



Speaking Notes for
Tom Evans

*Minister of Finance, Human Resources
& Information Technology*
Budget 2023-2024

Date: March 14, 2023
Check Against Delivery

- I stand here today, Mr. Speaker, to deliver my first Budget Speech as Treasurer of the Fifth Nunatsiavut Assembly.
- The President often reminds us that even as we face steep and daunting challenges, like we have done in the past, we will overcome. To do so, we need to strike a critical balance between promoting, enhancing and protecting our language and way of life, while supporting economic and social growth. This budget presents this balance, Mr. Speaker.
- As we continue *Charting a Course Towards Growth and Sustainability*, this budget hopes to build on the foundation laid in previous budgets. We envision a prosperous Nunatsiavut, in which our sustained growth reaches all of our communities and, indeed, all Beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.
- Since our establishment as a government, our financial prowess, while putting the needs of our people and our communities first and foremost, has garnered us the reputation of being responsible and progressive. We are on the right track, Mr. Speaker. We can hold our heads high, and be proud of our achievements and successes.

Revenue

- Mr. Speaker, as this is the first budget for the Fifth Nunatsiavut Assembly, it is important to outline the sources of revenue of the Government.
- The main source of funding flows under the Fiscal Financing Agreement or, as we commonly refer to it, the FFA, which sets out certain core programs and services that the Nunatsiavut Government has to deliver with the funding from the Government of Canada. However, as a government, we do have the authority to set the dollar amounts for these programs and services.
- In addition, Mr. Speaker, through the work of the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee in advocating and putting forth our respective positions in key priority areas, such as infrastructure, housing and education at the federal government level, we have been successful in receiving dedicated funding for these areas.
- Funds under targeted programs such as Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS), Inuit Health Survey, and TB Elimination

programs, to name a few, are flowed through the FFA, rather than through multi-year contribution agreements. This is a reflection of our strong government-to-government relationship.

- Mr. Speaker, this budget reflects a record of \$115.6 million being remitted to the Nunatsiavut Government in the upcoming fiscal year.
- Another key element of the FFA is the ability to carry over funds that are not expended in any given year. This flexibility allows us to plan for projects that are multi-year or cost more than a single year's funding.
- There is a significant amount of funds being carried forward from previous years – approximately \$229 million, Mr. Speaker. All of these funds have been appropriated in this budget so that as these funds are required, the Government has the authority to expend them.
- In addition to funds received under the FFA, the Nunatsiavut Government has budgeted revenues received from personal income taxes, GST, interest and investment income, for total overall revenues of \$369 million.
- Mr. Speaker, these revenues allow our Government to make strategic decisions, based on evidence and needs. We can move forward improving the quality of life and well-being for all Labrador Inuit.

Housing

- When we visit each of our communities, we see firsthand why housing is a key priority for our Government. We have the data to support our needs and have been immensely successful in receiving dedicated funding.
- In the upcoming year, there will be a total of 22 new units built in Nunatsiavut. These units will begin to address the needs for vulnerable populations, including elders, women and children.
- The Nunatsiavut Housing Commission (NHC) is now operational, Mr. Speaker. Its Board of Directors is extremely busy planning and implementing its operations and programs. The decisions of the Commission are being made based on the Housing Needs Assessment and guided by the Nunatsiavut Government's Housing Strategy.

- The Nunatsiavut Housing Needs Assessment also informed us that a significant number of houses in Nunatsiavut required major and minor repairs. This led to the creation of the Affordable Warmth Nunatsiavut Home Repair and Emergency Repair programs. I am pleased to say that we are making strides in this area. This budget commits funds to the 2022 and 2023 Home Repair programs, as well as to the Emergency Repair program.

Infrastructure

- Years of inadequate funding for infrastructure has led to the requirement for new financial investments in our communities. The Nunatsiavut Executive Council approved the Nunatsiavut Infrastructure Action Plan, outlining key priority areas based on infrastructure gaps and needs in our region.
- By the end of 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Government will have received \$54 million dollars dedicated to infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, these funds will enhance our ability to grow, enhance our sustainability and will improve access and improve the health and well-being of Labrador Inuit.
- Over the next five years, the items under the Nunatsiavut Infrastructure Action Plan will become more than words on paper, Mr. Speaker. They will become a reality in our communities – very exciting time to be in Nunatsiavut.

Language

- Mr. Speaker, protecting, enhancing and promoting our language is of the utmost importance – culturally and emotionally. Our language helps define us as a people, as it allows us to pass down our values and traditions to future generations. If we lose our language, Mr. Speaker, we lose a part of our culture and way of life.
- The Nunatsiavut Executive Council approved the Language Strategy “Inuttitut UKâlalluta, ilinniatitsiluta, InosiKalluta” in February 2021. The vision under this strategy is “Speak It. Teach it. Live it.” It’s a vision I’m sure we can all support.
- This budget reflects financial commitments to the Department of Language, Culture and Tourism to help achieve this vision. As an example, the department will assume responsibility of the Language Nests, an important

step as it works towards the goal of increased levels of Inuititut being spoken within homes, social circles and public events.

Food Security

- Food Security is another key priority area for Nunatsiavut, and indeed for all of Inuit Nunangat. An Inuit Nunangat Food Security strategy was released by Inuit Tapariit Kanatami in the Summer of 2021. Our staff is developing action plans and programs related to food security. They are involved with their counterparts from the other Inuit regions in advocating funds to move forward effectively on the strategy.
- Mr. Speaker, the pandemic highlighted the significant food insecurity faced by many Labrador Inuit on a daily basis. Through funding from the Government of Canada's Indigenous Community Support Fund, we were able to provide much-needed relief to many Labrador Inuit for the past three years.
- As Assembly members know, the COVID-19 Emergency Food Supplement and Cleaning Supplies programs will end on March 31. We realize many of our people will have a difficult time transitioning and adjusting when these programs end.
- We hear the concerns, and we understand, which is why we will continue to advocate for additional funds to help address food security.

Conclusion:

- Mr. Speaker, I have only touched on a few of the key priorities. There are many more programs, services and issues being addressed with the appropriations under this budget – all of which help us achieve our vision of a healthy and prosperous Nunatsiavut and improvements in the lives of all Labrador Inuit.
- I want to take this time to thank all of the Ministers and their dedicated staff. There is much work behind the scenes to secure funding, to develop strategies, action plans, programs and services and to build this budget – one that I am proud to stand and deliver here today.
- Nakummek, Mr. Speaker.