sending engineers to the road this past spring to do an assessment. Has this assessment been done, and what were the outcomes?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I think, instead of beating around the bush, I'm going to go right to the crux of this. The capital estimates have been tabled in the House of the Assembly, and I would be glad for the Member to ask me questions. Deliberation around this section of road is what he is referring to, and I think he will be quite happy to see what information comes out of that.

MR. NADLI: I'm very optimistic, but I'd like to see at least some action play out maybe by this spring. I'll ask the questions that most Members have on their mind: when will the Department of Infrastructure repair the access road onto the reserve?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I just referenced in my previous answer, I'm glad to answer these questions when we get into the Committee of the Whole. If the Member wants to ask me specific questions on this section of highway, I think he will be very happy with his answers.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these are the typical replies and answers that I have received from the Minister of Infrastructure. He's basically deflecting any kind of answers in the hope that he could give to people from the K'atloodchee Reserve. I've referenced the capital estimates. There's no specific reference to K'atloodchee Reserve access road. Does the Minister of Infrastructure care about the Dene and the reserve? Mahsi.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I think he is asking my opinion, and I am not going to give him the satisfaction of answering a question like that. I have made it quite clear, when we go to the Committee of the Whole, I want this Member to specifically ask

me the question about his section of road, and he will be very happy with the answer that he is going to get. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

QUESTION 416-18(3):
MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
RESUPPLY IMPACTS

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We seem to be on a roll with the last Minister's responses, and my question is for the Minister of ITI. Mr. Speaker, in the Minister's statement earlier, you mentioned the Petroleum Products Fund will help fund the airlift to the communities of Nunakput and to Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, I believe at this time the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund is a full-recovery system, and these costs may be covered by the customer. What will happen to the cost of petroleum products for Nunakput customers in 2018-2019? In other words, will the cost of gas go up in Nunakput? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, if the Member is referring to the transportation costs of what it is going to take to get the 700-and-some-thousand litres into these communities, that cost is not going to be added onto the backs of these people in these communities. The process will play out, whatever the POL, our formula, is, to increase or decrease the price of fuel and the price of delivery at the time of delivery of the barges and the price of the purchase of the fuel. That process is still in place, but the actual costs of this extraordinary event to find this fuel is not going to be passed on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: That is actually good to hear. I know that the first planes are arriving now, and hopefully that can keep the cost of living down in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I have five constituents who are businessmen, and they will not receive their goods by this upcoming airlift. This means lost business opportunities, due to the fact that they aren't deemed essential goods. What does the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment have to offer small businesses as they are paying off heavy equipment, vehicles, and dry goods for their stores, and also insurance on equipment that they will not receive until the fall of 2019?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The department has a number of mechanisms that we can support business and provide business relief. I would

encourage any business that is in this situation being described by the Member to contact our regional office and talk to one of our client personnel. ITI will look at individual applications and present it on a case-by-case basis for assistance under our SEED program.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response. It is good to see that there may be some assistance for some entrepreneurs and some small businesses that could not afford to stay afloat over the 2018-2019 season if they weren't allowed access to any type of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, there are also multiple research programs that run annually in Nunakput, as well as exploration programs on Banks Island. To us, research is important, in traditional knowledge, Indigenous knowledge, and scientific knowledge, and we encourage that in our region so that we have better data to understand our ecosystem. What can the department offer to ensure that scheduled programs may still run through the 2018-2019 season, given the shortage?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: In fact, I understand this past year was a record year for research in the region, both national and international researchers. We recognize that these are important economic contributors to the Member's region, but in reality, ITI has little influence on the research schedules. Most research projects are independent in nature and receive logistical support through the Aurora Institute. To date, we have not been aware of any difficulties with research projects in the region, but if there are, we will consider them on a case-by-case basis.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of these research and exploration projects usually fly in their own petroleum in the way of 45-gallon drums. I am hopeful that these are deemed essential, as it employs people in the region.

Mr. Speaker, hotels in Nunakput are at times the only places to house contractors, government employees, and visitors to the communities. How will the Department of ITI ensure that operations such as these important components of community infrastructure remain in operations with the shortage? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I am assuming the Member is speculating about the availability of goods and supplies for those operations. Again, we are not aware of this as an immediate concern. We recognize that this is an extraordinary situation that we are dealing with. There is no manual with all the

answers, but we are addressing the reality of this situation head-on.

As the Minister of Infrastructure, I assure the Member and this House and the people of Nunakput that we will do what we need to do. I have said that continually in this House. We can't do everything, particularly around a number of questions I always get around Herc-ing vehicles in. We are not prepared to do that. We are trying to work with everybody on a commodity-by-commodity basis and a community-by-community basis, and we will continue to work with this and try to address it the best that we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 417-18(3):
SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS IN TU NEDHE-
WIILIDEH

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to the question period here today, I heard the Minister of ITI respond to the Member from Sahtu about the dollar amount that has been spent in Sahtu. I would like to ask the Minister if he has that dollar amount for the riding of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh also. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have that information right here at my desk, but I can get that exact number for the Member and provide it to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: In my Member's statement, I referred to some of the businesses that are potential businesses in Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. I would like to ask if the Minister would direct the Business Development and Investment Corporation to send business development officers into the communities to meet with the community groups in order to flesh out what other possibilities may exist in the community for small business.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I can certainly have a look at the staff that we sent into the Sahtu region and work with the Member, and what we can do in his region to send our staff in there to talk about what are possibilities of starting up small businesses and opportunities, as well as, as I mentioned earlier in my statements today, to work around the traditional economy and how the hunters and trappers can access some of the SEED money, as well.

MR. BEAULIEU: I know that the Minister meant Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, but I would like to ask the Minister

a question on the number. Earlier the Minister had indicated that there was not enough money to help everyone. That is why I asked the initial question. My question will be: I anticipate that there is not enough money going into business development in my riding, so I would like to ask the Minister, once he is able to provide the numbers, if the Minister would come back to the House for additional funding to support business development in the small communities?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, this government has spent \$17.6 million. The SEED program is \$3.8 million. We have Community Futures, which we fund as an additional \$825,000. There are a number of programs and suits of needs out there that these people want.

The Member is kind of speculating that he is not getting enough money in his riding. I would have to go back and see what types of applications and what type of dollars have been spent in his region. As I said in this House earlier today, this has to be entrepreneurial-driven. We can't just be throwing money at something and hoping that it sticks. We have to work with the businesspeople in these communities who are future entrepreneurs who want to pursue these types of things, and that is what we are trying to do. The SEED policy is there to help facilitate that, with a number of programs within the Department of ITI, and we will continue to do that. That is the best I can answer the Member's question.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if there is any sort of policy that surrounds employment numbers. In my Member's statement, I referred to the dismal employment numbers that we have in the communities that I represent. I would like to ask the Minister, when spending money from the government for business development, if that is taken into consideration. Are employment numbers taken into consideration when spending money for any businesses in any of the communities in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That depends on what application, I suspect, you are doing. If you are going through BDIC or Community Futures and you are trying to get a loan to start a company, you have to have a business case to do that. That is relative to, you know, what your business case is going to be and the number of products you're going to be able to sell, and the capital that you have to invest, and the capital that we are going to invest to help support these things. When it comes to supporting the number of people hired in a community, I suspect that, depending on some of

our grants and contribution programs that we have, some of those factors are part of the decision-making. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 418-18(3):
CHALLENGES FACING SMALL BUSINESS

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Earlier today, my colleague from Hay River North spoke a lot about red tape and redundancy that we have within the Government of the Northwest Territories. He referenced the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and how they consistently give us failing grades, or an F. I just want to know: does our government recognize this ongoing and never-ending failing grade, or do we just flat-out reject it? You know, this institute comes and gives us this every year. Or better yet, what are we actually doing to identify our own challenges with regard to red tape and the roadblocks that small businesses face within our government? Do we foresee that we have these challenges and are we doing anything about them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think I referenced the Federation of the Business thing, but I've met with them. They have their opinion on what's happening in the Northwest Territories. My recollection is they use a very small case of data to give us this grade, but we recognize that, as I've said, I'm a small business owner in the Northwest Territories. The one thing that we did that helped to address this is through our BizPaL program. That is a very good program. Online, you can go on there and it takes you through all the licensing and permitting or whatever you need to do to help, especially brand new entrepreneurs, know exactly what they need to do, from workers' compensation to all these sorts of things. It's clearly laid out in there, and I believe that we are doing the best we can to help address this.

MR. VANTHUYNE: "Best we can" is really kind of vague, to be quite frank. If the Minister could please elaborate a little bit to share with us what "best we can" means. What does that mean as it relates to the silos that seem to be kind of structured between various departments that small businesses have to interact with on a daily basis? You know, the business community sees the Department of ITI as their representative at the territorial level. What is the government actually doing to identify the challenges of red tape, bureaucracy, and

redundancy, and what, I'll call it, policies, are they developing to help break that down?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: This is kind of like our procurement issue. I've never had anyone come and knock on my door complaining about red tape. I'm glad to work with the chair of the standing committee, of SCEDI, and sit down if they have any ideas on how we can rectify red tape within the Government of Northwest Territories. I'm glad to have those discussions.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I'm glad that the Minister brought it up, in fact. Government procurement obviously contributes significantly to the business community in the Northwest Territories. We have raised a number of times concerns around government procurement. The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment undertook a survey this summer. We are hoping to put forward a report later to table in the House and share with the Minister and his department about the challenges that we found.

I would just like to ask the Minister: can he explain the processes maybe through which his department engages with the business community to seek out and find out how they can improve their procurement processes and policies?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I've stated in this House before, we have a number of workshops that we conduct across all regions of the Northwest Territories. I don't have those stats right in front of me, but I notice a significant amount of people who have attended these. We continue to work with the business community. Certain Members in this House have brought up procurement as an issue with me. To date, I still have not had more than probably five complaints from the business community. I'm looking forward to this report that standing committee is going to present to me. I'll gladly sit down and have a discussion with you guys at that time.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we will be happy to work with the Minister and his department when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, it is Small Business Week. It's a great time to champion local and northern businesses. One of the things that has been identified as a challenge in recent weeks and months is that a number of our standing offer agreements, in fact, have a number of southern companies that are on the list. Northern companies find that to be challenging in order to get access. I appreciate that it's a public offering process, but will the Minister and will the department give some consideration to,

let's say, having southern firms must partner with northern firms in order to get a standing offer agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That's a discussion maybe I'm going to have to sit down and have with the chair of standing committee, because this is something that I haven't found to be an issue. It's a public offering. We have the list. A number of these people are quite capable and, you know, there are some specific things, specific asks, I believe, in that request of stuff. There are certain entrepreneurs in the Northwest Territories who aren't quite capable of doing these specific things. It's a tool that the Government of Northwest Territories has to be able to address some of those situations we have here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 419-18(3):

LIABILITY CAPS IN OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, who sets regulations for onshore oil and gas development and aggressively promotes that development. The Oil and Gas Spills and Debris Liability Regulations set absolute liability limits between \$10 and \$40 million, depending on the location of spill or debris. As I said, the Deepwater Horizon disaster resulted in fines and settlements more than 200 times that maximum amount. I know it's offshore, but onshore can cost us a lot of money, as well. Can the Minister explain why there are these liability caps in our regulations and what public purpose they serve? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to try to do the best I can to answer this Member's questions, because this is a very complicated area within the PRA.

One thing we have to make clear on this is we have mirrored the regulations. That was part of devolution and that's what we have right now. That's why it's clearly stated out there as laid out.

We are working on oil, OGOA; I guess we can call it the Oil and Gas Operations Act. That's going forward. We are having a look at it. OROGO is the other side of this issue, which is handled by the Minister of Justice. From my understanding, OROGO is going out for public consultation at a very high level on this act, on what's going on. There are some concerns there for our department

as well. I think some of them are very similar to what the Member is going to raise here today. We will continue to look at it, but the reason that these are there right now is because of devolution, and we mirrored the process.

MR. O'REILLY: I don't think it's actually all that complicated. The Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations is currently consulting on managing potential cost for spills and debris associated with oil and gas activities or infrastructure. Can the Minister confirm whether the scope of that review includes changing the Oil and Gas Spills and Debris Liability Regulations or eliminating the liability caps set in those regulations? That's something that Cabinet does.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: No, this is very high-level consultation. They are out there doing this right now. The Member will probably have an opportunity to actually go to that and participate in that. I want to advise this House that ITI, like the MLA, we will be invited to make our comments on this, on this consultation. We are very concerned as well about the liability and the responsibility. That is one of our big concerns around this whole thing. As well, we want to see more certainty and transparency built into this thing. We will be commenting on it, as well.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. So it's very clear, the work that OROGO is doing has nothing to do with the caps that are set in Cabinet's regulations. Earlier today, I recounted the massive costs that can be associated with spills or debris from accidents relating to oil and gas exploration and development. Greenland and Norway have eliminated all liability caps in relation to such accidents. The Auditor General of Canada recommended that such caps for offshore development be reviewed and changed. Would the Minister agree that the liability caps in our regulations put our government at some financial risk?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: To be clear, these caps are addressed in the regulations, and we are dealing with the act. That's what we are dealing with. The Member is talking like we are opening up the NWT to liabilities, and that is not what we are doing. In fact, what we are trying to do is close that loop that exists around suspended wells and clarifying responsibilities that operators in the NWT have. These changes that we are proposing do not change the fact that, in the NWT, when they are at fault, the polluter pays.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for that. We are actually

talking about the regulations. That is something the Minister has direct control over. He can take this to his Cabinet colleagues and get those regulations changed next week if he wants. So the liability caps in place through the Cabinet-approved regulations are identical to the ones in federal offshore regulations that have not been changed in over 30 years. These caps fly in the face of the polluter-pays principle which has been endorsed by our government. Does the Minister agree that the liability caps in our regulations are out of date and should be eliminated immediately?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I would agree with the Member that they are out of date, but I am not going to go out and get rid of them immediately. These things are in place. We have mirrored devolution. This is significant change for our government. If we were to do this, we would have to go out and engage all stakeholders in the Northwest Territories. Like I have said, we are only looking at the act right now, not the regulations, but we do have some concerns. I have clearly laid those out and agreed with the Member, but I am not prepared to go out there and just change this on a whim, without engaging all stakeholders in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 420-18(3):
INVESTING IN TOURISM DIVERSIFICATION

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I fear the Minister is not walking the talk on diversification. Tourism represents a tremendous opportunity for our economy for diversification, but we do need considerable investment to make the most of it, for example, in community infrastructure. He has said that, in this biggest-ever capital budget, we will see all kinds of goodies, but what I see here is incremental changes rather than new projects. Can he tell me whether there are any new tourism infrastructure projects in the capital budget? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When ITI is up in Committee of the Whole, and I believe we are probably going to be one of the first ones up, we have a capital budget of a significant investment of, I cannot remember the exact number, but we will be able to deliberate our capital investment around infrastructure and tourism when I get into the Committee of the Whole around all regions of the Northwest Territories.

MS. GREEN: I hate to spoil the surprise, but the capital estimates for tourism and parks show a decrease of more than 50 per cent over last year, to just over \$3 million, so it's hard to reconcile that level of investment with the "biggest-ever capital budget we have seen." So why is tourism consistently losing out in this government's capital estimates?

MR. SPEAKER: I would just like to remind Members that capital estimates is before the Committee of the Whole. When it comes to that, there will be detailed discussion, so it should not be discussed in question period. If you want to rephrase your question, Member for Yellowknife Centre?

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my concern is that, when it comes to community infrastructure, we are not seeing significant new investments. For example, we heard from my colleague from Nunakput about the lack of tourism services in Tuktoyaktuk, despite years of road development and the anticipation of tourism being a big draw there. Likewise, we don't have a visitors' centre here in Yellowknife, so my question is: what kind of investment can we expect before the end of this term, in real economic diversification in tourism?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, we are going to be going into the Committee of the Whole. We have clearly laid out what our investment is around the money that we've been allocated, and that we will continue to work on that. I am not scared to talk about tourism. Tourism is a big deal in the Northwest Territories. We just came from an FPT; it's a significant challenge right across this country. Things that I have learned from earlier this week's meeting at our FPT is some of the challenges right across this whole country are no different than what we are facing in our territory. In fact, when they were doing the presentation, I reached over to the assistant deputy minister, and I said, "It's almost like the exact same thing that is going on in the NWT and what challenges we are facing."

So the whole country is facing these challenges around infrastructure needs, shortage of hotel space, high cost of air travel across this country, how do we move people out of regional centres to the regions. This is a problem that's right across this country, and it's very well information-shared, I think, across the country about how we have to figure out a way to address this with federal support, as well.

MS. GREEN: It's cold comfort to find out that these problems are widespread. We are talking about what's happening here in the NWT, and the investments we need now to capitalize on tourism.

How many people who went to Tuktoyaktuk and found there wasn't even a place to dump their sewage are going to be in a big hurry to recommend their friends go back? So my question really is about the priority of investing in tourism. I still have not heard that the Minister is willing to invest any additional money in tourism diversification and infrastructure before the end of our term. Is that, in fact, the case?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, I only have the money that is allocated to me, but I am glad to sit down with committee. Anytime they want to have a discussion on how we can improve different funding levels for different programs within my portfolio, I am glad to do that, but the real crux of this is we only have so much money that this government has. If you are going to give it to me, you are going to have to take it from someone else on this side of the room, so that is the hard discussion that we are going to have to make here. Without increasing revenues in this territory and attracting more capital and industry to help support our economy and grow our economy, because that is 30 per cent of our economy, the mining sector in particular, what are we going to do? That is why all 19 of us are in this room, and we have to have those discussions.

We are trying to grow the economy, particularly the Department of ITI, to unlock our potential on what we are going to do to increase revenues for this government, but the reality is we only have so much money. If you want to put more money into tourism and diversification, I am all for it, but we have to have those conversations amongst all of us, and, to make my pie bigger, you are going to have to take it from someone else's.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the pie is pretty big at \$1.8 billion. I think there are different ways that it can be sliced. As someone else in this House has already pointed out today, when money is needed on an emergency basis, it's there. The pie seems to get bigger as needed, so this is a conversation that we will have in the Committee of the Whole on the capital budget and during the O and M budget in the winter.

My final question is about the feasibility of winterizing one campground north of Great Slave Lake and one south to accommodate late-season travellers. I noted when I went to Hay River about three weeks ago that there were quite a number of RVs on the road. I knew that, at the same time, they would have nowhere to park on their way to Yellowknife. There was nowhere to park in Hay River either. The campgrounds are closed. Can the Minister consider winterizing two campgrounds in

the Northwest Territories to accommodate these late-season travellers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: If I remember correctly, and we would have to go to Hansard, I think I made the commitment that, when we put out these campgrounds to tender, because it all comes back to funding, I would actually ask for a provision on how much it would cost to keep these things open a little bit longer. Based on the amount of money that we have allocated, I don't believe that we can do that.

One thing we are doing around winter campgrounds, particularly in the Yellowknife region, is we are looking at keeping these open for entrepreneurs around the tourism sector to be able to access our campgrounds and use them. We are doing that. I can't remember the number off the top of my head at briefing, though, but I think there are 36 businesses that have permits to use our campgrounds for Aurora viewing, and we will continue to support that.

The reality is that this comes back to what I just answered in my previous question. There's only so much money. That's what we have to work with, all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 421-18(3):
POLICIES IMPACTING SMALL BUSINESSES

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess when you wear rose-coloured glasses, red tape just looks like tape. I think that's sort of the issue we are running into here with this cross-departmental comprehensive plan to help small businesses. The Ministers don't seem to see a problem. I can't believe I'm bringing this up, but I'm going to discuss a few policies here.

The first is procurement. At first, there were no issues. Then he's heard issues from one or two people. Now it's five people he's heard issues from. I've heard issues from 15 people off the top of my head. I get CCed on the same emails that go to the Minister a lot of the times. I see people coming out of this building, and I know that they have talked to the Minister about it. I know he has heard it more than five times. I'll ask this because the number keeps growing: how many people have to come to the Minister with procurement issues before he considers it to be an actual problem? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I think the Member better take his rose-coloured glasses off, the way he's making comments, there. I have had a few people; like I have said, probably five people. I'm going to stay to five people who have come to me about procurement. The chair of SCEDE is doing a report. I will sit down and have that conversation with SCEDE, but I am not going to sit here and get into a debate if it's one, 10, or 15 people. If the Member has 15 people coming to him, maybe he should come to my office. He doesn't stop by my office and talk about procurement issues. He can do that any time he wants.

MR. SIMPSON: Maybe the Minister should begin reading his emails, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier, the Member from Yellowknife North brought up the standing offer agreements. The department has standing offer agreements with firms from the south. The Minister stated that northern firms don't have the expertise, and that's why they have to go to the south. What other options has the department looked at? Have they looked at perhaps requiring some northern content when these firms get these agreements, or going to local companies and helping them build that expertise?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Why does it always have to be on the back of the Government of the Northwest Territories? Can Members tell me, why does it always have to be on the back of the government? I am a private businessperson. If I have an issue with a particular type of tender and I don't have the expertise for it, I will reach out to counterparts in southern Canada to help me. You guys seem to think it's on the back of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories is here to help facilitate and grow the economy and look after the residents of the Northwest Territories. We are not here to get into individual businesses and do the day-to-day transactions that they need to do and grow their businesses. That's on the back of the entrepreneur.

MR. SIMPSON: That's what ITI does. That's their mandate. That's what the officers do every single day. Well, I'll move to SEED now, since I'm talking about all these policies here. Earlier, the Member from Nunakput was asking about remedies for business owners who were adversely affected by the disruption of barge resupply, and the Minister recommended that they contact ITI about SEED. SEED funding is being used to compensate for this failed barge delivery. Where is the SEED money coming from, Mr. Speaker? Is it coming from that region's pot of money, or is it coming from the entire territory?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Member is talking about hypotheticals, because I said that's where they could go if they had an issue with it. We don't know if there is an issue with it. Each region has their own allocation for SEED money. If there is some sort of over-pouring amount of money that we have to have a look at, I will certainly have a look at the situation.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't seen the situation first-hand, but I take my fellow colleagues at their word. If the Member for Nunakput says there is an issue, then I believe there is an issue.

My final question is that, you know, we have had a lot of questions around the table here. It always comes down to how much money we have. The Minister says, "I only have this much money in my budget." Well, I think I've sat running through supplementary estimate deliberations where the government says we need more money, then we sit down and we give them more money. Will the Minister bring forward a supplementary estimate to improve supports for entrepreneurs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: No, I will not.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 422-18(3):

LIABILITY CAPS IN OIL AND GAS REGULATIONS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to pursue the issue of the liability caps a little bit further with Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. To be really clear here, the review that is being carried out by OROGO is about proof of financial responsibility. It's not about the liability caps. OROGO doesn't even set the liability caps. Those are in the regulation. Is the Minister clear that the OROGO review has nothing whatsoever to do with the liability caps? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that's right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. We are starting to get on the same page here. I would like to ask the Minister: why have the caps not been reviewed in the four-and-a-half years since devolution?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, we are moving forward with the mirrored legislation on devolution. We are looking at the Gas and Oil Operations Act. That's what we are working on. We are going to look at the rest of it in the 19th Assembly, should this bill pass here.

The Member is not going to like this comment, but you know, we have 200-and-some mandate commitments within this Government of the Northwest Territories. To zero down on a regulation here where there's exactly no activity going on in our territory wouldn't be a good use of my time and the department's time. I'm not shunning that responsibility. We are continuing to work on the act going forward, and regulations will be looked at in the 19th Assembly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. Interestingly, a couple of days ago, we had the Premier saying that we are going to go and negotiate an entire offshore co-management regime when there is nothing happening with offshore oil and gas. I think there is a more likely prospect of onshore, and we have to make sure that we protect our citizens and our taxpayers and our government from liability. When will these regulations be reviewed? The Minister could do it next week if he wishes, but when is the Minister going to review these regulations?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I said, should this bill to amend the act pass in this Legislative Assembly, in the 19th Assembly we will review and modernize the regulations under this act.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I'm not very happy with the response from the Minister. These regulations are less than four pages long. In fact, I believe they are actually one page long, and the limits are just set here. I don't understand what the difficulty is in reviewing these caps.

What sort of process does the Minister envision going through to review a one-page regulation? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As we sit here and deliberate this conversation around the Oil and Gas Act and the regulations, the Member has raised a lot of concerns, and I agree with a number of his concerns. This is not something that we are just going to go out and do at a snap of our fingers. We have a lot of different players in this territory. We have committed to deal with all the Aboriginal and Indigenous governments in this territory, and the public. I am not just going to change the regulation before we change legislation on the Act, and I suspect it will be the way we do our full consultation

within the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, report of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 254-18(3):
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIRING
ALLOWANCE FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2018

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 21 of the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act, I wish to table the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowance Fund Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2018.

Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills. Item 17, motions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Motions

MOTION 21-18(3):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO
OCTOBER 23, 2018,
CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on October 18, 2018, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, October 23, 2018;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to October 23, 2018, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. 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. Bill 7, Chartered Professional Accountants

Act; Bill 8, Emergency Management Act; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; and Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the committee would like to consider Bill 8, Emergency Management Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. I will let Minister Schumann catch his breath. We'll take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. Committee, I will now call the Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill 8. I would now like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce the bill. Thank you. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, Mr. Chair, I am here to introduce Bill 8, Emergency Management Act. I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Government Operations for their review of this bill.

The purpose of the Emergency Management Act is to repeal and replace the Civil Emergency Measures Act. The act defines the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and the Government of the Northwest Territories in planning for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

The proposed amendments permit us to effectively modernize emergency management arrangements for the Northwest Territories, and they establish a dedicated public body to lead the coordination of activities of the Government of the Northwest Territories regarding emergency management.

The bill increases the discretion of community governments to organize and prepare for emergencies. It also clarifies the responsibilities of community governments in meeting the needs of residents during emergencies.

Search and rescue volunteers will now receive protection for the important work that they do in helping to keep residents safe in a part of Canada that is both rugged and remote. Much work also has been completed to update the Northwest Territories Emergency Plan, which is an important instrument used to operationalize the act.

Preparations and capacity building have been under way for some time, and the department is prepared to communicate our new direction to residents, community governments, and emergency management partners.

That concludes my opening remarks, and I would be pleased to answer any questions that the Members may have regarding Bill 8. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. I would now like to ask the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, which reviewed this bill, to make comments. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to have reviewed Bill 8, Emergency Management Act. We consulted broadly with all governments in the Northwest Territories responsible for providing municipal services in the Northwest Territories, and we held public meetings in Hay River, Enterprise, and Yellowknife, in addition to meeting with the mayor and council members in Inuvik.

Several issues were raised during our public consultations. The act changes the existing process so that Ministerial approval is required to renew a state of local emergency. We heard general acceptance for this proposal, which ensures that the Minister is aware and can bring territorial resources to bear on continuing emergency situations in municipalities.

Another key proposal in Bill 8 is to extend indemnity to local authorities and volunteers working on their behalf so that they are not liable for damage caused by any actions taken in good faith during an emergency response. The committee agrees with this proposal and heard no objections from municipalities to it.

The committee also heard a concern that section 18(2) of the bill authorizes the head of a local authority to act on behalf of the local authority where there is urgency in declaring a state of local emergency, but the act does not define the head of a local authority. The committee determined that it would be important in the implementation of Bill 8 to make the meaning of the provision clear to municipalities.

Therefore, the committee encourages the Minister, when implementing the new legislation, to ensure that municipalities are aware, if they do not already know, that section 18(2) of the bill refers to the mayor, or anyone acting on behalf of the mayor, rather than the senior administrative officer.

Finally, Bill 8 clarifies an existing provision in the Civil Emergencies Measures Act by setting out the circumstances under which the Minister might require a municipality to reimburse the GNWT for expenses paid out on behalf of the municipality during an emergency.

We heard some concern that section 13(2) of the bill provides that the Minister's decision on the matter is final. The committee had some discussion of this provision, and on the basis of the rarity of its past use, and the clarifying circumstances under which repayment might be required, the committee is satisfied with this provision as written.

Therefore, on the basis of our consultation, committee recommended no changes to Bill 8 as drafted. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. I would now like to ask the Minister responsible for Bill 8 if he would like to bring witnesses into the House.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. I will now ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce the witnesses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, Mr. Chair. On my left, I have Mr. Kevin Brezinski, director of public safety with the Department of MACA, and on my right, Mr. Ian Rennie, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 8, Emergency Management Act. Is the committee agreed that there are no further comments? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Can we proceed to a clause-by-clause review of Bill 8?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Does committee also agree that we consider the clauses in groups?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. There are 35 clauses in the bill. Let's turn to page 1. Clauses 1 to 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Clauses 6 to 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clauses 11 to 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clauses 16 to 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clauses 21 to 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clauses 26 to 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clauses 31 to 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. We will now return to the bill number and title. Bill 8, Emergency Management Act. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Does the committee agree that Bill 8 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Bill 8, Emergency Management Act, is now ready for third reading. Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Mackenzie Delta?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 7, Chartered Professional Accountants Act, Bill 8, Emergency Management Act, Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process, Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, and Minister's Statement 103-18(3), Marine Transportation Services, and would like to report progress that Bill 8, Emergency Management Act, is ready for third reading, and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do we have a seconder? Member for Hay River South. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, October 23, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgments
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address

12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion 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
 - Bill 7, Chartered Professional Accountants Act
 - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
 - Minister's Statement 103-18(3), Marine Transportation Services
 - Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 23, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

