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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, October 29, 2019****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. 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 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

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

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 118-18(3):
NEW TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS**

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, this summer an important step toward the Government of the Northwest Territories' commitment to securing funding for new priority transportation corridors in the Northwest Territories was achieved.

In July, the federal government announced the approval of funding to advance the all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway under the National Trade Corridors Fund. Up to 73 percent of total eligible project costs, to a maximum of \$102.5 million. We have a commitment by the federal government for the construction of the Great Bear River bridge, Wrigley to Mount Gaudet access road, and environmental and planning studies. Along with an investment of \$37.5 million from the Government of the Northwest Territories, the total funding leveraged towards the project is \$140 million.

The approval demonstrates the commitment of both governments to addressing the unique transportation needs in Canada's North to improve safety and foster economic and social development, while increasing our resiliency to the effects of climate change.

Work to advance the next steps for the construction of the all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway will bring important benefits to residents throughout the Mackenzie Valley, including employment and training opportunities that build local capacity. Residents of the Sahtu will have already witnessed these benefits on a smaller scale through the construction of the Canyon Creek all-season access road, which is expected to officially open on November 13th. The local employment and skill development residents have benefited from this

project will prepare them to take advantage of the opportunities that will come with the extension of the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

Mr. Speaker, the Great Bear River bridge represents one of these opportunities. The bridge will eliminate the need for an ice crossing on the Mackenzie River, improving the resiliency and safety of this crossing and increasing mobility for residents of the Mackenzie Valley.

Construction of the 15 kilometre Wrigley to Mount Gaudet access road is a project similar in scope to the Canyon Creek all-season access road and will provide opportunities for employment and training for residents of the Deh Cho.

Funding for environmental and planning studies will support the completion of critical project components, including consultation with Indigenous governments and communities, finalizing routing and design, and environmental and regulatory reviews, leading to obtaining permits for road construction.

Increased traffic volumes and weights supported by an all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway will result in efficiencies in the delivery of essential goods that contribute to stabilizing the cost of living in the communities. Economic development will be enabled by increased access to mineral and petroleum resources in the region, and reducing costs of production and exploration for industry. In terms of social benefits, we only need look to the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway to see how enhanced intercommunity and mobility has increased access to healthcare, education, sporting events, and more.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure is continuing to pursue other federal funding opportunities for the remaining components of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, as well as the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor. The Government of the Northwest Territories will reapply for funding for the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor following a northern-specific call for proposals to be issued under the National Trade Corridors Fund by the end of 2018. Funding for environmental and planning studies as well as replacement of the Frank Channel Bridge to

eliminate a key bottleneck along this route will help advance next priority phases.

Mr. Speaker, on Thursday of last week, the decision by the responsible Ministers on the future of the proposed Tlicho all-season road was issued. After careful consideration of all of the information and views provided by parties during the environmental assessment process, the responsible Ministers have approved the project and agreed to adopt the recommendations of the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board with modifications. The Tlicho Government separately concurred with the decision of the responsible Ministers.

As a result of this positive decision, the Government of the Northwest Territories will work to identify a successful proponent through the competitive procurement process by November of this year and proceed to the regulatory and permitting phase for this project. This will allow for construction to begin as early as next fall. Tlicho residents and businesses will be involved throughout the construction and operation of the highway, which will help lower the cost of living in this region, increase the resiliency of these communities to the impacts of climate change, and open up new economic opportunities in the region.

Partnerships with Indigenous organizations will also be critical to ensuring the success of the projects already mentioned. The Department of Infrastructure is meeting with Indigenous organizations, community representatives, and staff from the relevant review boards over the fall and early winter to discuss next steps in advancing environmental reviews and permitting for the Mackenzie Valley Highway, partnerships with Indigenous governments, and how benefits to local residents can be maximized. Departmental staff met recently with the Board of the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated and Chief and Council of the Pehdzeh Ki First Nation, and both of these organizations have indicated their continuing support for moving forward together with us in partnership on this project. The department is also continuing to work to identify opportunities and best options to partner with Indigenous groups on the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor.

Mr. Speaker, it is an exciting time for our territory as these projects begin to take shape. Ensuring the people of the Northwest Territories are able to make the most of these investments is critical before any construction takes place, and we look forward to working closely with our partners to building a safe, efficient, and resilient infrastructure system that meets the needs of the North.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 119-18(3):
CULTURE AND LANGUAGE PROGRESS
UPDATE

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, our cultures and languages are the foundation of our work in Education, Culture and Employment. When our languages and cultures are strong, our people are strong and our work is much more successful. I am pleased to report that we are seeing progress in our efforts to retain, preserve, and promote Northwest Territories languages and cultures.

We are currently finalizing a multi-year action plan as a companion piece to the Strong Cultures, Strong Territory Framework. The action plan contains 25 categories of actions needed to ensure the Government of the Northwest Territories is inclusive of all the culture and heritage in the North. We expect these actions to be under way until 2025.

Mr. Speaker, the arts are integral to northern cultures and identity, and the Northwest Territories Arts Council is a key organization in supporting the arts. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment increased the funding for the arts council to \$700,000 annually.

In partnership with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, we have begun to develop a new arts strategy. We anticipate a 10-year strategy will be completed by the spring of 2019, following engagements with stakeholders. We are seeing great successes from artists and artisans employing many different media. Supporting their efforts will be a focus of the new strategy.

Mr. Speaker, partnerships across cultures and languages are crucial. Recently, the Northwest Territories Archives was honoured to receive 25 years of stories, photos, and records from the Gwich'in Tribal Council. These valuable pieces of Gwich'in history are currently being catalogued and preserved for generations to come.

The Native Communications Society also recently transferred ownership of approximately 200,000 pictures from the Native Press, taken from 1970 to 1990. The NWT Archives is responsible for the active preservation and stewardship of those invaluable historic records.

During the Minister's Culture and Heritage Circle induction ceremony this morning, we honoured the contributions of nominated NWT residents and groups. The circle, which is in its eighth year, celebrates people and groups who have made a

lasting contribution to culture and heritage in the North.

Mr. Speaker, as Members are aware, we recently tabled the Indigenous Languages Action Plan, A Shared Responsibility, which includes numerous actions for the preservation, promotion, and revitalization of the territory's nine official Indigenous languages. The Action Plan also emphasized the value of partnerships and the shared responsibility of all territorial residents to preserve, promote, and strengthen the Indigenous languages of the Northwest Territories.

Much of the work we are doing in languages focuses on integrating languages within our education system. This includes a new Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 Indigenous Languages and Education Policy, which promotes respecting Indigenous world views, cultures, and languages in the community in which the school is located.

The Our Languages curriculum continues to guide Indigenous language learning in NWT schools. Last month, we held our first comprehensive in-service and training on the curriculum, with 75 regional Indigenous language coordinators and language teachers. The participants were enthusiastic and engaged. This event was a defining moment in our efforts at Indigenizing education, and it strengthened our partnerships at the community and school levels.

Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the NWT Indigenous Languages Framework and Action Plan, A Shared Responsibility also includes the administration of the annual \$5.9 million received from Canadian Heritage. Out of the \$5.9 million, we provided a total of \$4.8 million directly to regional Indigenous governments to design and deliver Indigenous language programming in their communities. The remainder of the funding continues to support several other Indigenous language programs, such as the Community Radio Broadcasting Support, the Territorial Strategic Indigenous Languages Initiatives, and a program called Revitalizing Indigenous Languages in Communities. We continue to support the broadcasting of Indigenous languages on air across the territories through the Native Communications Society and the Inuvialuit Communications Society.

Mr. Speaker, we have also reached a milestone in the delivery of French-language services and programs by the Government of the Northwest Territories. Five years ago, the Government of the Northwest Territories released the French Language Communications and Services Strategic Plan, a five-year plan focused on ensuring the government was providing service in French to the populations in the significant demand communities of Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith, and Yellowknife.

The plan has recently been independently evaluated, and the report is publicly available.

With the results of the evaluation, we have now begun the work of developing a new strategic plan with our partner, the Federation franco-tenoise, to meet the expectations of the French first-language speakers and Francophone communities of the North.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, later today, at the appropriate time, I will table the 2017-2018 Official Languages Annual Report, which provides further information on the status of all official languages in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, while there is much work to do in preserving and promoting the cultures and languages of the Northwest Territories, every partnership created makes our initiatives stronger. I look forward to working with all of our partners as we continue to strengthen our languages and cultures in the coming year. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 120-18(3): INVESTING IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES FILM

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has committed to supporting the film industry to further develop the skills and competencies of Northwest Territories film producers, build infrastructure, assist below-the-line crew and support services, and help develop marketing and communication plans for films made in the Northwest Territories.

Last month, I had the pleasure of attending the first annual Northwest Territories Film and Media Awards that concluded this year's Yellowknife International Film Festival. In accepting an award for his impact on the Northwest Territories film industry, the godfather of the NWT's film industry, Terry Woolf, said our industry was experiencing a renaissance. Today I am happy to amplify his words, share some successes, and highlight how the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is sustaining this renaissance with investments in the future of this important sector of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot talk about the significant growth that we have seen in our film sector without recognizing the Northwest Territories Professional Media Association. Their role in our local industry has been and continues to be a critical driver of its success. Without their mentorship, support, and leadership, it is unlikely that the slate of nominees at this year's inaugural awards show would have been as full as it was.

While I was in attendance this year, I was able to announce a new film apprenticeship program that will soon provide opportunities for the Northwest Territories film workforce to gain on-the-job experience with major film productions. This program will be delivered by the Northwest Territories Professional Media Association with the financial backing of the Department of ITI's NWT Film Commission and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. This new support is one that originated in a conversation I had with Ms. Jennifer Walden on the set of "Red Snow." It will now provide opportunities for up-and-coming filmmakers to get some of the guidance and mentorship they need to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, this year's Yellowknife International Film Festival was an opportunity to shine the spotlight on and celebrate the success of some of the projects that have been made possible directly and indirectly by our government's investments under Take One - the NWT Film Strategy and Action Plan. They include projects like the big-ticket premiere of Ms. Jennifer Walden and Mr. Jeremy Emerson's "Elijah and the Rock Creature." It was exciting to see the hard work, passion, and time invested in this project rewarded in a first showing that sold out in minutes.

This year's festival also featured films like "I Hold the Dehcho in My Heart" and "Revolution Moosehide," productions that further confirmed the talents and skills of local producers and crews and which also serve to share important cultural stories of our Territory. Off-screen, the 2018 Film Festival included a program of workshops, speakers, and networking, which brought together talent from within the territory and beyond. Together, they were able to gain valuable knowledge and encourage each other.

Through ITI's Northwest Territories Film Commission, the Government of the Northwest Territories is investing every day in the growth and diversity of our economy and its film sector. The Northwest Territories Film Rebate Program in particular has helped the Northwest Territories support high-profile productions like the multi-award-winning "Sun at Midnight," while leveraging an estimated \$1.8 million in economic activity from our \$280,000 investment. Through film support contributions under our Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development, or SEED, Policy, we provide financial resources for local film makers to produce and promote their films.

We are also increasing the profile of the Northwest Territories with location marketing and global networking led by our Film Commission, which is attracting and encouraging both local and guest producers to film in the NWT. The film and media sector offers extraordinary opportunities to share

our stories and diversify our economy. We continue to invest in this area, and look forward to more success in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AGING IN PLACE AND LONG-TERM CARE

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Today, I will talk to you about the seniors who are living in their home. It is very hard for the elders to live in their own homes, and it is getting more difficult. Now some of them are confined to wheelchairs, and their houses have to be revamped to live in. Health and Social Services, I want to ask about how the elders are getting help and homecare workers and how they are working with the people.

The way it is down south, you have to be very old before you get long-term care. The way it is now, the elders down south, if they are in a long-term care for two to three years, it is different up here. All the people up here who are in long-term care, sometimes they are in there for 10 years, and it costs a lot of money to keep them there. Well, if they can't live in their home, they are put into long-term care homes, and that is not the best thing.

What I think the Social Service, NWT Housing Corporation, working in partnership, last year, the Housing Corporation Aging in Place, that program, it wasn't enough money. There was only \$10 million to work with. That was all it was. It was almost impossible to work with. It was not enough to completely work on the homes. If we work together on that program, if we have more moneys put into the coffer, the young people can work with the elders and show them how to work on homes.

The homecare workers, they used to be trained before and after they were all taught. Now that they are adults, they are not teaching the young people anymore. They are looking for young people to train, but there doesn't seem to be a response. Now that the elders who are living in their home, they have to take care of them with medications so they can be asked. The nurse, you know, they can do some interpreting and work with. This is what I want to ask the Ministers today. [Translation ends]

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member's statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MINISTER'S CULTURE AND HERITAGE CIRCLE AWARD RECIPIENTS

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured today, and I want to congratulate the recipients of the Minister's Culture and Heritage Circle Awards. These awards are given to individuals and groups who contribute to the preservation and promotion of arts, cultures, and heritage in the Northwest Territories.

Taken from the background of this award, I can see that each of the recipients, Mr. Speaker, have been playing a key role in promoting, protecting, preserving, and celebrating our unique culture, heritage, and ways of life.

Mr. Speaker, the elder award was presented to Joanne Tetlich of Fort McPherson. I want to congratulate her and her efforts in being able to relate to the youth and to make her community, her home, and her camp a better and safe place for everyone. Her role in keeping her culture strong has impacted the youth in a positive way, and they have a role model to look up to.

Mr. Speaker, the community award went to the Designated Gwich'in Organization of Fort McPherson. Ms. Anita Koe has accepted the award on behalf of her colleagues. The DGO is a prime example of promoting the culture; they take pride in being traditional, using their elders to teach and promote the culture, and they also get the community involved in activities that are happening at their office.

Congratulations to Joanne and Anita, and to the rest of the award recipients. Good luck in the future projects, and continue to do the great job that you do. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDRESSING RENTAL OFFICE DELAYS

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Rental Officer has had some success reducing wait times for hearings to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants. However, the delay between the hearing and the written decision continues with significant financial consequences for landlords, especially for landlords who are renting a small number of units or who are subletting.

A constituent was in touch to relate her experiences. She was renting out her primary residence and a dispute arose about the non-payment of the rent and damage to her property. She applied for a hearing on March 15th and waited three months until the end of June for that hearing. During that time, the backlog of unpaid rent and

damages added up to \$13,000, which is big money by anyone's standards.

Mr. Speaker, desperate to recover her losses, my constituent went to the rental office on July 27th to ask for her written order so she could start the garnishee process. According to the rental office report tabled earlier in this sitting, wait times for written orders have been steadily increasing, with half of them taking up to three months. My constituent received her order in two months, but the numbers it contained were wrong. She was told the remedy was to apply for an amendment to her order, requiring a new hearing, likely in October, followed by another two-month wait for a written decision. She is going to end up waiting nine months to begin the garnishee process. Of course, the longer she waits, the less likely she is to collect any money.

Mr. Speaker, the rental office has suggested a remedy. Written orders are mandatory in the Northwest Territories, but in six provinces, there is no requirement for written orders. It is at the discretion of the Rental Officer to issue a verbal order or at the request of one of the parties. The rental officer says, "The requirement to write all reasons for a decision is a major contributing factor to the elapsed time between the hearing date and the date the order and reasons for decision are written."

Mr. Speaker it is time to amend the Residential Tenancies Act to give the Rental Officer discretion about whether to produce written decisions and to give landlords like my constituent hope for a quicker resolution to the hardship imposed by the non-payment of rent. I will have questions for the Minister of Justice. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON YELLOWKNIFE AIRPORT HOTEL STUDY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Infrastructure Department is in the process of conducting the Yellowknife Airport Hotel Study as part of developing the airport's 20-year master plan. Unfortunately, it seems to have mishandled communications around this project, and Yellowknife's private hotel industry representatives are very concerned.

Mr. Speaker, responding to the growth in tourism and the overall growth of the city, the hotel industry is in the middle of a \$50 million investment in growing its capacity in Yellowknife. Just between the Explorer Hotel and the recently completed Nova Hotel, there will be a 31 percent increase in room

capacity over three years. That is an additional 50,000 room nights.

For the government, in this climate, to decide to consider the feasibility of a hotel located at the airport seems ill-advised at best, and at worst, hostile to the good, corporate citizens in our hotel industry. It has the appearance of the government competing against the private sector at a time when the private sector is making major investments in responding to demand.

Mr. Speaker, it is also a time when the capital city is focusing hard on revitalizing the downtown core. Any new infrastructure supported, studied, or even considered by the GNWT should surely be done with extensive consultation with the city in recognition of their long-term plans.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Minister has tried to assure concerned industry people that the GNWT has no intention of competing with the private sector, nor to build a business case for an airport hotel, but I also know that, while the industry reps have been promised consultation, they were not contacted in advance of this undertaking.

Mr. Speaker, in recent years, Edmonton has built a hotel at the airport. Downtown Edmonton is a 45-minute highway drive, and that is if the traffic is good from the airport. In Yellowknife, downtown is five minutes away.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure why the department considered that investing taxpayers' dollars in this study was a good idea. Long-term planning and knowledge is always good, but it is equally important to recognize the importance of the City's future plans for revitalization, plus we must respect our good private sector partners and the investments that they are making in our communities, infrastructure, and our economy.

At the appropriate time, I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONSENSUS GOVERNANCE

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Consensus model of governance. Mr. Speaker, this building and its unique design matches the principles of a healing circle. Mr. Speaker, the principles of consensus government were historically within the First Nations community. Today, with that and the British traditions, it is defined by the ability and willingness of all legislative Members on working together for success.

Mr. Speaker, many times, many previous Assemblies held discussions on the effectiveness of this consensus government.

Mr. Speaker, this is my first term representing the Sahtu riding. It was brought to my attention by a colleague, "You will never find a job description on the website for your position. What you achieve is your efforts and ability on working with everyone and your colleagues."

Mr. Speaker, last year was our government's 50th anniversary since the days of Stuart Hodgson. This government has seen our territory divided with the creation of Nunavut, four land claims settlements, and devolution. Through Indigenous partnerships, our system will grow and provide defined relationships for success.

Mr. Speaker, we have growing issues in our regions' and small communities' social environment and the many challenges they face with housing, education, et cetera, and we need improved deliverance. On that note, Mr. Speaker, I am very confident that consensus government and strengthening our continued relationships with our federal counterparts can be successful for future generations. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FALL HUNT IN KAKISA

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about our traditional fall hunt in Kakisa. Every year, around mid-September, the community of Kakisa organizes a fall moose hunt. This is a traditional activity that brings together the entire community, from elders to youth, and every member has the opportunity to take part in different aspects of the hunt.

Mr. Speaker, this year, the community travelled to a remote part of the K'aagee Tu First Nation traditional territory by float plane, an area around Tathlina Lake. Youth participated in the hunt and learned a great deal from their elders, who passed on traditional knowledge and values to the younger generation.

Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging to see activities like this on the land, as they are great opportunities to engage with youth and get them involved in the traditions and culture that have shaped our way of life for generations. I am glad to see another successful fall hunt in Kakisa and continue to encourage traditional activities where our communities are engaged. Mahsi. [Translation ends]

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
UNION OF NORTHERN WORKERS AND
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to a matter that is very concerning to the Members of this House and the citizens of the Northwest Territories, and that is the potential for a strike that will be taken by the Union of Northern Workers, following the reported failure of mediation between the UNW and the GNWT's negotiators. We, as a territory, have more than enough divisive strike actions in our history that Northerners know they don't want another one.

Mr. Speaker, 4,000 employees of the territorial public service have been without contract for two and a half years, easily the longest period that negotiations have endured in this territory. Added to this the looming strike of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, without contract now for three and a half years, and it becomes clear that there are significant shortcomings in how labour negotiations have been managed to resolve these issues to ensure a fair deal for workers and for all of our residents who depend on government services and continued investment of government resources in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, the economy of the NWT depends on the continued productivity and earning power of its workforce. The employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories are our friends and neighbours, the customers of our local businesses, and the patrons of our arts and crafts, just like those employed in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, the government's employees pay their mortgages for their homes in the North, buy their groceries, clothes, and tools at local stores, and all of that comes from the wages they earn. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take an economics degree to understand the crippling blow that casting these employees out of the workforce will have on the economy of our territory or the negative effect that it will have on local businesses.

Mr. Speaker, before running for office, I was a public servant struggling to make ends meet as a single father. Much of my salary went to rent and groceries, and at the end of the day, there was little left in the way of savings or funds to invest in my son's future. There are employees who had it better than I did, and there are employees who had it worse. None of them will come out of any strike action better off.

Mr. Speaker, given the fragile state of the northern economy, it is not the time for any member of the workforce, particularly more than 4,000 of them, to be on a picket line when a strike could have been avoided through timely and reasonable negotiation in good faith.

Mr. Speaker, an effective and engaged public service is a goal we should all share, and we must, at all costs, avoid a crippling strike to our economy. We cannot allow these negotiations to fail, and we must work with all sides to come to a resolution, get bargaining back on track, and get a fair deal for workers and all of our residents that depend on their continued public service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RESOURCE ROYALTIES REPORTING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. During the summer, my office cobbled together information on the amount of money that our public governments get in return for the extraction of our non-renewable resources.

According to figures from the NWT Bureau of Statistics, the value of diamonds mined in the Northwest Territories since 1999 is \$29.4 billion. The value of all mineral, oil, and gas production was \$38.6 billion. Unfortunately, the public accounts for both the federal and the NWT governments don't report separate royalty figures for each type of mineral, oil, or gas, so it's impossible to see exactly what royalties were paid on diamonds. The value of production figures are for calendar years, not the fiscal year report of royalties. Using the best data at hand, we estimate that, for the \$39 billion in minerals, oil, and gas, the public governments received \$1.2 billion in royalties, or a measly 3 percent of total production value.

A GNWT-commissioned report on our management of resources describes our return as "paltry" under the "world's most charitable fiscal regime for the mining sector." The most recent study released by ITI, "Policies for Generating Socio-Economic Benefits from Natural Resource Extraction Projects," that I will table later today, makes the statement that, if the NWT were a country, it would be the second-richest in the world after Luxembourg on a GDP-per-capita basis. While our government receives more from tobacco tax than royalties this year, Cabinet has cut programs and service in the name of fiscal austerity and refuses to review our resource royalty regimes. So much for the "evolve" following "devolve" and responsible management of resources.

As legislators, we have been told that we cannot have precise amounts of the royalties paid for each extractive industry, just as our federal government and the entire world moves to greater accountability and transparency in reporting of resource revenues. Royalty amounts for diamonds are lumped in with other minerals, even sand and gravel. I have asked for these details but have been refused. I think that's shocking. One of the foremost responsibilities as a legislator is oversight of our public finances. One of our greatest duties is to ensure citizens get a fair return for the exaction of our one-time natural capital. I will have questions later today for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PASSING OF MADELINE NELNER

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madeline Nelner passed away on October 4, 2018. She was an amazing person. She was 91-year-old community member of Liidlii Kue, who was a pillar of wisdom and common sense.

Madeline was born at the confluence of the Willow and Mackenzie Rivers on April 19, 1927, to Paul and Marguerite Jose. Madeline has a twin sister, Celine Villeneuve, and a younger sister, Diane Edwards, still alive. She was predeceased by her parents, four sisters, two brothers, and a son.

Madeline was five years old when she went to residential school. After 10 years of residential school, Madeline was sent to Liidlii Kue to work with the nuns who ran the hospital. She worked there for three years before moving down south.

Mr. Speaker, Madeline was a beautiful woman who turned her future husband, Ivan Gerald Nelner's, head, and they soon began courting one another in 1963. After getting married, they started their family. They had two sons, Dennis and John. Unfortunately, John passed away two weeks after his birth.

Back in those days, homemakers would not buy clothes at the store. Madeline would buy patterns, fabric, and sew her own clothes and the family's.

The Nelner family moved to Liidlii Kue in the early '70s. After her husband passed away in 1981, Madeline worked at several jobs. She was a guard at the local police station, caretaking for the youth group home and the seniors' home. In those days, Madeline had the patience of Job. She was bound and determined to see her son graduate from high school, which meant she was going to be alone most of the school year. Dennis thanked his mom

for her courage, strength, and determination to see him graduate.

Madeline enjoyed knitting, crocheting, and baking during her spare time. She liked to socialize and play cards, Rummoli, crib, and frustration rummy until all hours with her friends. She enjoyed reading and, most importantly, spending time with her two grandchildren. Madeline loved her grandchildren, Nicholas and Lydia, and her son, Dennis, and daughter-in-law, Trudy.

Madeline was well-grounded in her Catholic faith. She helped raise funds to replace the aging church. Madeline used her own residential school money to pay for the ingredients.

Madeline was amazing for 91 years old. She had an exceptional memory, excellent comprehension, could read and write like a 20-year-old, and had her own home, where she lived and cooked on her own.

Dennis had the privilege to live with his mom for the last five months of her life in Yellowknife. She told him she'd had a long life and, if the Lord came calling, she would not feel any sorrow. The pain and suffering is now over, and that's the main thing. Madeline was surrounded by her family and friends in her own home when she passed away. This is how she had described it. She would not have had it any other way. I would like to thank Madeline's niece, Susan, and her husband, Larry Pucka, for being here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Our condolences to the family and also to the community, as well. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NEED FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING IN NUNAKPUT REGION

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have often spoken about the critical need for housing in my region. Today I would like to focus on one particular part of this very large issue, the need for transitional housing.

Mr. Speaker, historically, transitional housing has been focused in our larger communities through organizations like Inuvik Transition House or the YWCA here in Yellowknife, whose Rockhill Apartments were recently lost in a fire.

We have come to better understand, Mr. Speaker, that homelessness is not a problem limited to the regional centres. Residents themselves have made their voices heard, calling for more transitional housing with options spread across the territory.

The NWT Housing Corporation responded with the Northern Pathways to Housing program, a five-year

partnership with three communities, to introduce new transitional housing units and fund ongoing caseworker support.

Mr. Speaker, the program is intended to help tackle homelessness in small communities specifically because, even though public housing is typically the norm, some residents are unable to access housing. They are being left out in the cold, sometimes literally.

Mr. Speaker, Northern Pathways to Housing is making significant headway on a serious problem but unfortunately is not enough. Nunakput communities are among those not included.

Although the funding agreement between the Government of Canada and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation will bring much-needed housing replacements for the region, that money is not going to result in additional units. Today, right now, we have current residents in need and prospective residents looking for options. This is an area that needs urgent attention. 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 visitors in the gallery. I have the pleasure of recognizing Mrs. Maria Andrelita S. Austria, who is here with us today, Consul General of the Philippines. She is here on the occasion of her first official visit to the Northwest Territories, and she advised me that this will not be her last trip. She will make other trips coming to the North. Accompanying her is Ms. Arlene Magno, Consul from the Philippines consulate in Vancouver. Please join me in welcoming Ms. Austria and Ms. Magno to our Chamber this afternoon.

I would also like to recognize Ms. Elaine Keenan Bengts, the NWT Information and Privacy Commissioner, who is here with us today to witness the tabling of her annual report later on today. Masi for being here with us.

[Translation] we also have a guest, Donna Camsell from Behchoko. I would like to thank her, as well. [Translation ends] Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the recipients of the 2018 Minister's Culture and Heritage Circle this morning. For the youth award, we have Miss Alice Twa, and her parents attending, of Yellowknife, on her behalf, her parents, Erin O'Rourke and Cameron Twa. Thank you. Our individual award went to Tishna

Marlowe of Lutselk'e. Our elder award went to Joanne Tetlich, of Fort McPherson. The group award went to Old Town Community Association of Yellowknife, represented by Lisa Seagrave, Rosalind Mercredi, and Dave Kellett. Our Minister's Choice Award went to the Designated Gwich'in Organization of Fort McPherson, represented by Anita Koe, Ruby McDonald, Lenny McDonald, and Dean Charlie.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I was too excited. I forgot to recognize Carmen Moore from my Protocol Office. Masi for being here with us. You're doing such a fantastic job. Masi. Recognition of visitors in gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize Tishna Marlowe for receiving the Minister's Cultural and Heritage award. I'm sure Lutselk'e is very proud of Tishna. I had the pleasure of seeing one of her fashion shows, and they have the right to be proud.

I would also like to recognize Larry Purcka. Larry is a hardworking expert in highway construction, and was a major part of Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my constituents of Fort McPherson. We have Joanne Tetlich, Dean Charlie, Anita Koe, Lenny and Ruby McDonald, Dennis Wright, and my constituency assistant Liz Wright. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize Mr. Larry Purcka and our two pages from Deline, Abigail Sewi and MacKenzie Menacho. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Yellowknife South.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to recognize two constituents of Yellowknife South, Susan and Larry Purcka. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to recognize a few constituents in the gallery. I would like to start by recognizing the Privacy Commissioner, Elaine Keenan Bengts. I would also like to recognize Rosalind Mercredi, Lisa Seagrave, and who is that guy up there? Oh yes,

that's Dave Kellett up there. Thank you for being here and welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Great Slave.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize some constituents in the gallery today. Today with us are Cameron and Erin Twa, who are the proud parents of Alice Twa, who was recognized for the Minister's Cultural and Heritage Circle recipients earlier today. Also, Alice's proud grandfather Robert O'Rourke, who is with us today, and also with us in the gallery, a constituent in the Great Slave riding is Elaine Keenan Bengts. Welcome to the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to recognize a constituent as well, Lisa Seagrave, and congratulations on winning an award earlier today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement here, I talked about Madeline Nelner, and I would personally like to thank her niece Susan and her husband Larry Purcka for all the work they did with Madeline during her time here, and taking her home and making her feel loved. I'd like to thank you for doing that. As well, not too many times you get to recognize a couple of friends, Joanne Tetlich and Liz Wright. Joanne's name wasn't that when I first met her, and it kind of ages me. They're still young and fresh there, but I would like to thank them for being here because they were friends of mine during school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in gallery. If we have missed anyone in the gallery, welcome to our Chamber. It is always great to have an audience as part of our proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgments. Member for Nahendeh.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 15-18(3):
NICK AND KAREN SIBBESTON, 50TH
ANNIVERSARY

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nick and Karen Sibbeston married in Lloydminster, Alberta, on August 17, 1968, after meeting each other while studying Education at the University of Alberta. This year, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Nick noted that he grew up in the North, and Karen on a farm in the South, and that intercultural marriages are a phenomenon that is occurring more and more nowadays. Nick said that this is truly a great cultural experience; to give

and take, and to learn from each other and your differences. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 463-18(3):
HOMECARE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Today, I would like to talk about homecare, the people who are working with the elders. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services: would the Minister be prepared to allocate more homecare money into the system to help seniors stay in their homes as long as possible? [Translation ends]

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier in this Assembly, we put \$2.5 million more into homecare support here in the Northwest Territories, creating a number of positions throughout the Northwest Territories. As the Member knows, we are also intending and planning to move forward with home and/or family community caregiver program that will help elders and persons with disabilities stay in their homes for as long as possible. We are getting close to being able to roll that out. We are hiring someone to help us with the final steps before we start reaching out to residents across the Northwest Territories on how to pilot that. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are making investments in this area.

MR. BEAULIEU: [Translation] Thank you. I have two questions there. There's the aging in place program. Is the Minister willing to put more money into the aging in place program? [Translation ends]

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We are committed to moving forward with our Aging in Place Action Plan to find ways to help support our residents stay in their homes as long as possible. We are making an investment in this program now. We are getting individuals in place to help facilitate that piloting. Once the piloting is done, we will be in a better position to determine how much financial resources we need to support the program, but this is a model that we believe is going to be effective. This is a model that we believe is going to be helpful to our residents, and we are committed to rolling it out.

MR. BEAULIEU: [Translation] My fourth question is: we ask for money at the Assemblies like that. Is the Minister prepared to request supplementary funding to run a couple of programs as soon as possible? [Translation ends]

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: If I understand correctly, the Member is asking whether I'm prepared to move a supplemental to fund more in this area this fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, we do have some dollars available in this fiscal year to help us with design. Until we actually have a design, it would be difficult to run it with a program. It would really be ad hoc, and I think what we want to do is learn from these opportunities, learn from these experiences, so we can develop the program that really meets the residents' needs.

We do have money in. We are rolling out. We will be seeking participants towards the end of this fiscal year so that we can do our testing next year, and then we will be in a really good position to determine what allocation of resources we are actually going to need to make this a reality in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 464-18(3):
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF CANADIAN
COAST GUARD ARCTIC REGION POSITION

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 24th, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Coast Guard announced that they would create a new administrative and operational region focused solely on the Arctic. According to the Minister of DFO, Minister Wilkinson, decisions about policy, resource management, and conservation should be made in the North in collaboration with territorial and Indigenous governments, but one of the first decisions was to hire a new assistant commissioner of the Coast Guard and place that position in Yellowknife.

Why the position will be based in Yellowknife when operations are based in Hay River, and DFO has a big building with a lot of office space, is a little confusing to me and a little concerning to the residents of Hay River. I would like to get to the bottom of it. I have some questions for our territorial counterpart to the federal Minister of DFO, the Minister of Infrastructure.

My first question is: because the federal Minister cited collaboration with territorial governments as a key element in the creation of this new region, what consultation occurred between the territorial government and DFO regarding the location of the new assistant commissioner position? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as I am aware of, there was no

consultation done with my department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: It's like the old days all over again when Ottawa was calling the shots up here. Since this decision was announced just last week, has the Minister inquired about DFO's plans and if they plan to move operations to Yellowknife?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As this announcement just came out lately, and we have been in session and I have been travelling, I have not had a direction conversation with the federal Minister about moving any of their operations or any discussion about this new position.

MR. SIMPSON: Can I get the Minister to commit to having those conversations so that he can share that information with the House?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, when this announcement came out, I am looking forward to having a discussion with the Minister of DFO and see what their long-term plans are around moving any types of operations around and this new position as well, and having a discussion about this new Arctic region.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is always a challenge to stop the flow of centralization to Yellowknife. We need jobs in our other communities as well. In addition to chatting about the future of this, can the Minister also commit to supporting keeping those positions in Hay River? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Of course, we are committed to keeping what we have in Hay River around the marine facilities as well. There has been much debate in this House lately about how we operate MTS and what our long-term plan should be around that. It makes sense to keep MTS and the Coast Guard located in Hay River. That is both of their headquarters, and we will continue to work collaboratively with the federal government. If there are any plans of changing anything and updating the committee, I will do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 465-18(3):
RIGHTS-BASED CABINS IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week you heard me ask about rights-based cabins to the Minister of Lands. I am going to actually move my questioning to the Premier. Can the

Premier advise what consultation has been done by the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs with Indigenous governments about the process of determining what cabins in their area are rights-based cabins? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Lands is leading the Government of the Northwest Territories' efforts to identify legal rights-based cabins on public land in the Northwest Territories. Lands is currently engaging, on a government-to-government basis and at the working level with Indigenous governments, to discuss how rights-based cabins can be identified and managed in a way that is respectful of Aboriginal and treaty rights.

The Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs is not directly conducting the consultation or engagement on this initiative but has provided advice on the approach used by Lands to ensure that it is consistent with the Government of the Northwest Territories' engagement principles, negotiations, efforts, and our processes for consultation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the answer from the Premier. Can the Premier advise this House if there has been any feedback from the Indigenous governments that is affecting the government's now proposed identifying of rights-based cabins?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes and respects Aboriginal and treaty rights, including the rights of Indigenous peoples to build and use a cabin on public land that supports their rights to hunt, fish, and trap.

The Department of Lands is out engaging with Indigenous governments to discuss how best to identify and manage rights-based cabins. It is premature to say specifically how the feedback will affect any future process. The Department of Lands will use the feedback from the current engagement process to ensure that any future actions related to unauthorized occupancy will respect Aboriginal treaty rights and will not adversely impact rights-based cabins.

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the response from the Premier. Mr. Speaker, how, if at all, has the approach for identifying and registering rights-based cabins differ in regions with settled claims and unsettled claims?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Government of the Northwest Territories is aware that some of these untenured structures may be associated with an asserted right in areas with unsettled claims or Aboriginal and/or treaty rights as established

through a settled claim. In all instances, the Government of the Northwest Territories is respectful of Aboriginal treaty rights and wishes to develop a respectful approach to managing rights-based cabins in order to distinguish those cabins from untenured cabins.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank the Premier for his answer. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier tell us what recommendation EIA has made about effective communications with people who have traditional cabins, and how is EIA making sure these guidelines are followed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Department of Lands participates actively in an interdepartmental Aboriginal consultation working group that is led by the Department of EIA and assists departments to implement best practices for engagement and consultation. The Government of the Northwest Territories' consultation approaches are intended to support respectful government-to-government consultation and engagement and to carry out effective communications with Indigenous governments.

The Government of the Northwest Territories values its relationships with Indigenous governments. Our doors are open. If an Indigenous government has concerns over this process or any other, they are welcome to come to us and identify those, either as a specific concern or during our bilateral government-to-government meetings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 466-18(3): YELLOWKNIFE AIRPORT HOTEL PROPOSAL

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure, and it is regarding the possibility of a hotel at the Yellowknife Airport.

I would just like to ask the Minister if he can advise whether the department has spoken with representatives of the hospitality industry as part of the airport hotel study. I understood that that didn't take place in advance of this, call it, undertaking coming out. Has he spoken with the industry since? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't tell you if the department has or not, but myself, personally, I have received letters

from one of the operators about laying out their concerns. We have had an exchange of a couple of letters going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I guess, as part of that communication and for the interest of the public, as part of the study, has any land at the airport been set aside for an airport hotel?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The short answer is no. The work that we are doing is to inform the development of the renewed airport 20-year business plan. That is what we are looking at doing.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for that reply. Does the department have a private-sector partner in mind for any potential airport hotel? Or have they been pitched by a developer about building a hotel at the Yellowknife Airport?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: No, we have not been approached or I, personally, have not been approached about developing a hotel at the airport. What we are trying to do is come up with the long-term objectives that we need to do with this airport. Part of this planning process, this takes some serious technical review, so we have put out a separate RFP. That is the reason that has caused such a ruckus in the community over this issue.

What we are trying to do is just get a 20-year business plan and have a look at what needs to be done. If this is the long-term planning efforts to help us achieve a development plan for the next 20 years and this is going to provide information around that, that is what we need to do to come up with our plan.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with respect, I think the reason why there is a ruckus is because there has been a breakdown in communication. The department met with the City of Yellowknife and their council and did a presentation to them. The committee which I chair has not even had any such presentation presented to them. I am going to ask the Minister: will the Minister at least bring the results of this study to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment before it goes to anybody else? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I can commit to doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Justice. The Rental Office has made some positive changes in getting clients to the hearing stage, but the wait for written decisions often adds up to three months. The Rental Officer, in her most recent report, says, "Amending the Act to be consistent with Alberta's legislation would immediately reduce wait times for both hearing dates and issuance of orders. By releasing the time spent writing reasons for decision that have already been given orally at hearing, more time would be available to complete other duties." My question is: does the Minister agree with this assessment? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did have an opportunity to read that portion of the report. Clearly, we need to speed up the process. We are looking seriously at that recommendation. I note that, in many provinces, in fact, six, there is no requirement for written reasons for a decision. That would certainly speed up the process. We are looking seriously at that. It does seem to be a sensible suggestion. Thank you.

MS. GREEN: The Minister, of course, knows that the legislative calendar is now very full for the remainder of this Assembly. Work could be begun now, if not completed, by the end of this Assembly to move this issue forward. Will the Minister begin work to bring forward legislation to make the change suggested, specifically that written orders are discretionary?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Of course, there are a lot of other legislative initiatives facing us. We are reviewing this report and will be working on it and hope to bring forth something before the end of this Assembly, at least start that work.

MS. GREEN: I am pulling out my wish list. I got a yes, so I am going for it. There is hope. In the meantime, prior to the legislative change, can the Minister commit to providing more staff at the rental office so that the written orders can be made available sooner?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We went out for an RFP for a deputy rental officer. That contract is being finalized. Hopefully, that will speed up the process.

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

MS. GREEN: Another yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for that. My final question is: my constituent also had issues with the forms. Basically, she had to take a template from the office and recreate it on her computer. Can the Minister tell us what he is doing

to bring forms for the rental office into this century? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you for the question. I haven't looked at the forms myself, but certainly I will have staff or myself look at them. If they need to be modernized, perhaps we can provide some assistance in modernizing them. I realize many of the forms that are used in the judicial or semi- or quasi-judicial area are outdated and are in need of improvement. I am committing to look at those forms. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 468-18(3):
RESOURCE ROYALTIES REPORTING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I referred in my statement to the inability to match up the public reporting of royalties by fiscal years with the value of mineral and oil and gas production by calendar years. Since the royalty amounts of all resource products are lumped together, you can't disentangle the amounts received for individual commodities. Will the Minister commit to begin to disclose publicly the royalty figures for each resource commodity, using the consistent reporting period similar to the value of resource production as used by the NWT Stats Bureau? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, we have mirrored legislation from the federal government through devolution, and we do not currently allow this disclosure. That is what he is clearly asking for. I will note to the Member that the information is currently available on a company-by-company basis on NRCan website that was developed to support the federal excise industry transparency act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I guess we still have to rely then on the federal mirror, whether it is ESTMA or the stuff that we have in place. That is just not good enough. Cabinet has made much of its open-government initiative, yet the most basic revenue figures for judging management of our resources can't be found. Will the Minister commit to reviewing his public reporting of resource revenues and set up a clear and accessible public record for reporting resource revenue information, yes or no?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: When we developed the associated regulations for the mineral resource sector, intent is to bring information required for

public release in line with the federal excise industry transparency act. I think the Member is going to be quite pleased with that. Transparency on both finances and materials are signature of our oil and gas legislation review, and our "what we heard" report for that project outlines our commitment to those principles.

MR. O'REILLY: I would like to thank the Minister for that. We are getting closer. In my statement, I said that, if NWT were a country, it would be the second-richest place in the world on a GDP-per-capita basis. We certainly don't seem to lack the capacity to generate more revenues. The report that I am going to table today also says that "more aggressive fiscal and royalty rates" are something that we can do, so how does the Minister plan to work to incorporate more transparent and accountable public reporting of resource revenues in the proposed Mineral Resources Act and the amendments to our oil and gas legislation?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I would say that the Government of the Northwest Territories is quite committed to that. The Member is quite aware, as I have said in this House before, that we mirrored the regulations; we are moving forward with both of these acts to move forward with the regulations probably in the 19th Assembly, especially around the royalty regime and that and any regulations. So we are quite committed to doing these things in consultation with all residents of the Northwest Territories and our partners at intergovernmental council. We continue to work on that.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for that, but I am hoping we do not have to wait until the 19th Assembly. Cabinet has failed to make any substantive changes to the mirror legislation we inherited at devolution more than four years ago. Cabinet has rejected something as basic as a public review of the adequacy of resource revenues, despite making cuts to programs and services in the last three years. Can the Minister explain how our government can possibly convince the federal government that we can and should assume any further responsibilities for resource management with that kind of a track record?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I want to be quite clear. Our government is on track to deliver these changes by the end of this Legislative Assembly with a number of pieces that we are working on. We believe the federal government believes in good legislation. With that being said, I think with respect to that fact, to get legislation right takes an appropriate amount of time, and we will continue to work on that, and I think that will help strengthen

our case with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 469-18(3):
GNWT RESPONSE TO THE AURORA COLLEGE
FOUNDATIONAL REVIEW REPORT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the Minister of Education did a Minister's statement on the response to Aurora College foundational review, and in there she talked about that the associate deputy minister will guide the college in the formation into a polytechnic. Among the first steps will be including an overall vision for post-secondary education in the North. Can the Minister please advise: is this the direction of the department and Cabinet as we move forward, that this associate deputy minister will be the one coming up with the vision? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The territorial-wide vision is actually a political decision that will be made, but it's really important; we actually want the associate deputy minister of post-secondary renewal to be with us during that process because that person has to understand really clearly what the vision is, because the next step from that is to be able to do the post-secondary vision based off of the territorial vision. So it's a political decision, but that person will be helping to facilitate it.

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the answer from the Minister. How long is this going to take, then? If we are talking about a vision, and I strongly believe we should be starting that here in the House, talking to committee and other Members to see where it is, but when will we be able to have this person in place to start this process?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The competition for the position closes at the end of this month, and then we will be starting the interview process as soon as that's done, so we are assuming that the person will be hired before the end of this calendar year.

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the Minister giving us that answer, and I am looking forward to the end of the calendar year so as we can move forward. I guess we wait a little bit longer. A little bit of time shouldn't hurt us. So the next question I have for the Minister is: what's happening to the advisory committee? When will that voice, the voice of the Northwest Territories, be brought back?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: In the government response that we tabled yesterday, it was stated that the advisory committee to the regional board will be set up and an advisory committee, or senate, or whatever we call it, will also be set up. One is to have regional representations from all of the regions in the Northwest Territories. The other one is to actually provide expert advice to the administrator on specifics regarding the post-secondary education. Those two boards, committees, are very critical, so they will be one of the first priorities. We did commit to that at least in the first two years, but I am hoping to get it done in the next fiscal year.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the Minister's commitment in moving forward, because that is very important. Those two committees are very important. The advisory committee has a regional and territorial voice, and then the academic advisory council, that there is new, something that's new, and I think it would be very beneficial as we move forward through our post-secondary. So in the meantime, what is going to happen? Who is going to replace the advisories? Is it still going to be the public administrator? Is that person still going to be in place, being the voice of the NWT at this time?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The act does state that we have to have an administrator in place, so that position will stay until we get the new advisory committee initiated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 470-18(3):
2018 WILDLAND FIRE SEASON

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the honourable Minister for Economic and Natural Resources did a Minister's statement on the 2018 wildfire season. I appreciate the work that the department is doing, but I do have some questions for him in regards to our staff going out of the province and that. Can the Minister advise us on how those costs are recovered? I believe I have heard of a program, MARS, and if he could just give us a further update on what that program is about? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, through the Mutual Aid Resources Sharing Agreement, we were able to recover \$2 million from this summer.

MR. THOMPSON: So can the Minister advise us how much of that funding came back? Because we paid our workers and for our equipment, so how much money is that coming back to the NWT, what percentage money-wise? What percentage is coming back?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: My understanding is \$2 million came back to the Northwest Territories. Broken down, I am not sure what that is as far as salaries go for the employees, but through our Mutual Aid Resources Sharing Agreement we recovered \$2 million.

MR. THOMPSON: I greatly appreciate the Minister for that answer. Can he advise the House how much we spent sending them out at this time?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding, and I am sure that was the Member's question, was how much we spent exporting our crews and resources outside the Northwest Territories, my understanding is that, if we spent \$2 million, then we would recover \$2 million.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the answer from the Minister. That's good to hear. At least it's a break-even and giving our firefighters some very-much-needed training. The Minister talked about some different crews and them going out and doing work during the fire season because it was not that bad. Can the Minister advise this House, here, what the crew for Fort Liard did during that time?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my statement, crews that were not out fighting fires or being exported were doing some work around the communities. In Fort Liard, my understanding is there are three crews in Fort Liard, one in Sambaa K'e, and three in Simpson. Again, the information that I have is that one crew from each community was exported this summer. 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, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 271-18(3):
2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT ON OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 27(2) of the Official Languages Act, I wish to table the following document entitled "2017-2018 Annual Report on the Official Languages." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 272-18(3):
POLICIES FOR GENERATING SOCIOECONOMIC
BENEFITS FROM NATURAL RESOURCE
EXTRACTION PROJECTS: A RESEARCH
REPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TABLED DOCUMENT 273-18(3):
NWT RESOURCE PRODUCTION 1999 TO 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have two documents to table today. The first is entitled "Policies for Generating Socioeconomic Benefits from Natural Resource Extraction Projects, A Research Report for the Government of the Northwest Territories" by Eric Werker, Maggie Cascadden, and Katherine Zmuda, dated April 23, 2017. Mr. Speaker, the second document I wish to table is entitled "NWT Resource Production 1999 to 2017," one page. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents.

TABLED DOCUMENT 274-18(3):
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EQUAL PAY
COMMISSIONER FOR THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1,
2017 TO MAY 30, 2018

TABLED DOCUMENT 275-18(3):
ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18 OF THE
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, pursuant to section 40.23(2) of the Public Service Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Equal Pay Commissioner for the Northwest Territories for the period October 1, 2017, to May 30, 2018. Pursuant to section 68 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, I wish to table the 2017-2018 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

At this time, again, I would like to draw your attention, Members, to a presence in the gallery.

Today with us is Ms. Elaine Keenan Bengts, the Information and Privacy Commissioner. Masi for joining us here this afternoon. Item 15, notices of motion. Minister of Finance.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 22-18(3): COORDINATED CANNABIS TAXATION AGREEMENT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that the Government of the Northwest Territories should agree to receive revenues from an excise duty in respect of the Northwest Territories as imposed as part of the federally legislated cannabis excise duty. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MOTION 23-18(3): REVOCATION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR HAY RIVER SOUTH TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MR. TESTART: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this Assembly formally revokes the pleasure of the Assembly from the appointment of the honourable Member for Hay River South as a Member of the Executive Council, and further that this Assembly recommends that a Member be chosen to be a Member of the Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion. Member for Nahendeh.

MOTION 24-18(3): REVOCATION OF APPOINTMENT OF THE HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR GREAT SLAVE TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that this Assembly formally revokes the pleasure of the Assembly from the appointment of the honourable Member for Great Slave as a Member of the Executive Council, and further that this Assembly recommends that a Member be chosen to be a Member of the Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 31: NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 911 ACT

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, I will move that Bill 31, Northwest Territories 911 Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

BILL 32: NATUROPATHIC PROFESSION STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, I will move that bill 32, Naturopathic Profession Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, be read for the first time. 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

Bill 29 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister responsible for Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 25: AN ACT TO AMEND THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Workers' Compensation Act to:

- clarify the usage of the terms "impairment" and "disability";
- add detail respecting who is considered an employer within the scope of the act;
- remove the requirement for a primary healthcare provider;
- clarify the compensation paid to a dependent child of a deceased worker;
- add unemployment benefits as a category of remuneration;
- authorize information sharing and disclosure for the purpose of improving administration of the act;
- enable an inspector to inspect healthcare providers' records to verify services received; and
- correct inconsistencies and errors identified in the act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Bill 25 has had its second reading and is now referred to a standing committee. Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 26: STATISTICS ACT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 26, Statistics Act, be read for the second time.

This bill establishes a framework to allow the Northwest Territories Bureau of Statistics to collect, analyze, disseminate, and share information. The information is to be used for making informed decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Bill 26 has had its second reading and is now referred to a standing committee. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Minister's Statement 103-18(3), Marine Transportation Services; and Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020. By the authority given to me as speaker by Motion 7-18(3), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with Member for Mackenzie Delta in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Good afternoon, Members. I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee, Mr. Testart?

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The committee would like to consider Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, with the Departments of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Infrastructure, and Finance reviewed in that order; and then further to consider Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. We will continue after a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020. Does the Minister of ITI have any opening remarks? To begin with general comments, does the Minister of ITI wish to bring witnesses into the House?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you. Would the Minister please introduce his witnesses.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left is Julie Mujcin, director of Finance and Administration. On my right is Tracy St-Denis, assistant deputy minister.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. There will be no general comments. Committee, we will start on page 35, Industry, Tourism and Investment. I will defer departmental totals until after consideration of activity summaries and begin on page 36. Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support, infrastructure investment, \$8,428,000. Any questions? Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have some questions about the fish plant in Hay River. Could we get some details on any sort of timeline? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members may not be aware, but we did our submission to the federal government and we completed a schematic design on this thing and we are moving forward on the design and development of it. We have not heard back as of yet from the federal government on our application. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. When does the department expect to hear back from the federal government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. From everything I'm hearing, shortly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have nothing further with the fish plant. This is the same thing I ask every year, and we're always waiting to hear back from the feds. Hopefully, it is shortly.

I would like to know about the collections station. Could the Minister discuss those a little bit? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As committee knows, our strategy is to have a collection station north of the lake and south of the lake, and presently we are in discussions with the community of Fort Resolution about how we can move that forward. Hopefully, that will be the first one out of the gate when we get going. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Once again, can I get a timeline? So far, it's a five-year project, I think four or five years, this Great Slave Lake Commercial Fisheries Revitalization Strategy, and there hasn't been any ground broken on anything yet, so can we get some timelines as to these collections stations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our plan is to have these collection stations up and running before the plant opens in 2020. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Could the Minister describe these collection stations? Are they just a reefer truck? Is it going to be a physical building? Could we get some details on that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we are working with Fort Resolution, presently, I can tell you right now, we are working with the small craft harbours in the communities. So they can look at the dock, and we'll be looking at doing the infrastructure around the outside of that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Are these contingent on federal funds as well, then? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, it is. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Is this part of the decision that may be made soon, or is this a different pot of federal money? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is from a different pot of money. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be attending the Fishermen's Federation AGM coming up next month, so I think I will save the rest of my questions for there, because it seems to be a waiting game. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. It's more of a comment, but I will see if the Minister wants to reply.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it is a little bit of a waiting game. We've done our due diligence. Our submissions are in, and we are waiting for a response from the federal government, and we will continue to move forward on our process on the schematic design, and the design development of the fish plant, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Are all the funds in these capital estimates, the \$8.4 million, are those all GNWT funds, or does that include the expected federal money, too? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That includes federal expected money as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. What's our portion, and what's the federal portion? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have a calculator in front of us, but \$8.428 million. It's a 75-25 split; so, 25 ours, 75 feds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. I understand, with the actual fish plant, there are issues with either the sewer or the water going to the plant in Hay River, or something. They need to upgrade the pump station. Has all of that been worked out, or does the Town of Hay River also need to do some work before this can happen? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Ms. St-Denis.

MS. ST-DENIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have been in discussions with the community. The community is looking to secure funding from a federal agency to assist them. They have a larger project; not just the fish plant, some other aspirations, as well, but we're not anticipating this impacting moving forward for our project.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. St-Denis. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Nothing further.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next on the list we have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I have a question for the Minister on the collection stations. The Minister mentioned that they're working for resolution on one of those. It's a positive thing. I would like to ask the Minister if there would be a small abattoir also included as part of the project for the collection station? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time, no, there's no discussions about abattoirs. The collection station is about collecting fish from different zones on the lake, and then getting the fish to the fish plant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, usually when they haul fish from one location to another, they put it in ice, and in places where they are picking it up on the lakes and so on, they have a place where individuals can go repack the fish that they're getting out of the nets, and packing it in ice and so on, and that usually means in a building of some sort. If it's not an abattoir that is going to be there at the collection station, will there be another type of building there where they

can work on preparing the fish for pick-up? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The collection station has been in discussion with the fisherman right now. We are going to move to a tub-type system where the fish are collected in tubs out on the Great Slave Lake, and they will be brought into these collections stations, and that's where they will be. A small infrastructure needs to support that with a cooler, and will be able to hold these fish until we move them to Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all I have for this item. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. Any further questions? Page 36 and 37. If not, I'll call the page. Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support, infrastructure investment, 2019-2020 Capital Estimates, total \$8,428,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next, we have Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, information items on page 39 and 40. Are there any questions? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this listing of projects doesn't say anything about the Yellowknife Visitors' Centre. Could the Minister update us on the plan to replace the Yellowknife Visitors' Centre? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As this has been a matter of discussion in the House a number of times, most Members are well aware, we are in discussions with the City of Yellowknife on moving forward on how we can work with the city and planning with ITI and some other key partners around this initiative. I know it's very important to the Members of Yellowknife in particular, but we are working with the City of Yellowknife to come up with a strong vision for tourism in the City of Yellowknife and how this includes a longer-term visitors' centre. Those discussions will continue to be ongoing, and I believe Infrastructure will probably be at the table at some point as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister please indicate when he expects these discussions to come to some kind of culmination? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The City of Yellowknife is responsible for visitors' services. With those ongoing discussions, we are at the stage where we are still looking at these things and having those discussions with the city, but once we are at the stage where there are program design possibilities, we will working, like I said, with the Departments of Infrastructure and Finance to see what the options are for facilities and the appropriate time to enter into discussions around potential funding if something should come out of that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. That would be a great answer if there was already a visitors' centre and we were looking at replacing it, but the fact is that the visitors' centre is now in the boardroom at the city hall. There doesn't seem to be an end point to the collaboration and discussions and planning, which I personally don't find very satisfying. Is the Minister able to expedite this in any way? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This has been an ongoing issue. We know that. We already know the concerns that we have around the tourism industry in Yellowknife, but I could have the staff have a look at if there's a way to expedite this and get back to committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Yes, thank you. I would appreciate him doing that. We are now a year and a half without a visitors' centre and with no firm plan to replace it. Being able to say when that might happen, to accept themselves' goal, to reach, I think would be very useful. If he could do that, that would be helpful.

On the topic of the visitors' centre, has the Minister determined what will happen to the old visitors' centre, the one that is currently boarded up? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As all Members know, the existing tourism visitors' centre that was shut down has been stabilized by the Department of Infrastructure. We have spent some money there to stabilize it. They are doing a program review and doing a design aspect looking at the things viable. Once we hit some interest from other parties, along with discussions possibly even with the City of Yellowknife, they will enter into the idea of maybe if we wanted to move in there if we can save that building or what can be done with it. At this present time, that's the situation with the visitors' centre that is shut down. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Once again, I would like to ask about timing. I don't get any sense of whether this is a six-month or six-year project. Could the Minister clarify that, please?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I have clearly laid out, there are lots of discussions going on around this. We realize the urgency around it. The City of Yellowknife just recently had their election. We will be going into an election coming up here within the next eleven months or so. We, as I have stated in my earlier comment, that I could ask some of my staff to look at it. There's a way to expedite this, but there is going to be a number of partners that need to come to the table: funding, there's a capital process that has to take place. For the Government of the Northwest Territories, they're going to be funding this. If it's a loaner with partners regardless of how much capital we put into this, but we need to work with everybody and we will continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Yes, thank you. Well, given the amount of money that tourism is bringing to the territory, I think that the more quickly we can get to providing better services for visitors, the more successful we will be in building up our tourism numbers.

I want to ask some questions as well about the parks. The North Slave parks are very heavily used, often by people who live in the North Slave. My question is whether there are any plans to expand any of the North Slave parks or to develop any new

parks, for example in the Tlicho or Deh Cho areas. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have recently added a loop at Prelude. That has added some capacity. As the Member knows, we are presently in discussion with the Tlicho and what we can do on the North Arm Park in their region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, on page 39, the project referred is developing the day use area. I was thinking more about campsites. Can the Minister confirm that he also is talking about campsites? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are looking at campsite parks there as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nothing further.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next on our list, we have Mr. Simpson. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was dealing with an issue. How many of these projects here are carry-overs from the previous budget or projects that didn't get done last year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: 2019-2020, those are all new projects. None of those are carry-overs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Every single project on here is brand new. They haven't been put out to tender before, or anything like that. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under 2019-2020, the \$3,102,000 is all brand new projects. Some of them are multi-year. Any of the

carry-overs, if there is carry-over, they are listed under the 2018-2019 revised estimates.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. The carry-overs are \$6.9 million? So there's \$6.9 million worth of work that we approved that wasn't completed that is going to be carried over? Sorry. If I could just get a little bit of clarification here. If these are all new projects that we are looking at for this year, then that's all I need to know. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: 2019-2020 on page 38. So everyone is on page 38. \$3,102,000 are all new projects. Some of them are multi-year. Under the 2018-2019, the \$6.891 million, 3.5 of that is carry-overs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Of the \$6.891 million that was from last year, 3.5 of that is work that still needs to be done. Is that reflected in the project listing on pages 39 and 40? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The pages 39 and 40 are everything that is listed under the \$3.1 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. On page 38, there is the \$6.891 million, and there is \$3.5 million of that that is work that has not been completed that will be completed in the next fiscal year. That is my understanding so far. Will that then have to come forward as a supplementary if it is completed? I am just trying to follow the money. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Ms. Mujcin.

MS. MUJCIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Any carryovers from the 2018-2019 fiscal year will be reflected through a supplementary appropriation in 2019-2020. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Mujcin. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Okay. We have \$3.1 million this year, \$3.5 from last year. That is \$6.6 million worth of work. Is it all going to get done in 2019-2020? How can we be sure that we are not

going to have another big carryover like this? Can we be sure it is going to get done? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Ms. Mujcin.

MS. MUJCIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, the carryovers that are reflected under the 2018-2019 revised estimates are for our carryover projects from 2017-2018. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Mujcin. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Next on the list, we have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is related to the proposed new park, which is incorporated into the Sahtu land claim, to turn the Canol Heritage Trail into a trail and transferred over to this government. I know in the past, there have been a number of discussions going back and forth, studies with the SSI group and the Tulita District Land Corporation. Within those studies, a large investment cost incurred by the federal government to assess, site-by-site, and in particular, there are two different companies here, Franz Environmental and SENES Environmental that did the study to identify the scope of liability assessments, including barrels and whatnot.

It is a two-year cleanup, which, in my understanding, only includes removal of asbestos in the buildings, some bridges to provide the ongoing fisheries in those crossings, and removal of some barrels. It is very minimal to the overall studies on the cleanup. My question is: is this department engaging with the federal government for additional work after this coming summer's Phase II clean-up season? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At a regional level, we are always working with the federal government to promote using regional assets to continue the work that is ongoing. You know, this has been a long, ongoing file with the federal government, and it is a federal process that we are dealing with. We will continue to work with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Mr. Chair, on that thought, moving forward, would the Minister consider or has the department considered doing the assessment, how

much it would cost in getting the funding from the feds to do the cost on their behalf in collaboration with the Sahtu group as per the land claim chapter? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This has been an ongoing issue any time that I have had a discussion with the people in the Sahtu around the cleanup of this park and the federal procurement rules that are tied to federal process. I am well aware that, you know, the federal government has their process that they follow and their due diligence. They are working closely with SSI on how they can maybe look at changing some of those processes.

We have even had our MP with us at meetings around procurement, how we can change these types of things. At the end of the day, we still have to respect the federal process and what they want to do. We can continue to work with them and engage with them on how we can figure out a way to have this money spent in the Northwest Territories without going to a public RFP. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It seems that there are ongoing discussions there. I am satisfied with those discussions in hopes that it might materialize with a possible transfer of capital funds from the federal to the territorial government to initiate a continuous cleanup as per the studies that already have been done, knowing the fact that our procurement policies are a little bit more flexible than the federal one. I see it as a win-win situation for both this government and the recipients of the land claim. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we will continue to work with the federal government. Once we are satisfied that the land is cleaned up, it will be transferred to the GNWT to be the future Doito Territorial Park. In the meantime, I would like to update the House that we will continue working to establish some needed infrastructure along that trail, including the construction of two hiking shelters that are scheduled to be completed this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Mr. Chair, thank you. Thank the Minister for the reply.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next on the list, we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Ingraham Trail, of course, is in the riding of Yellowknife North. I think I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to commend the Minister and his department for the significant efforts and improvements that they have put into the many parks that line the Ingraham Trail, as the Minister referred to earlier: the new loop out at Prelude; there has been a lot of new signage with regard to the parks; we continue to see investments here with regard to the Prelude Lake Park Kitchen Shelter as well as the long overdue Prosperous Lake boat launch. I am rather pleased to see those.

As the Minister is aware, we have had some discussions in the past with regard to opening the parks up for aurora viewing. I know this is a little bit more in the operational context, but we might not have that discussion now long after the aurora season is done. I just want to see if the Minister can share some comments around what the department might be doing with regard to trying to make more space available within our parks for the booming aurora-viewing tourism opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department has been working very close, particularly with our aurora operators, for this winter use of our parks. Those discussions have been going very well. We have been looking at opening up more of our parks along Ingraham Trail for aurora viewing in the wintertime. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Minister for the positive answer. Can he elaborate a little bit more on which parks, in fact, that we are considering opening up for aurora viewing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are looking at opening all of our wayside parks along the Ingraham Trail for aurora viewing operators to use. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Just for the public's interest so that we can know, kind of, what names there are, I

have a good idea what those are, but is it possible for the Minister to kind of give us an indication? In my mind, I can think of Yellowknife River, Pontoon day use area, Madeline day use, maybe Cameron River. Can we get some clarification on which ones the Minister is talking about, and are we, in fact, actioning the use of those right now or this coming season, this winter? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are going to use Madeline Lake Territorial, Wayside Park, North Arm Territorial, Pontoon Lake, Powder Point. We are also using Prelude, Prosperous, and Yellowknife River. A full-time maintenance person has been hired on for this, plus we are going to be maintaining washrooms and stuff throughout the winter as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank, again, the Minister and the department for that work. I think that is going to be well-appreciated and well-utilized. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Comment noted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Any further questions, Mr. Vanthuyne? No. Next, we have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, on page 39, it has the NWT-BC border development. Can the Minister advise what the status is? I have seen this in last year's capital, and I am trying to understand what stage it is at and if it is going to be completed this year or if it's not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have had community consultation already with the community on this project. We are out for design work right now on moving that forward, and then we will probably be going back to the community for some more consultation once the design is laid out. We are hoping to have the plans ready by December. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I greatly appreciate that the department has gone and reached out to the community, is consulting with them, and going back there. I think it is a very positive step moving forward. Can the Minister advise when this project is going to be done? This fiscal year coming up, or is it just through the design process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, this is a multi-year project. I will just read what we have got going on here. Phase I will focus on the layout of the pull-out and a pavilion, completing the design and the structure. Work includes surveys, assessment, estimates, drawings, as well as work with the communities to gather comparative information for the signage, which is important. The second phase will be completed in 2019-2020, which will consist of construction and implementation of the project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister just clarify? In the book, it said "estimated completion." I am assuming this is going to be work done during the summertime. Is this when the work is going to be done, or as we are moving forward on the process? Like, I understand that you are consulting with them, designs are going to be happening, but April 1st, is that going to be the next part of the project? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It would make sense for us to try to do this work in the summertime, so I would anticipate that would be starting in April. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate that information from the Minister. That looks good. I am looking forward to seeing that kiosk there. It has been a huge issue to the community, so I greatly appreciate that.

With regard to the Blackstone Park Campsite betterment, can the Minister expand a little bit further on it? Is it work about the roads, or is it the campgrounds that are going to be enhanced, or is it going to be a combination of all? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have had the pleasure of actually staying at this campground this summer when I went on holidays, so I am very familiar with it. The campsites will be resurfaced, levelled, and expanded to accommodate larger RV traffic, which is actually an issue there right now when I was there. Campsites with pull-out through entrances will be widened so that larger RVs can pull through safely and upgrade site infrastructure tent beds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we talk about levelling the camp, the sites, and that, and the roads and widening them, we are talking about gravel. Correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There would be gravel, for sure, but at the top of there would actually be site preparation, and the construction work would go in part of that as well. It would be different types of gravel, but yes, gravel would be included. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just trying to understand if there was chipseal going to be in there, but I totally support the fact that we are putting gravel in, and we are making it better. I have been the campground, as Minister Schumann has been in there, and it is a beautiful site. It has an opportunity to have a better impact for tourism in the region. I thank the Minister for his answers. No further questions, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Comment noted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Any further questions, committee? If not, we will return to page 38. Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, infrastructure investments, \$3,102,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you. We will now return to page 35. Industry, Tourism and Investment, departmental total, total capital estimates, \$11,530,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you. That concludes the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Have a seat, Minister Schumann. Thank you, committee. We have agreed to now consider the Department of Infrastructure. Does the Minister have witnesses he would like to bring into the Chamber?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce his witnesses.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left is assistant deputy minister of regional operations Jayleen Robertson. On my right is Paul Guy, deputy minister of Infrastructure. On our far right is Kevin McLeod, assistant deputy minister of asset management. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister. I will now open the floor to general comments, if any. Seeing none, we will defer the departmental total until after consideration of activity summaries, which start on page 42. Infrastructure, asset management, infrastructure investment, \$129,905,000. Any questions on information items, pages 43 and 44? Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How much of this \$129 or \$130 million is federal funds and how much is NWT funds? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have that exact breakdown in front of us right now, but if the Members were to go to page 43, where it says "Investing Canada plan", those ones are 75-cent dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. So, "Investing in Canada plan". Oh, the "Building Canada Plan," I'm guessing? The BCP? Okay. Then I see you have engine retrofits and replace engines on a couple of ferries here. I know that with technology the way it is, you can get a lot more mileage, or rather, a lot more efficiency out of engines nowadays. Are these retrofits or replacements going to save money in the long run? Does the Minister know how much?

Will it cut down on greenhouse gases, et cetera? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The intent of those projects is to upgrade the engines in the ferries that we served as part of the highway system. Part of it is to reduce the emissions, both the greenhouse gases as well as some of the other gases that are used in water and cleaner technology. Modern engines are much more efficient and generate less pollutants. There is also an operating efficiency that we gain through those as well. We have some initial information on the one that we just recently completed, which we will ask ADM Robertson to speak to. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Assistant deputy minister Robertson.

MS. ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the deputy was saying, we are working to replace the engines in the Lafferty, which is a very similar project to what we had done on the Louis Cardinal just this year. It's very early. At this point, we have been running them for the whole season, but reports are that there's quite a bit of fuel efficiency, as much as up to 20 percent, as well as there's an increase in power at the same time. They are extremely quiet and they are working very well on the Louis Cardinal, I understand. We are working to do a similar type of project at the Lafferty Ferry. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Robertson. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. Nothing further.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next on the list, we have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could just ask the Minister to explain the difference in these two project names, "Highway Culverts, Bridges and Chipseal Overlay" and "Bridges Rehabilitation." Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Bridges Rehabilitation project is an ongoing project that started with the federal government. That's in the Building Canada Fund process that we go against all the other jurisdictions for that funding to improve our bridges. The Bridge and Culvert program that is part of the capital program is a smaller program. It updates and rehabilitates the current bridges in our

inventory and all culverts that are greater than 1.5 metres in diameter.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering, again, on those two same topics if the Minister could explain the estimated completion. One is 2023-2024 and one is 2019-2020. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For 2018-2019, we have the Buffalo River Bridge. For 2018-2019, we have the Frank Channel Bridge for pre-engineering, environmental design, and new bridge. In 2019-2020, rehabilitation works are deferred. Hay River to Pine Point Bridge, 2019-2020. For construction, the year two of two, repair and concrete piers, abutments, strengthen steel, rehabilitate concrete bridge deck, replace bearings and deck joints, and repaint steel stresses. In 2019-2020, we have Oscar Creek Bridge, Jean Marie Bridge, and Trout River Bridge. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the community access road improvements, that's a Building Canada shared funding I can see. We also have the community access road program. That's not here because it's an O and M program, I believe. I'm wondering if there's a clear distinction between which types of roads this capital addresses, and the O and M program with relatively the same name, if that addresses different types of roads. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will defer this question to ADM Robertson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Ms. Robertson.

MS. ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is a capital project within here that is called community access roads. This is for improvements on access roads that the GNWT, which it is responsible for, they form part of the GNWT public highway system. Just to answer the question about the community access program, that is approved within our main estimates. That's a contributions program that is approved annually within our O and M appropriation. It provides contribution funding for

communities to deliver community-based projects for access roads and trails and other infrastructure that is community infrastructure. It's a contribution program to communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Robertson. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I hope this question wasn't asked already here. I missed that line of questioning, but it's regarding Merv Hardie Ferry that's sitting by the Deh Cho Bridge. I am wondering what the plan for that ferry is? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is currently sitting there as a spare, and we're open to options in the future what we can do with it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, does the department know how long a vessel such as this can sit on dry dock before it is no longer usable? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This ferry is sitting there right now, but we do our annual maintenance on it. If we were to deploy it, we would have to do an evaluation, and see what kind of investment would have to be made to put the ferry back in service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions on this page.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Next, we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Similar to the previous department, I want to take this opportunity to commend the Minister and his department for the work that they have done on the Ingraham Trail. There has been a lot of good work with continuing to do chip seal and widening on the road, and we know that there has been some brush clearing and what have you done in the last couple of seasons, and that is greatly appreciated.

I just want to touch on something that I've touched on a couple of times over the past couple of years, and that is with regard to some guardrails along the Prosperous boat launch area. Can the Minister

provide some update as to whether we will or will not actually be seeing an investment in installing guardrails around the corners near the Prosperous Lake boat launch? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are at the planning, including survey and design work is under way for the possible installation of guardrails at kilometre 13.5 and kilometre 18.7, but we are looking at other options because guardrails might not be the only solution as well on this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate what the Minister is saying. That is kind of the message he's been providing for a little while. What sort of options are we considering if we are not considering guardrails? Is there some kind of engineering being considered for realignment of the road, or maybe he can elaborate? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Exactly that. We are having a look at possibly realigning this road in the very near future going forward, and we are looking at what types of solutions that would be, and that's why guardrails may not be the best solution at this time if we are looking at realigning this section of highway. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate the Minister sharing that information. I am certainly supportive of the longer-term approaches rather than the short-term approach, if that's the way in which we actually are going to go.

Speaking about roadside or road safety on the Ingraham Trail, I would like to bring to the Minister's attention to the idea of a roadside pull-out being considered at an area known as Big Hill Lake. A number of constituents have brought that matter to my attention, that vehicles are parking directly on the road. We know that you're not supposed to park on the road anywhere on the Ingraham Trail. A number of vehicles sometimes go nose first into the ditch. It's a steep ditch. This year, it was a rather wet ditch. There has been residents who have had to pull visitors or tourists out of that ditch. Does the Minister believe that there might be a good case for

designing and building a roadside pull-out at Big Hill Lake on Ingraham Trail? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, along with my other department of ITI, we are in discussions with Infrastructure. We are having a serious look at this. We are considering future plans on what we're going to do in that area as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's, again, welcome news from the Minister. Future plans, is that again sort of relevant to pre-design kind of engineering aspects? Is it something that would come out of maybe budgets that we have within this year? What are we considering? When are we considering this? What exactly are we considering? What kind of time frame are considering? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for the Member's information of the funding for the engineering on this is done from within, so we are working on that presently. We are looking at possibly maybe moving on this, depending how things go with ITI and stuff, but moving this for the next capital planning session after this one, so it would be 2020-2021. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the additional information. One of the things that I would maybe suggest or recommend in consideration in that as well is the idea of just some more signage along the Ingraham Trail indicating that parking is not allowed on the Ingraham Trail. It has been a serious safety issue where folks viewing aurora have actually just parked on the road in the middle of the dark with no lights on, et cetera, and, of course, other vehicles come upon them without seeing them that well. I think we need to improve signage on the roadway a little better indicating to tourists who are new to town and renting vehicles that you can't park on that highway, so that could be welcomed. That's just a suggestion.

But lastly, not long ago, and again, I commend the department for the work that they have done, just out here in front of the Legislative Assembly along what was referred to formerly as Highway No. 4, the entrance into Yellowknife. They've done some good work with the crosswalk, as well as the path

work in the area. I'm just asking today, is the path work that they've done, is that complete now, or is there some consideration being done towards hard topping or paving the pathway work that was put down there a year ago? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A couple of comments first on the Ingraham Trail. We are working closely with ITI and NWT Tourism. Those discussions are ongoing about how we can improve the signage out on the Ingraham Trail. Just to update Members as well, all the rental cars now are going to have a map in there with all the different languages about the concerns of Ingraham Trail, so that is going to be out there to help support the tourism industry and hopefully alleviate some of the safety issues there. For the trail here, we are committed to paving our section, so that would be from the intersection up to the Nova Hotel, and we're working closely with the city. Hopefully, they will be able to do their half of this section going forward, but we want to do ours next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to clarify a couple of things, and then I'll have some other questions. When the Minister talked about the highway culverts, bridges, and chip seal overlay and he talked about Trout Lake River and Jean Marie River bridges, is that supposed to happen this fiscal year, or is it the year after? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That work is going to commence in 2019-2020. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I thank the Minister for that. I mean, it's been long overdue, and some of the bridges need a little more work so it ensures that traffic, especially heavy traffic, can get across those bridges. I greatly appreciate that.

Can the Minister advise if Axe Handle Creek, Bouvier Creek, and Red Knife Creek, if those sections are going to be enforced? As I drive over them numerous times, I see certain sections of the road, the rails are kind of falling in. Is that being looked at? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That section of highway, there are some inspections taking place. Minor repairs will be done as needed, and major repairs will be looked at in future years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. I mean, I appreciate the department is looking at that. If it is minor, that would be great. If it is major, I know that there are certain sections that the department is working on, and I have to give credit to both sides, the Providence side and the Simpson side, for the work they are doing on it. I have given the Minister a hard time about the potholes, so I appreciate the work they are doing on that.

When we talked about Highway No. 1 reconstruction, does the department have a plan that shows which section the work is going to be done on, and is it available to myself and the Members that are affected by Highway No. 1? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Embankment drainage improvement on kilometre 207 to 212 for 2018-2019. In 2019-2021, rehabilitation, including widening, drainage improvement, culvert installation, sub-base course construction, and chipsealing from kilometre 212 to 222. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister provide that information to us so that I know exactly where? I do have a map, and it has those numbers, but I am not too sure where those numbers are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we can do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister and the department being able to provide that information. When we talk about Highway No. 7, could the Minister advise what section of the

road this is going to be scheduled for? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Embankment and drainage improvements on kilometre 20 to 23. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I think that is from the border in? It's not from the Simpson junction moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is from the border in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank you for the clarification on that.

When we talk about community access roads improvements, I know there are a couple of projects being looked at. I am hoping that the department is able to look at Sambaa K'e, the winter road. I know that they have broached the idea to the department and the Minister and myself numerous times. I shouldn't say to the Minister numerous times. They have broached it to me numerous times.

What we are trying to do and what I am hoping to see is that they are trying to remove a hill, two hills, as a safety factor. We are trying to make sure the certified winter road is in solid shape. Will the Minister commit to looking at this feasibility? I know that right now we don't have any money earmarked for this project, but is he willing to commit to look at it if they find money? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am going to do better than that. We had a discussion with the community last year and encouraged them, if they did an application through cap funding, that this would be addressed and encouraged them to submit that to have more local employment and local work for the community and that we would probably do it, but they never did their application. That is where that stands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister's commitment to capital work. Caps are talking \$50,000, and I think it is going to be a little bit more work than just \$50,000 for the two of the hills. We are also talking about trying to make these hills a little bit more safer.

I will, again, work with the community to talk about the cap project, but will the Minister commit to looking at that, and if that is not feasible, if he can get his regional staff to work with the community to help them fill out the application? Specifically, the demands on the band manager are huge. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said, we reached out to the community last year, and we can do that again. I will commit to reaching out to the community again to access the cap program to get the most benefits that they can locally for employment and work.

At the same time, we can commit to scoping out and seeing what type of larger project it would be, but I would be glad to work with the Member and his community to try to at least access the cap program this year to get something going, then we can have a look at what the larger project would entail. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I greatly appreciate the Minister coming forth with that commitment. I mean, it is very important, and the Minister has been in the community. Like I say, I thank the department for being willing to work with the community. I will work with the community to connect with the regional staff and the Minister to try to move forward with this.

My next project we are talking about, again, is the Jean Marie Access Road. The department spent some good quality money on the section coming in from the highway, but the other section of the road seems to be a big concern for the community, and they have been asking previous governments to have a commitment in there. This is what I have been advised. Will the Minister look at the feasibility of doing some work with the community to fix that first section of that access road? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have just recently finished some embankment and drainage work there, but we are looking at what

we can do with some granular overlay this coming summer year with the community, what we can do close to the community for gravel. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the department. I greatly appreciate the work they are doing there, and it is great to hear some positive steps towards that. Every time I go in there, there is that one soft spot that I have to slow down and go less than 20 kilometres an hour sometimes, and I do follow the speed limits that are posted there by the Minister.

My other question is just in regards to the Nahanni Butte, their certified winter road. They use it year-round, except for breakup and freeze-up. Can the Minister advise if the department is able to work with them to put some money to it? It is more about the site, like clearing the brush, getting it out, getting it away from the road, because buffalos don't seem to care about where it is. They just seem to care what direction they are going. Can the Minister confirm that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through our O and M with brushing, I can commit that we will have a look and see what the situation is there and, if there is something that can be done, work with the Member and the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson, your time is up. Are there any further questions from committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have had the occasion to use the crosswalk myself out in front of the Assembly here. It crosses the highway. One half is in my riding; the other is in the riding for my colleague from Yellowknife North. I know I have been on the record as urging the Minister to put in the crosswalk. It's good; it's there. I also heard a commitment today that the path on the Explorer side is going to be paved. That's great.

I know that, in using the crosswalk, I have pressed the button, and I felt a little bit leery about crossing the road, because you don't know if those cars are actually going to stop or not. You don't know if the lights are flashing. There is no indicator on the part of the crosswalk, once you press the button, that anything is happening when you are a pedestrian. I am wondering if there is some way that that can be adjusted so that there is either a blinking sound or some sort of light so that the pedestrian knows that

the system is actually working or not. I really ventured out there kind of gingerly, wondering whether the cars are going to stop or not, and whether the thing is actually working.

That is my first question for the Minister, if he could work with his staff to make that work just a little bit better. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There is a risk with crosswalks. Pressing the button is only one part of it, and then making eye contact with the drivers to make sure that they see you, especially as we get into the darkness.

We are committed to working with the Transportation Association of Canada and the guidelines for crosswalks, and we will look at other options to improve that site as much as possible and the suggestion of a blinking light to tell the pedestrian the lights are working.

Again, we would like to see the pedestrians make eye contact with those vehicles to make sure that they do stop and stop safely. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. I appreciate the comments, and in fact, I try to do that, but given that the traffic there is, like, actually five lanes wide when you consider the turning lane into the hotel, it is hard to see that far, and if another vehicle is sort of in behind, you don't know whether they are stopping or not. I get it; you guys are going to check into that and try to improve it.

That is from the pedestrian perspective, but also, I think, for the drivers, because I have driven that part as well. All of a sudden, somebody's pressing a light. You don't know whether the guy in front of you is actually going to stop or not. If there is a way to make the lighting system a little more noticeable for drivers, as well, that would be appreciated. Is that something the department could look at as well? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, as Mr. McLeod said, we are looking at it from a pedestrian perspective, but we will also look at it from that perspective as well.

As Mr. McLeod said, the new standard, the standards that we follow, come from the national standards of the Transportation Association of Canada, so we also have to work with them to see

if there is another standard we can use or more enhanced equipment, but we do recognize that problem that the drivers are having, too, noticing those lights there aren't as bright as they could be at certain times of the day. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment made by the department to look at those two issues. I will check out the crosswalk again myself in probably a few weeks, after it gets a bit darker, and see how it is working, but I look forward to the department looking at that and improving it. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Any more comments? Next on the list, we have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have just got three more questions, I think.

In regard to Mount Gaudet Access Road, it is great to see this is on there. Can the Minister advise us what is exactly happening this fiscal year in regard to that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This year we are doing community consultation. We will be working with the community on this closely. We have got an environmental assessment work that needs to be done and planning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister advise, is it 2018-2019 or is it 2019-2020 that they are talking about for the process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That will be 2019-2020.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate that clarification from the Minister. I know previously when we have gone into the community, there was a commitment from the department to go in and consult with the community on beginning the stages of alignment and that. Has that been done? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We were just in there last week to meet with the community and kick off that process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is great to hear. I greatly appreciate the department following up on their commitment to the community, and I am looking forward to working with the Minister and the community on this project.

In regard to the bulldozer going into Fort Simpson, is there a reason for us buying a D6 dozer and not utilizing local contractors? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Ms. Robertson.

MS. ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In all regions, we do have a mix of our own equipment, as well as we utilize the equipment of contractors. In this case, this is the proposed piece of equipment for our own operations. It is generally so that we can have this piece of equipment there available at the landings to be able to respond extremely quickly and make sure that we have the equipment on site when we need it so that we can keep the ferries operational. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Robertson. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank Ms. Robertson for that answer in clarifying. Sometimes we need to get the information out there because sometimes the contractors are asking those questions, why the equipment is not being utilized.

The ferry in Fort Simpson, the Lafferty ferry engines, it says 2019-2020. Is this going to be engines that are going to be in place for the year 2019 season, or is it going to be for the 2020 season? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our plan is to move ahead with changing out these engines and have them ready for next ferry season. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I greatly appreciate that. I guess the question is: when are we going to

start looking at doing the changeover? I believe tomorrow our season is done. I think that is the last email I got, and I thank the department for keeping it open for such a long time with the challenges that we are facing. When is the ferry engine going to start to be replaced? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Once we pass this capital budget, we will do the procurement process and hopefully have them delivered for April and do the replacement in April, May, June. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope he is not saying in June; I am hoping we will see it done in April because our ferry kind of starts running around the beginning of May. That would be a huge concern for the constituents in the Nahendeh riding.

Can the Minister just clarify exactly when the replacement will be done? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to alleviate any concerns that the Member has, we just did these exact same replacements up in the BeauDel on an existing ferry up there. The biggest lee time is to get to procurement and get these engines delivered, but I don't believe it will interfere with the sailing season at all, for the Member's concerns. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the department for making this change. You know, if the engines are going to be quieter, that means the hearing of the staff is going to be not impacted as much. If we are saving 20 percent, I think that's a great, you know, fuel. That's a great start to looking to maybe extending the hours of the ferry operation later on, but I won't be asking that question here today. I thank the Minister and the department for all the work they are doing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. More a comment. Any further questions from the committee? If not, I will read the page. Infrastructure, asset management, infrastructure investment, \$129,905,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next, we have Infrastructure, programs and services, infrastructure investment, \$64,976,000. Any questions? Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next, we turn to page 41. Infrastructure, total capital estimates, \$194,881,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Does committee agree that we have concluded the Department of Infrastructure?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Committee, we have agreed to now consider the Department of Finance. Does the Minister have witnesses he would like to bring into the Chamber?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you. Please introduce your witness, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, to my right, I have Mr. David Stewart, who is the deputy minister of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we will now defer departmental total until after consideration of the activity summaries, which start on page 28. Finance, office of the Comptroller General, infrastructure investments, \$1,630,000. Any questions? Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. I will now call the page. Office of the Comptroller General, infrastructure investments, \$1,630,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Next, we have department as a whole. The Department of Finance, total capital estimates, \$1,630,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Does committee agree that we have concluded the Department of Finance?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber. Thank you, committee. Do you agree we have concluded consideration of Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020? Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

COMMITTEE MOTION 78-18(3):
CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT 215-
18(3), CAPITAL ESTIMATES, 2019-2020,
CARRIED

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, I move that consideration of Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 215-18(3) be reported as ready for further consideration in the formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, there is a motion in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions?

---Carried

Thank you, committee. The tabled document is now concluded. We will now turn to Bill 24. Does committee agree? Committee will now take a five-minute break just to reorganized. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): I call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. I will now ask the Member responsible for the bill to introduce it. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As chair of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures, I am pleased to present Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act.

Bill 24 is the result of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures review of three reports submitted by the Chief Electoral Officer in the life of the 18th Assembly. The first, entitled "Modernizing Election Administration in the Northwest Territories," was tabled by the Speaker on May 31, 2016, and reports on the conduct of the general election. The second report is a white paper on the independence and accountability of election administration in the Northwest Territories commissioned by the Chief Electoral Officer and tabled in the Legislative Assembly on February 28, 2017. The third report provides four supplementary recommendations on the administration of the 2015 general election. It was tabled on June 1, 2017. Together, these reports contain 107 recommendations for changes related to election administration, including legislative amendments.

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures is responsible for reviewing these reports and for making recommendations to the Legislative Assembly. Because the Chief Electoral Officer's two reports and white paper are closely related, the committee carried out a coordinated and comprehensive review of all three documents, involving in-depth examination of each recommendation, and extensive public and stakeholder consultation. The standing committee notified former candidates, interested stakeholders, and the media prior to holding public hearings with the Chief Electoral Officer in Yellowknife on September 9, 2016, and June 12, 2017. Public submissions were received from two individuals, and additional submissions were sought from stakeholders and from the public via the standing committee's website after the white paper was tabled.

At the conclusion of this consultation and review process, the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures released its report on the review of the Chief Electoral Officer's three reports on October 17, 2017. The standing committee report was debated in Committee of the Whole on October 19, 2017, and this Assembly adopted each of the standing committee's 15 recommendations. Since that time, the law clerk and legislative drafters have been working to translate these recommendations for improvements to the Elections and Plebiscites Act into the amendments found in Bill 24.

The amendments were also reviewed and discussed by caucus by all MLAs earlier this month, where some additional minor changes were made. The overriding purpose of these amendments is to increase the opportunity for members of the public to participate in the democratic process in the Northwest Territories and to improve administration of elections. These amendments also allow for modernization of our electoral system. The most important changes include:

- fixing the election date to the first Tuesday in October;
- setting rules for third-party advertising;
- allowing greater flexibility and financial reporting by candidates;
- allowing absentee voters to vote electronically;
- clarifying the mandate of Elections NWT, including working with youth in schools;
- increasing penalties under the act;
- expanding the scope of annual reports by the chief electoral officer; and
- improving powers of investigation and enforcement.

Bill 24 recognizes the strength of our existing system, and builds on this strength to ensure our electoral process is modern, inclusive, and more accessible to all voters in the Northwest Territories. That concludes my opening remarks, Mr. Chair, and I'm prepared for any questions that Members may have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

MR. O'REILLY: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. O'Reilly, please introduce your witnesses.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have two witnesses here with me today. Mr. Mike Reddy, the legislative drafter with the Department of Justice, is on my left, and I have Ms. Alyssa Holland, who is a law clerk, on my right-hand side. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 24. Any comments? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased today to speak to Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. The bill provides for a series of changes that will offer much-needed flexibility and modernization of our system of elections in the NWT. I would like to acknowledge the work of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures in bringing forward these comprehensive changes to our elections legislation, along with recognizing the contributions of the Chief Electoral Officer, members of the public, and former candidates in their submissions to the review of the Elections Plebiscites Act. I will be supporting all

clauses of the bills, and will have specific comments on some of these sections later today.

Mr. Chairman, now that I have addressed what is currently in the bill, I want to raise concerns about what isn't in the bill. For as long as I can remember, living and working in the NWT, there has been a constant tension in our political discourse of what system is best to represent the interests of Northerners; the status quo consensus model, or responsible government through organized political parties. Debates on the merits of both systems occur regularly during election cycles, and more frequently in response to political events that raise questions about accountability of executive power in our government, the ethical conduct of Members of the Legislative Assembly, and the pace of enacting legislation and providing clear direction towards public policy. These debates are important to a healthy democracy, and it's clear to me that there is public interest and desire for more options to be brought forward for consideration during elections.

Therefore, later during this review, I will be introducing a series of amendments that will allow for the registration and regulation of political parties in the Northwest Territories. My decision to bring forward these amendments to create formal rules for political parties in our Election Act is primarily based on the concerns brought forward to me by my constituents over the past three years, the concerns of my colleagues in this House, and my own reflections of my time in office.

The principle of these amendments is twofold; to clearly set out in law rights and responsibilities of territorial political parties, and further, to enhance the democratic rights of our citizens.

The honourable Members of this House have had the opportunity to discuss this matter privately behind closed doors, and while I acknowledge there has been little appetite to bring forward changes to the rules and procedures of the Legislative Assembly, I believe it is important to have a public debate on this matter to weigh all options for democratic reform in the Northwest Territories and to continue to challenge our assumptions around peace, order, and good government in the NWT.

The continuing confusion around the status of territorial political parties and the desire of many of our people to engage their democratic right to free association compels an examination of the current state of our laws as it relates to territorial political parties.

Three statutes, the Public Service Act, the Cooperative Associations Act, and the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, make explicit

reference to political parties, and make certain prohibitions against these organizations.

Additionally, the GNWT's Code of Conduct establishes extensive prohibitions towards territorial political parties. These provisions exist in a legal gray area, as there is no current definition of a territorial political party in any of our laws. Federal parties are defined and regulated through the Canada Elections Act, and are well-understood by the provisions of our legislation practices and policies. The same is not true for territorial political parties.

The amendments I will introduce are designed to solve this problem by clearly defining the roles, rights, and responsibilities of territorial political parties by governing them through the Elections and Plebiscites Act, similarly to how political parties are regulated through federal, territorial, and provincial elections legislation in other jurisdictions. This will have the effect of assisting members of the public service in interpreting the Code of Conduct and the aforementioned laws to allow them to better understand their roles as public servants with respect to MLAs.

The current state of affairs often has GNWT employees muzzled with respect to matters of public policy, and a display of frequent unwillingness to engage with elected Members for fear of reprisal from their employer, the GNWT. This is not the intention of the Code of Conduct, nor is it appropriate to limit the rights of public servants without clearly defining those limits through law.

The second aspect of this proposal is the enhancement of the democratic rights of NWT residents. Setting aside personal feelings toward the concept of party politics, it is true, many of our citizens have expressed a desire to see more options given during elections including parties as a form of political expression. The proposed amendments can therefore be characterized as enhancing democratic rights as opposed to modifying or reducing democratic rights. The distinction is important as, if this were such a proposal, there would be a real need for consultation at minimum, if not an outright plebiscite.

However, these amendments are not proposing to change how people vote, how they run in elections, or how the legislature operates. These amendments do not directly change or alter the institutions of consensus government, nor do they serve as an endorsement of responsible government through political parties over the more familiar consensus-style government. Rather, these amendments seek to provide additional options to the electorate and more choice at the ballot box.

Voters will still be able to support consensus representation in their ridings, as long as a candidate runs presenting that option. Creating a legal framework for political parties does not mean the Legislative Assembly is abandoning consensus government. Arguments to the contrary presume the success of political parties during electoral contests, which is yet unknown, and it cannot be seen as a guaranteed outcome without any real evidence to support this assumption.

In speaking of support of additional changes to the bill to regulate political parties, I offer the commonly accepted international development standards for democratic legislatures that recognize the right of citizens to form political associations and freely participate in the democratic process. The conversations we have been having as a caucus concerning increasing the number of women in the Legislative Assembly to 30 percent is drawn from these same development goals and, as they relate to political parties, are not controversial in the rights they seek to advance and enshrine in free and open societies.

Mr. Chairman, I want to acknowledge plainly that changing the act to incorporate political parties carries with it no small amount of controversy, given the subject matter. I have taken personal steps to ensure that the public is aware of this proposal and communicated broadly with the media and the general public through online social media and direct communication with individual citizens.

While some Members may be concerned that this proposal has not been given over to the public for review, I would point out that all of the amendments brought forward in this bill have likewise not gone out for extensive public consultation. Only two public hearings have been held on this Chief Electoral Officer's territory election reports and white paper on electoral administrative independence, the last one nearly a year ago by the standing committee on June 7, 2017.

The recommendations made in this report were considered and later formed the basis of subsequent recommendations made by the committee in its October 17, 2017, report that was later adopted by the House. Apart from public debate in this Chamber on these recommendations, the proposed amendments we are considering today have not been subject to public consultation and review.

Mr. Chairman, the changes brought forward in Bill 24 are welcome, are much needed improvements to our election's administration in the NWT and will go a long way to enhance our democracy. However, the act does not go far enough to address a long-standing issue concerning political

parties that is well known to all Members of this House and to the public in general.

The additional amendments I will be introducing in respect to the regulation and registration of political parties can be considered as technical or legal in nature to close the loopholes that exist in our current laws, responding to public interest and setting out rules for political parties, or to meet international standards of democratic legislature that ensure the rights of all citizens are upheld and properly defined in law.

I believe strongly we must act to address this issue for these reasons and use the current opportunity to amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act as a means to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, is the committee agreed that there are no further comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Can we proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Thank you. Does committee also agree that we will consider the clauses in groups of 10 except where we have motions in order? Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Thank you. Committee, we will now differ the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 2 of the bill. [Microphone turned off]

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Clause 2?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 79-18(3):
BILL 24: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS
AND PLEBISCITES ACT - SUBCLAUSE 2(4),
DEFEATED

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 24 be amended in subclause 2(4) by adding the following proposed definitions in alphabetical order:

- "authorized representative" meaning a person authorized by a political party to provide the necessary consent to enable a person to be identified on a ballot as a member of a political party;

- "political party" means an association, organization, or affiliation of electors comprising a political organization, one of the purposes of which is to nominate and support candidates in elections;
- "registered political party" means a political organization that is registered by the Chief Electoral Officer under section 83.1.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. There is a motion in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this motion simply lays out the definitions that clarify later amendments that will be proposed. Quite plainly, it speaks to what a political party is, what a registered political party is, and what an authorized representative is in terms of the regulations that will be proposed under the act.

Again, this provides absolute certainty to Northerners and, in particular, those who are subject to either the GNWT's code of conduct or other statutes that make explicit reference to Territorial political parties without defining them. This clarifies that issue and clearly defines what a political party is and the difference between a group of people who have formed one and an officially registered one that can participate in elections.

They are simple definitions, Mr. Chair. I look forward to the debate on them. I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that there are some other potential amendments that are going to be coming from the honourable Member from Kam Lake as it relates to his views and his opinions toward making amendments that would align for party politics. I think, on the onset, it is important for me to share some of my views and allow folks to get an understanding of where I will be positioning myself and what my opinion will be.

Mr. Chair, my colleague from Kam Lake has introduced an amendment and will be introducing others to the Elections and Plebiscites Act to promote the establishment of political parties in the NWT. It is not the first time, of course, that party politics have been proposed in the NWT. It likely won't be the last.

Mr. Chair, our unique form of government is an experiment to some degree. It is an ongoing attempt to find the best way to manage our affairs with respect to our unique history and the heritage of the diverse peoples of the NWT. As such, it is constantly growing and changing. In such a dynamic system, it is important to be open to new ideas and possibilities of change and improvement.

For that reason, I welcome my colleague's suggestions for change, as he has said the goal of his proposal is to enhance the democratic rights of our residents. That is the most important goal of any political system, to give citizens a clear voice.

Mr. Chair, my colleague believes that it is the right of Canadians to establish party politics. I agree that, under the charter, we have that right. I support him in bringing forward his position about changing how we conduct business in the House. However, I don't believe that a party system is the right answer for the NWT.

Mr. Chair, democracy emerged from the town meeting where citizens were afforded a chance to voice their opinions on issues of public interest. Parties emerged as a way of consolidating positions of broad interest into respective groups.

In the NWT, we are blessed with a small but hugely diverse population. It includes people from many different backgrounds, cultures, and languages. We are fortunate that, in our system, each person actually has the opportunity to speak up, have their voice heard, and make a difference. Importantly, our system also pays respect to the decision-making traditions of the Indigenous people of whom this territory we all live in.

Consensus is not a perfect system; I will admit it. All of us in this room know that it requires ongoing attention and vigilance to make it work, but in a territory with a diversity in population, I believe it remains the best system to respond to the needs of our society.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chair, I stated in an article in my recent newsletter that I don't want to be in a system where cooperation is out and control is in. I believe that a partisan system will begin to diminish somewhat the diversity, rather than enhance it. I believe that unique voices will be discouraged or even silenced in certain ways under a party system.

Mr. Speaker, you don't have to look very far to see the divisions that partisanship can cause. We live in a world that is increasingly divided. I don't believe that we need to divide into camps in order to manage our public affairs in the NWT.

Consensus isn't perfect, Mr. Speaker, but I believe it is uniquely ours, and it promotes unity, collaboration, and most importantly, it represents

our identity and who we are as a people. For those reasons, I will not be in support of the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Next, we have Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Member for bringing this motion to the floor. I think it is important to have this type of discussion. However, I do have a number of concerns. I don't actually believe that this is the right venue to be having this discussion. I know the Member has said that this is a mechanism to get this into the floor to have those discussions.

In the Government of the Northwest Territories, if a government is moving legislation, it usually involves developing a legislative proposal based on what the MLAs, 19, heard during election campaign. From the LP, that would go to a committee for review to make sure that it is consistent with what we heard from the public.

The LP would then turn into a legislative process, which would involve going out to the communities, going out to residents of the Northwest Territories, listening to them, and making sure that the legislation meets the desires of the people, or at least the vast majority of the people of the Northwest Territories.

From then, there would be a first and a second reading, at which opportunity committee would then be given that piece of legislation to take on the road for 120 days, where they have an opportunity to check to see whether or not the Cabinet of the day actually got the legislation right. This is a great opportunity for input to be provided, amendments to be made, and the voices of the people to be heard, at which point, after amendments, if appropriate, there would be a motion or a bill would then come to the floor for third reading.

I think the honourable Member, Mr. O'Reilly, and his committee did a significant amount of work going out and engaging the public and getting feedback on the Elections and Plebiscites Act, and at no time did I hear anybody come in and say that we need to incorporate parties through this process, that we need to have that discussion at this point in time. I am not saying we don't need to have this discussion; I am saying that nobody brought it up.

I have had an opportunity to reach out to my constituents across the Northwest Territories, as well as my constituents in my riding, and what I have heard is some people saying, yeah, they like the idea of a party. I have heard lots of people say what they would prefer to see is a consensus government where people remember what the

principles of consensus government are, and that we all, on every side of the House, work together in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. I have also heard people say, in particular a lot of the Aboriginal governments, that they don't want a party system. They want to change the way that we provide services, and they want guaranteed seats.

There isn't consensus on the system that we need to have or whether or not there even needs to be change.

The honourable Member for Kam Lake responded to a constituent of mine recently, who raised concerns about what was being proposed, and the MLA indicated that it is important to have public discussion on the proposed amendment, but I think it's important that we are having the discussion publicly. I think what the Member has missed is to have the discussion with the public, and if this is something that we are going to discuss, we need to take it to the public and make sure that we get it right.

Frankly, if we move to a party system here in the Northwest Territories, it changes everything. It is a fundamental change in how we provide governance in this territory. It means no more budgets being shared with MLAs on the other side of the House. It means no more working on bills together. It means no more healthy debate and discussion. It is a different system completely, and if we are going to do it, I believe, without question, that the people of the Northwest Territories have to tell us to do it.

I have encouraged the Member to consider a plebiscite. I have encouraged the Member to actually bring forward a private Member's bill that could go through normal process and get proper feedback. I strongly believe that bringing to the floor through this means is inconsistent with the principles and tenets and is not giving the public their due course and their opportunity to have meaningful input into something. It is, to me, more like an end run, and I am frustrated that we are having the conversation here today; I am not saying that we don't need to have the conversation.

Having said all that, I also don't support party politics in the Northwest Territories. I believe, and what I have heard more than anything, is that we need to do better. We need to work together. We have to remember why we are here, and we have to stop the partisanship behaviour that happens on both sides of this House. We need to do better.

I can't support this motion. I don't believe, necessarily, all of the descriptions that the Member has provided. This does create the opening for party politics in the Northwest Territories. If this motion is defeated, I don't think we will necessarily

see the rest of the motions, because they wouldn't make sense without this one passing first, but some of the motions that were being proposed include spending. By allowing a party to spend in advance of an election it is really creating unfair opportunity and disadvantage for those who actually believe in consensus government, as opposed to those who want to run a party system. I am frustrated, and I won't be supporting those motions either.

I thank the Member for bringing it. I wish he had used a mechanism that I feel would be more appropriate to have this discussion and not come by way of an end run. I hope that the Member continues to engage and have this dialogue because I am interested to hear what the people have to say.

As the MLA for Great Slave, because this is a review of the Elections and Plebiscites Act and we all speak as incumbents, not Ministers or Regular Members, this is an open vote for everybody, I cannot support this motion, and I don't think anybody should either. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. I would like to remind Members that the debate should be to the motion. This motion proposes adding definitions to the motion. I realize it is a contentious issue here. Any further questions? Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I, too, would like to express my thoughts on this proposed amendment.

It is very interesting where we find ourselves at currently and what caused the movement to bring us inevitable point. My understanding is that there is frustration in terms of accountability and transparency. How do you make Cabinet, how do you make Ministers more accountable? That is the frustration. The consensus government does not foster a very transparent and accountable process. Some people believe that, and for those reasons today, an amendment has been proposed that, if you file your nomination or register as a candidate, you have to declare whether you affiliate yourself with a party or not, and it is very unfortunate that we have come to this point.

What is also interesting is my colleague had expressed, well, possibly what should have happened perhaps in terms of process is that, really, a venue to put forth this concept and ensure that a vigilant debate from all sides could happen. That initiative was never undertaken by Cabinet. There have been maybe some gestures towards reforming and looking at new concepts of democracy to ensure that it works within the confines of the consensus system, but that did not happen. That did not happen from Cabinet or the

leaders from Cabinet. Instead, what's happening is, from outside, we proposed the idea of party politics because we need to ensure that there's a level of transparency and accountability. That's what precipitated this, is my understanding, this provision to amend the Elections Act.

Also in saying that, too, I'm not prepared to support the amendment. You know, we already have parties. We have Yellowknife. Interestingly enough, you know, we also have regional centres and we also have small communities. You know, so do we have a party system? Indeed, we do. We have a Cabinet and we have Regular MLAs on the side, so you can't tell me that we have one party. There are two parties. I think it's not a good time for us to make changes that are going to have a significant impact in terms of how people work together in the Northwest Territories. It's just not the right time to bring forth a concept like that.

Really, what we are kind of seeing, too, as my colleague expressed, "Well, this is a unique experience in terms of governance." First Nations and democracy, democratic principles and concepts brought together so that non-Indigenous and Indigenous people can live and work together.

What it is, is that we have a public government based on fiduciary obligations on behalf of First Nations to serve the interests of Dene, Inuvialuit, and Metis of the Northwest Territories. That's the experiment that we have now and we have to make it work.

At the end of the day, it's clear and acknowledged that the extent of consultation was not far and wide. You know, people at the community level need to understand of the implications of the changes that we are proposing. Therefore, I'm not in a position to support this amendment. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Next on the list we have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I respect the three previous presenters and agree with all the issues raised. I will not be supporting this amendment, for all the reasons being that it would deny the people who I serve the right in having their own deliberations within themselves as voters, the governments they sit on and represent.

There are several organizations in the Sahtu that I represent, and I will not stand in the way of their democratic right to voice and have an input into this process. We have a system, as mentioned by the Member from Great Slave, that there is a system to encounter and a process to engage with those individuals.

In short, for all the reasons raised, I agree and will not repeat the three speakers before me. In having said that, I don't agree with this. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Next on the list, we have Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I really appreciate the amount of work that the Member proposing these amendments has put into this project, if I can call it that.

I have long been a supporter of a certain party, so I am partisan in that sense. I frankly could see a future where there would be parties in the Northwest Territories. My problem with this proposal is the manner in which it has come to us. It was only raised a couple of weeks ago. I appreciate that the Member opposite has been speaking about this issue and his position on it is well known, but why not have a private Member's bill and go through the normal processes?

I really don't have much of an idea what the voters in my riding would think about this. They have mainly been concerned about another certain issue. I haven't really raised it with them.

The Member who was speaking about this motion talked about consultation and review. We really haven't done enough of that for this kind of change. I'm not necessarily opposed to the idea of parties in the Northwest Territories, but I don't think this is the way that we should get there. I'm going to abstain on this vote. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Next, we have Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When this was first brought to us as Members of the Legislative Assembly, I did talk a little bit more to the Member from Kam Lake, who was bringing this forward. At that time, my biggest concern was around the money. Within this, what will be coming up later, is that introducing that, if this goes through, that there would be an extra \$30,000 that can be utilized a year before the election or during the year of the election. I have always been about fairness and I have tried to maintain that fairness throughout all of my work here at the Legislative Assembly. This doesn't make it fair. When you have an extra \$30,000, they have an extra year to campaign. The Legislative Assembly has to be open to as many people as possible.

When I came in here, not only was I a woman, I was also a woman of poverty. To be able to just find the money that it took to run the election on its own meant that I used every cent in my savings. It meant that I racked up a Visa to the maximum. In

fact, I couldn't even spend the amount of money because I didn't have it.

If we do this, my biggest concern is now that somebody would have an advantage. They would have up to possibly \$60,000 to be able to campaign. That is not accessible for people in poverty. We have to be accessible in this government. We have to allow people to be able to get into these seats. That \$60,000 is not going to do it.

That was my major concern. However, I was open to looking at the idea of the party system within here, but I put it on my Facebook because I decided that it was something that I needed to hear from the people. I didn't realize how many comments I would get; not as many on my Facebook, but I had phone calls all weekend from people saying "Yes, no, yes, no, yes, no." All it told me was that this is a huge issue. This isn't a small issue, Mr. Chair. People want a say in this. People are afraid. They want to have a say.

I think that, one, I can't agree with the spending. Two, we need to have a plebiscite on this. Therefore, because of that, I cannot support this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Next, we have Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess what we have before us is a bill that was developed in response to reports from the Chief Electoral Officer; the observations and recommendations that she made in running the election in 2015. There were opportunities for the public to review and comment on her report. Maybe they could have been better, and I will agree with the mover of this motion that we probably could do a better job in terms of the public review of this bill itself, but the Chief Electoral Officer did not raise the issue of party politics in her reports. That's not part of why this bill was being brought forward.

I guess, on that basis alone, I have some difficulty with the proposal from the Member from Kam Lake that this is being sort of piggybacked onto this work. I think that party politics represents a very fundamental change to the way that we carry out governance in the Northwest Territories, and that it really does deserve a public discussion and debate. I think we have heard that it's going to be a divisive debate and discussion. We know that.

I think trying to do this, even though I understand that this is enabling, that it doesn't require party politics, it certainly opens the door. I think once you open that door, there's no coming back. It is very difficult to come back.

I agree with others. I think that the more appropriate way to do this, rather than piggyback it onto this bill, is to do it as a private Member's bill and/or a plebiscite. If you're going to do a plebiscite, there needs to be a very clear question around registration of political parties and affiliation on ballots. I think you can devise a clear question around those ideas and, you know, I'm willing to have that discussion and debate, but I don't think we have it in the context of this bill and the changes that it proposes, which are really to improve our democratic system, improve elections, and improve the ability of the Chief Electoral Officer to carry out elections.

The last point I guess I want to make is that there's some urgency with this bill. We have to get this bill dealt with, so that we give the Chief Electoral Officer clear direction moving forward in how the next election is going to be carried out. I know I have sort of pestered some of my colleagues about this, about the necessity to get this done and out the door so that the Chief Electoral Officer can get the tools and the resources in place to start working on the election, which is less than a year away.

With all that being said, I do want to commend my colleague from Kam Lake in bringing this forward. Look, I'm as frustrated as anybody else with consensus government. I don't think it's working as well as it can and should. That being said, I have tried to find ways to improve it and work with our Cabinet colleagues, when and where I can, including amendments to bills and so on. I do want to commend my colleague from Kam Lake in bringing this forward and starting the debate and discussion that will inevitably take place around party politics. I just don't think this is the time and place to do it in the context of this bill. For all those reasons, Mr. Chair, I will be voting against the amendment. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Next on the list, we have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When I first got elected, we talked about consensus and what it means. I have had the pleasure of living all my life in the Northwest Territories and watching consensus government work. I have been in meetings where a decision was made, and an elder come up or somebody else come up and asked for clarification and brought their viewpoint to a place. That is what is, to me, true consensus government as you work forward and move forward to this.

I had the opportunity to go back home and talk to my constituents about this very issue. Their first question was: "What do you want? You're our MLA. What do you want?" I said, "I want a true consensus government. I want to be able to come

back and tell the people that they heard us." They heard what the people were asking.

A number of people have said, "It's not working. You know, it's not working, and we're not seeing it. The smaller communities are losing out. They don't have the voice." I have talked to others and they say, "You have to give it one more shot. This is your first term. Work on it. See how it could be achieved."

I have been accused as the person who brought this or is supporting this. I want to tell everybody here and tell the Northwest Territories, I listened. That's my job as an MLA, is to listen and to hear what people are saying and be their voice. Even if I fundamentally don't agree with it, I have to be Nahendeh's voice. That's what I was elected to do. I was asked to present things, fight for things.

Poverty is an issue. We see a huge, huge issue in the Northwest Territories. It is about the residents. It's like I tell my soccer kids, my hockey kids, and my ball kids that I have coached throughout the years: we need to work on our weak point. If it's soccer, if it's passing, we spend a lot of time on passing.

When we sit here and look at it, this side here has a number of times brought forward ideas that would be strategic spending that would have a huge impact on the whole collective Northwest Territories. As we have developed, sometimes people say, "I fight against consensus." Now, I fight for consensus. I'm willing to stand up, be by myself and still have my voice be heard.

A number of colleagues here talked about the importance of accountability, being transparent, and working for the residents of the Northwest Territories. That's what our job is, 19 of us. When I get accused of, "Well, you're not doing true consensus because you're arguing the point and you don't get your own way," it's not my way. I'm fighting for my constituents, the people I represent.

If I stand up and say, "Yes, no, I don't agree with this." I have had to make some really fundamental choices where I thought, "Well, this is good for my personal belief, but it goes against." My constituents are saying, "No, this is what we need to do." So I do listen to them.

I struggled with this. I made a commitment that I would support this motion. Why? It's not that I support same-party politics. That's the worst thing I'd ever want to see in this Legislative Assembly, but we should allow the residents of the Northwest Territories to decide that. They should be the ones deciding.

The Member from Great Slave talked about a plebiscite. Maybe that's the direction we have to go.

Let's let the people talk. I have heard colleagues say, "Well, it's each community that makes the decision." Is it a riding? Is it the communities? Well, you know what, I think the residents of the Northwest Territories have to make that decision.

I struggle with this, I really do, because it lights at my core. I have been lucky enough to be here; born and raised in the Northwest Territories. My seven children were born and raised in the territories. My grandchildren were born in the territories.

I thought about it. I have listened to people. At the end of the day, unfortunately, I can't support it right now because we haven't done due process. I struggle with that and I apologize to Mr. Testart, because Mr. Testart did an amazing job with this. He went out and did a lot of good work with this, and he has brought it forth to the forefront.

I would support a private bill. I would also support a plebiscite moving forward so that we can get the consultation of the residents of the Northwest Territories. This is not a cannabis bill, where we can only hit 19 communities. This is something that would have to hit 33 communities, and for that, and as the Member for Frame Lake -- I am still struggling with the Members from Yellowknife. I have only been in here three years. I know their names well. We didn't hear that when we toured the bill.

We have to respect due process, and for that, I cannot support the bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Any further questions? Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I can't support this motion, and I won't support any further motions within this to start looking at a party politics-type system.

I believe in consensus government. It has its pros, and it has some cons, but I think that the big question here, and a couple of Members have raised it, is that for an institution that prides itself on hearing the people, which it says right in our code of conduct, I believe, I don't think we heard them on this one, because there has not been a groundswell of support for this, and I think the approach that we are taking is the wrong approach. That goes against what this institution is supposed to be doing.

The Member from Frame Lake, the sponsor of the bill, said it well when he said that it can't be piggybacked onto this. It is one that has got to either come forward as a private Member's bill or in a plebiscite. We cannot assume that we know what the people of the Northwest Territories want, because we didn't ask them. They didn't tell us.

They have more important issues on their minds right now, and we should respect that.

I can't support this, and I will not support any further amendments to Bill 24. I think we had a debate on Bill 24, and we have comments on some of the items that are in it. Again, I think the Member from Nahendeh said it when he spoke about an elder, this institution is based on the Aboriginal principle of a circle sharing type of governance, consensus decision-making, mixed with some Westminster British-style parliamentary procedures. The Member from Sahtu, I think, said as much in his Member's statement today.

We shouldn't sit here and assume that we know what is best for the people of the Northwest Territories when we have not gone out and asked them exactly what they want. There are a couple of opportunities for that. I think a private Member's bill is a great idea. A plebiscite could be considered. There is the Electoral Boundaries Commission. That is going to be struck, I think, during the midway of the next Assembly, and I think there is an opportunity there.

There is not a groundswell of support for this, not from what I have been hearing, and there was a comment made that the people in the small communities don't have a voice. Yes, they do. We are that voice, and we have to listen to what they have to say, because it says right in our Member's code of conduct, "Hear the voices of people." We didn't hear the voices of people on this one. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Usually, we don't do a second round, but I will let Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chair. I know it is not our typical process to allow the mover to close this debate, but I welcome the opportunity. I just wanted to comment on Members who have raised concerns about consultation, and I am not going to pretend like this isn't a big issue, but we talk about it all the time and typically around election cycles, and then we don't talk about until the next election cycle, and so on and so forth.

This is an attempt to draw public debate into a very specific proposal that was not proposing to transform this Chamber today into a political party system tomorrow, but rather to allow opportunities for those seeking this option to pursue it and have voters decide in a general election.

Members who are concerned about the lack of consultation on these amendments should be concerned about the lack of consultation on all amendments in this bill. There is a big difference

between the CEO canvassing comments in her report or the standing committee holding two public hearings, I believe, in this building and taking a bill out on the road or soliciting input over a period of time. I am not going to pin that on the standing committee. This is the process that we follow in amending the Elections Act. This is how our process works. The bill is always fast-tracked to the House, and we make these decisions as quickly as we can, and as thoroughly as we can, based on the evidence provided in those reports.

However, changing polling day from Monday to Tuesday, that might be a concern people have an issue with, and I don't think they know that that is happening. We will see if it happens when that clause comes up. I think, if we have an issue with changing our Elections Act without fully informed consent, then the substance of these amendments, which only came into existence when the bill was given first reading, should also be toured out there. If you take issue with these amendments, we need to take issue with all of the amendments, because that is the only logical approach to the issue of consultation.

My honourable friend for Range Lake, in her comments about candidates with limited resources, I should note that a proposal for spending limits is not subject to these amendments, but to that issue of candidates with limited resources, not speaking in defence of political parties, but certainly one of the aspects of them is that they do have resources. Someone who doesn't have the financial means to contest an election, personal wealth to contest an election, to buy signs, to buy radio ads, a party could do that for them. Whereas some may look at this as an unfair advantage, it might be an advantage to those who don't have established fundraising networks, who don't have personal wealth, and who are looking for support.

We have an issue with getting women candidates running; you create organizations and institutions that have those resources. That could be another option. I am not saying it is the only one, but we are talking about options in this debate, and I am dismayed that the grounds for some of the comments from the Members are driven by a fear that incumbents would be at a disadvantage in a general election or independent candidates who are Members of this House would be at a disadvantage.

Members know, from the amendments that I have posted, both publicly and shared, that one of these amendments is to allow all independents to spend outside of election periods, so even independent challengers can level the playing field with incumbents, and I will save my comments for that amendment, because I still will bring it forward.

I appreciate where Members are coming from. I appreciate that they support consensus. The point of these amendments is not to condemn consensus to the dustbin of history. The point of these amendments is to allow our citizens to exercise their constitutional rights in a clear and consistent manner.

If a plebiscite failed and said, "No, we don't want party politics," you are giving an Assembly a mandate to ignore defining the constitutional rights, and that gives me great consternation. If a plebiscite passes, then you have to ask yourself, "How is this going to work for people who aren't very much invested, and for people who are concerned that political parties are going to have an unfair advantage in running against them?" I don't know if a plebiscite is the best way forward.

I think the debate is a good one to have. I know these amendments are obviously not going to pass, but I did want to speak to some of the concerns raised, because I think it is important that we talk about what these amendments represent, and perhaps it will enable change, but it is not change in and of itself, and to mischaracterize the amendments does a disservice to this debate. The debate should be around the fundamental democratic rights of our constituents and the choices they make in an election, and should they not have a full range of options available to them as guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Next on the list, we have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I don't support this amendment, but I have actually had a discussion with the people that I represent; well, with the leadership. Their main concern was a fair distribution of resources right across the territory. I'm not sure that consensus government creates a fair distribution of resources to all ridings. I'm not saying it's not happening. What I'm saying is the consensus government system doesn't create an atmosphere where everybody feels that they would be getting their fair share of the resources being spent by government.

I think that we need to be able to go back to people in this room who support the only consensus government. We should go back and look at what the principles of consensus government is. I believe that the way the system is set up here, where you have 11 people sitting essentially in opposition and seven people on Cabinet, would work if the consensus government was followed with true principles and true intent. I believe that it has great potential for not representing individuals who sit in opposition, truly in opposition of Cabinet. It doesn't work if Cabinet doesn't wish it to work.

The system where everybody is represented and everyone has a say is not really coming out under this current consensus government. I feel that people wouldn't even consider party politics or give it a second thought if we thought the system was working the way it should work. By ensuring that everybody has a say in what goes on, who sits on Cabinet, who gets which dollars into which riding on which types of projects, where the projects are brought to here and discussed, the decision is made. That's where this party politics seems to creep into it, where the decision is made by a Cabinet which is like a party at this point. Then you have Regular Members who will vote with Cabinet on any issue that makes them the backbenchers, the people who are trying to hold government accountable for reasons that we would state would lose the vote, so you don't have accountability.

In a true consensus government, if we want to talk about how consensus government should work, then it works by the opposition having the majority vote. This ensures that each and every Member in the House is represented and would have to be represented. Cabinets representing their ridings and the people on this side have a fair opportunity to represent their ridings, as well. Maybe party politics is not the way to do it. Maybe the way to do is to go back to the principles of consensus government and follow consensus government.

I mean, it works if it's followed. It doesn't work if it's not followed. I mean I have done fairly well with the projects, but I didn't have a say in a lot of things that went on. I didn't have a say when huge projects were approved in the ridings of people who sit on Cabinet. What I did try to do and what we did try to do on this side of the House was ask the Cabinet to make small tweaks; minor, maybe a small percentage in order to say that this is what we feel that is important to the ridings that we represent, but we don't have the authority or the ability, I'll say, to be able to carry out what our wishes are in here. It's not because we are asking for too much. It's because we don't have the votes to be able to ask for the little that we have, to be able to get the little that we have asked for. If consensus government was working, this wouldn't even be a discussion at this point.

I think that, at some point down the road, there will be another discussion. Maybe it has to be in a plebiscite. That's what people here in the room seem to think would be good. Go back to the communities and ask them. Unfortunately, the time is not now.

I can't support this amendment, because the people I represent don't want me to support anything that has to do with party politics at this time. Most of the communities that I represent grew up in the system, the leaders grew up in the system of consensus

government, and as the honourable Member from Nahendeh said, they said, "You need to give it a full opportunity again." At least one more time to see if the system would work.

I can't support the amendment, but I just wanted to state the reasons why I even considered going out and talking to the leadership on this. It's because I thought that this one wasn't working as well, either. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. That's the end of our list, I believe. I let everyone speak a little off-topic, but I know it is an important issue here. To the other motions, if we could stick to the actual motion, that would be appreciated. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Kam Lake.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): All those opposed, please rise.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): All those abstaining, please rise.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Thebacha.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): The results of the recorded vote: one in favour, 14 opposed, one abstention. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): With that, Members, we will call a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. We will now call the Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we were on clause 2. We will continue. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. We will now do the majority in groups.

---Clauses 3 to 33 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 80-18(3):
BILL 24: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS
AND PLEBISCITES ACT - AMENDMENT IN
CLAUSE 34 BY ADDING THE FOLLOWING
AFTER PARAGRAPH (A),
DEFEATED

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that Bill 24 be amended in clause 34 by adding the following after paragraph (a):

(a.1) adding the following after paragraph (o):

(o.1) if the person being nominated wishes to be identified on the ballot as a member of a registered political party

(i) contain the consent of the party's authorized representative, as indicated by the authorized representative's signature, and

(ii) contain the person's written declaration that he or she is a member of a registered political party and wishes to be identified as a member of that party on the ballot.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Thank you, committee. I did not yet call clause 34, but I will call it now, and we will proceed to the motion. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know which way the wind is blowing on this amendment, so I won't belabour the point too much, but for the purposes of posterity, I wish to make sure these amendments make their way into the official record so that we can see clearly what was being proposed and clearly how these amendments were designed to create options for our residents.

There are a few more amendments I will move as well for the same purposes, but we don't have to belabour the point, and I won't be asking for recorded votes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. The motion is in on the floor. The motion

has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): All those in favour, please rise. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I did not request a recorded vote.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Okay, a miscommunication here. To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? All those abstaining?

---Defeated

Committee, we will now continue with clause 35. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Clause 36. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 81-18(3):
BILL 24: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS
AND PLEBISCITES ACT - ADDING THE
FOLLOWING AFTER CLAUSE 36,
DEFEATED

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 24 be amended by adding the following after clause 36:

36.1 The following is added after section 83:

83.1. The Chief Electoral Officer shall maintain a register of political parties and shall register in it any political party that files with the Chief Electoral Officer an application in the approved form that contains

(a) the names of at least 60 electors indicated by the signature of each elector who collectively represents a minimum of three electoral districts, and who identify as Members of the political party;

(b) the constitution of the political party approved by a majority of its members; and

(c) the name of the person identified as the authorized representative of the registered political party. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? All those abstaining?

---Defeated

The committee will now continue with clause 37.

---Clauses 37 through 59 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clause 60. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 82-18(3):
 BILL 24: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS
 AND PLEBISCITES ACT – RENUMBERING
 CLAUSE 60 AS SUBCLAUSE 60(1) AND ADDING
 THE FOLLOWING AFTER THAT RENUMBERED
 SUBCLAUSE,
 DEFEATED

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 24 be amended by renumbering clause 60 as subclause 60(1) and adding the following after that renumbered subclause:

(2) The following is added after subsection 238(1):

(1.1) A person who may be a candidate for an electoral district may, during the period of time prior to the pre-election period and campaign period for an election, use an amount of his or her own funds not exceeding \$30,000 to promote his or her candidacy or election.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This amendment is separate from the previous suite of amendments that was designed to register and regulate territorial political parties. One of the concerns raised, and we've heard it in the debate was around creating an unfair advantage for independent candidates or incumbents to compete with a political organization with superior resources.

This amendment allows anyone who wishes to be a candidate in an election to use up to \$30,000 a year to promote their candidacy. One of the realities of being an incumbent in this House is we are able to hold the public's attention to a certain degree for four years through newsletters, through advertising. Even if it's not to directly promote our candidacy, it indirectly continues to keep our roles as MLAs alive in the public's eyes.

In the Northwest Territories, statistically, incumbents have a 65 percent likelihood of being returned to office in a general election. This amendment is designed to allow potential challengers to an incumbent to be able to spend their own personal resources to promote their candidacy. That could look like an ad in the newspaper saying, "I'm John Doe, and I would like to be your next MLA for Kam Lake," and it to not be an offence under the Elections Act to do so.

A lot of Members spoke earlier today about ensuring we have a level playing field for all political contenders. This amendment will allow

independence, because we all know the registration of political parties is not a reality. Those amendments failed. This amendment specifically addresses the ability of independent candidates to promote their candidacy to a pre-defined limit outside of an electoral period or a pre-election period.

I hope Members will consider this separate from the issues of political parties. This is a very specific amendment that addresses independent candidates who could be consensus candidates or any kind of candidate, but this does level the playing field between challengers and incumbents. At the appropriate time, I would like a requested vote. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This one was the most worrisome for myself. My understanding is this gives the person \$30,000 they could spend during the election period, usually a month, and then an extra \$30,000 for a year before. This does impact people who live in poverty. Again, like I said before, we need to make these Chambers as accessible as possible. I don't know very many people who live in poverty who could come up with \$60,000 in a year, so therefore I will not be supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm appreciative of what this particular motion is presenting. I recognize that I ran in a riding where the incumbent was retiring, but had I not run in a riding where the incumbent was retiring, it is clearly, and we know this statistically, proven time and time again, and I think that my colleague from Kam Lake was being a little bit conservative on his numbers as it relates to the percentage that an incumbent has as an advantage in getting back into office. It's more like 85 percent, from some statistics that I've seen in the past. That comes because they have a lot of exposure through various forms of mediums, and it is extremely difficult for any new candidate who is going to make this commitment in life. There are a lot of different things that they have to get in order to even come to this decision that we are going to make in terms of for them to run.

Again, we talk about us wanting to promote women getting into politics and leadership roles, and one of the challenges that we've identified, as has the Member on the other side of the House, one of them is the financial challenges that they have. When you're competing against an incumbent, boy, do you ever have to take out of your pocket, or

certainly go knocking on your friends' doors to see if you can raise any kind of money to compete against an incumbent, because it's difficult.

In a very short period of time, in the writ period, you have 35 days to put out the best case scenario for promoting yourself; whether it's on social media, or in the newspapers, on the radios, at the public forums, knocking on doors, and you have to have some kind of messaging document with you all the time, whether it's brochures, et cetera. They all cost money. What this is going to allow is for not only any candidate, but especially non-incumbent candidates to go out and raise some funds. This isn't just about money out of their own pocket. They are allowed to go and raise some funds. Write some letters to some friends and family and say, "I need your help. I'm going to do my best and put my best foot forward, and would you kindly support me." They can collect some money and make the case and build support for themselves. Frankly, I appreciate that the Member has put this forward, and I will give it my support. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm trying to fully understand this particular motion. In listening to the Member from Kam Lake, it sounds like he was suggesting that a person who wished to be a candidate in a district but wasn't currently an incumbent might be able to spend some money in order to level the playing field. But the more I look at the motion, it sounds like anybody, whether you're an incumbent or somebody who is seeking to run against the incumbent, can spend money. To me, that doesn't really scream levelling the playing field. I'd like to ask the Member a question: can the Member provide some clarity as to whether or not this is anybody can spend \$30,000 prior to the election period, or non-incumbents who are choosing to run can spend \$30,000? I am open to supporting the second, but not the first. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Next on the list, we have Mr. Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I share Mr. Abernethy's concern because it doesn't differentiate between new candidates and incumbents. We know that incumbents often win, so this system would seem to me to lead to the incumbent spending the \$30,000 since they're already ahead, so I don't think I can support this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Next, we have Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, fundraising for election purposes is now tightly

controlled by the Election Act. The amount of money that you can raise, the ability to provide tax receipts to donors, and an accounting of what the money has to be spent on, I don't see those provisions being reflected in this. Those provisions apply to people who are a candidate.

What if a person decides, after all, not to be a candidate and they have raised this money? Do they owe some kind of explanation or accounting for raising the money and then not becoming a candidate? I think that this motion is too vague to add to the changes at this time, and I won't be supporting it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. To the motion. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I would like a little more time to consider this. My concern is that there are rules around what sitting MLAs can spend their money on. We do have rules around our constituency, expense allowances. They are there for good reasons, to allow us to tell people what we are doing as MLAs. Hopefully, it doesn't creep over into electioneering.

I understand what the intent of what the mover of the motion is trying to accomplish. I am not sure this is the best way to do it. There are some rules that we are going to get to in terms of third-party advertising during a campaign that I think will address another set of related issues. I am worried that this is going to set up perpetual election mode for us in the Northwest Territories, where anybody who wishes to be a candidate, including an incumbent, presumably, can spend money outside the election period.

I am not sure that is a great way to go about this. I appreciate the intent. I am not sure this is the best way to address the issue. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Kam Lake and the Member for Yellowknife North.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): All those opposed, please rise.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, the

Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Sahtu.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote are two in favour, 12 opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Clause 60. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Thank you. Committee, just to be sure we have it on the record, I wanted to go back to several clauses where motions were defeated to ensure we agree. Committee, clause 34. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Clause 36, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. We will now return to clause 61 to 74. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed? Thank you. Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Does committee agree that Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, is now ready for third reading? Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Bill 24 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 24?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Thank you, committee. Mr. Beaulieu, what is the wish of committee?

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. There is a motion to rise and report progress. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. I will now rise and report progress.

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

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, and Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. I would like to report progress, with one motion carried, and that Bill 24 is ready for third reading and that consideration of Tabled Document 215-18(3) is concluded and that the House concurred in those estimates and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon be introduced without delay. 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 Frame Lake. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---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 30, 2018, 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. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address

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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
 - Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act
 19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act
 - Bill 20, Ombud Act
 - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
 - Minister's Statement 103-18(3), Marine Transportation Services
 21. Report of Committee of the Whole
 22. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act
 23. Orders of the Day

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

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:29 p.m.