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Impacts Of The Northern Drug Trade

MR. RAMSAY: I would like to speak today about drugs and the impact they are having on our communities, families, residents and children.

I had the opportunity on Monday to attend a session with representatives of Crack Busters, a group trying to help crack addicts through the process of quitting crack cocaine. I listened to how the group works and learned from local addictions experts, including Dr. Ross Wheeler, how addictive and devastating crack is.

Unless you are personally affected by crack, most people have no idea how dangerous this drug is. It destroys families, and addicts will do whatever they can to get their next hit or fix. Many families in the Northwest Territories have been financially ruined by the ravages of crack, and children as young as 13 and 14 are doing this drug in our communities, and parents are left helpless.

I wanted to mention today an article that appeared in the Edmonton Journal last Sunday, February 27th, which I will table later today. The title of the article is "Big City Drugs Plague Northern Capital". It would appear that we were getting attention in southern press for diamonds, aurora, oil and gas, but now it is drugs.

I find this to be very disturbing. I have said previously in this House that we do not have enough resources to combat the scourge that drugs are bringing. I will say again today, emphatically, that, as a government, we are not doing enough to tackle the drug problem.

The city of Yellowknife has three full-time members on the drug squad. We need more officers, more drug dogs, and it is obvious that other communities in the Northwest Territories, like Hay River and Inuvik, do not have the resources to meet the need. I believe it is incumbent on us, as legislators, to act on this situation to try to get the money and the resources to fight back and give our children, our families and our youth a fighting chance. The problem is only getting worse.

How many more families will be destroyed? How many more children are going to fall prey to this insidious drug? We have to have a strategy and a plan to get the drugs off of our streets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.