



News Release

Budget Establishes Fiscal Framework for *Pinasuaqtavut*

IQALUIT, Nunavut (Feb. 25, 2005) – Finance Minister Leona Aglukkaq today unveiled a balanced \$935.8-million 2005-06 budget that establishes a fiscal framework for implementation of priorities in *Pinasuaqtavut*, the government's mandate for its current term.

“While *Pinasuaqtavut* sets out the priorities, it is this budget that provides the blueprint for how we use our financial resources in the coming year,” Aglukkaq said. “In carrying out our work we will be guided by the eight principles in *Pinasuaqtavut* that embody Inuit societal values.”

The budget underlines the government's firm commitment to:

- strengthening financial management and accountability;
- strengthening the economy;
- building a stronger cultural foundation based on Inuit societal values; and
- improving education, health care and housing.

All departments will see an increase in annual budgets. Programs in the Departments of Education and Health and Social Services, along with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, account for more than half of the total budget.

Key components of the territorial budget include:

- A 10.5 per cent increase for the Department of Education, which will receive \$174.2 million. The department will implement an ambitious program, including the development of a new school funding formula that will better reflect the needs of schools;
- An 18.1 per cent increase for the Department of Health and Social Services, which will receive \$215.2 million. The department will implement the *Closer to Home* initiative. This approach to health care delivery will be simple, accessible and responsive to the needs of Nunavummiut and be considerate of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and the goals of *Pinasuaqtavut*; and
- A \$181.2 million budget, including federal contributions, for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. At least 80 housing units will be built during the upcoming construction season.

“This budget is designed to develop the economies in all of our communities. It creates a positive business climate and provides support for a stronger education system and effective health care system. An economy can only be strong if Nunavummiut live in healthy communities and with an education that enables them to be self reliant,” said Aglukkaq.

It is important to create the right conditions for strong economic activity, especially in the natural resources sector, so that Nunavummiut will be in a position to fully realize the benefits from any future devolution agreement with the federal government, the Minister said. In upcoming negotiations for such an agreement Nunavut will seek fair and equitable access to royalties from its abundant resources.

“As we assume full responsibility for the economic development of Nunavut we must also demonstrate our commitment to being fully accountable for our actions. This high degree of accountability is evident in this budget,” Aglukkaq said.

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Please also see Budget Address 2005-06

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