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National Nursing Week

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to speak today about nurses and draw attention to the fact that this week is National Nursing Week across Canada.

Tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, May 12th, is Florence Nightingale's birthday. In 1971, the International Council of Nurses declared May 12th International Nurses Day. In 1985, the council passed a resolution to begin negotiations with the federal government to explore having the week including May 12th proclaimed as National Nurses Week. A few months later, in recognition of the dedication and achievements of the nursing profession, the Minister of Health at the time proclaimed the second week of May as National Nurses Week. In 1993, the name was changed to National Nursing Week to emphasize the profession's accomplishments as a discipline.

The purpose of National Nursing Week is to increase awareness amongst the public, policymakers and governments, of the many contributions of nursing to the well-being, not only of Canadians but to northerners. It's also an opportunity to educate Canadians about health issues by providing information they need to make decisions about their health and to promote the role of the nurse.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the hard work, dedication and conviction shown by our nurses here in the Northwest Territories. Many of them have been through trying times over the past few years and nurses, Mr. Speaker, are the cornerstone of our health care system.

Nursing, for me, is very close to home as my wife, Amanda, is a registered nurse and I get to have a very close-up look and understand some of the challenges and demands that are placed upon our nurses.

Mr. Speaker, I have the utmost respect for our nurses and I am very proud of the work and care they provide to our residents each and every day, in our hospitals, in our health centres, in clinics and in public health units, and in our senior care facilities, Mr. Speaker. With that, I want to thank the nurses for all they do for us each and every day. Mahsi.

--- Applause