

Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, May 14, 2008 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. At this time, we will proceed with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper. Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Judy Pakozdy

Mr. Mitchell: I rise today to pay tribute to Judy Pakozdy on her retirement as executive director of FASSY. Judy recently retired as the executive director of the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon. FASSY, as it is known, offers training, advocacy and support for families and individuals affected by FASD or FAE.

Judy has been a long-time resident of the Yukon and through those many years she has been a strong advocate for people affected by FAS/FAE. There have been many challenges and obstacles along the way, but that never stopped Judy in her struggle on behalf of people affected by FASD.

Throughout the years Judy has gained and shared a great deal of knowledge about FASD. She has been an outspoken advocate for change and in developing appropriate programming and resources for chronically affected people. Judy knows first-hand what works, what doesn't work and what should be in place to help improve their lives. Judy has been relentless in her efforts, and by lending her voice to the cause has earned the genuine respect of hundreds of Yukoners and their families. She is devoted and committed to the needs of those who cannot speak for themselves. One of the greatest legacies she will leave us is that she never stopped speaking out and working for the benefit of people with special needs and always strived to improve their lives.

Numerous people affected by FASD are living more productive and satisfying lives today because of Judy's efforts and intervention on their behalf. Judy Pakozdy is definitely one of those people whom we can speak of and say that the Yukon is better off because she was here.

Congratulations on your retirement, Judy. On behalf of all Yukoners we wish to thank you for your years of service and commitment to people affected by FASD. Our best wishes to you in all your future endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming former Senator Ione Christensen, vice-president of the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, and Monsieur Richard Johnson, FASSY president.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I rise to pay tribute to Judy Pakozdy and to thank her for the service she has given to the individuals that FASSY serves, as well as to thank all the other

members of FASSY's board of directors and volunteers for the work they do.

The Yukon government is pleased to have a long-standing relationship with the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon and provides roughly \$400,000 per year to assist them in their good work. But without the contribution of volunteers of those such as Judy who go above and beyond the call of duty, it would not be possible to do the very good they do. It is truly a testament to Judy and all the others who are involved that this good work is done and that the people who are served by this are enabled to participate more effectively and more fully in society.

On behalf of the government, I wish Judy the very best in her retirement and thank her again for her years of dedication to Yukon citizens.

Mr. Hardy: Mr. Speaker, the NDP would like, as well, to acknowledge and thank Judy Pakozdy for many many many years of work in an area that is extremely difficult and that is extremely challenging. I would say up until a few years ago it wasn't as well known as it is now.

I remember when I was first elected in 1996, one of the first people I met was Judy. I don't even think she said, "Hello" to me; I think she started talking about FASSY immediately and it never stopped. From 1996 until two weeks ago — I think I was down at their office — when I went by to wish Judy the best, sure enough, Judy and her staff cornered me and we talked about FASSY again. They cornered me to make me part of their next awareness campaign — I think it is an awareness campaign — in which I would participate in one of their initiatives, which I of course agreed to do. What I'm saying around that is that Judy was relentless and was a champion for this cause. We're going to really really miss that in the Yukon. We need more champions like that. We need more heroes like her, and that is what Judy brought.

You can tell the quality of the work she brought to this issue by the people who worked with her and that she brought in. We have two of them in the audience today, who are committed to bringing forward and continuing the work on fetal alcohol syndrome.

The staff I meet in the FASSY office are just as dedicated, and Judy has inspired that in these people. With that alone — not including all the other things she has done — she is leaving a legacy to continue on. Wherever she goes and whatever she does, I'm sure she will create another one, wherever she lands.

So we wish her well in her travels, and I look forward to being cornered more often by people from FASSY.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
 Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of our Assembly to join me in welcoming the grade 5 class from Takhini Elementary School and their teacher, Ms. Wilma deWitt, to our Assembly today. Welcome.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any other introductions of visitors? Returns or documents for tabling.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I have for tabling the 2006-07 annual report for the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I have for tabling today the Fleet Vehicle Agency 2008-09 Business Report.

Also, I have for tabling today four regulations pursuant to the *Area Development Act*.

Mr. Cardiff: I have for tabling a letter to the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation.

Speaker: Are there any other documents for tabling?
Are there any reports of committees?
Are there any petitions?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Mitchell: I give notice of the following motion:
THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to make the recruitment of a full-time pediatrician a top priority.

Mr. McRobb: I give notice of the following motion:
THAT this House urges the Yukon government to bring Bill No. 106, the net metering bill, to an expeditious conclusion that will respect the following nine points:

(1) demonstrate to the public that it has the courage to make its position known in succinct terms;

(2) demonstrate to the public that it will not waste any more of the precious time remaining in this sitting to belabour Bill No. 106;

(3) demonstrate responsible action in debate this afternoon by not continuing its filibuster on this bill, which has already consumed two hours of time in this House, even though it was presented in less than 10 minutes by the Official Opposition, who does not intend to speak further to this bill in second reading;

(4) acknowledge that passing this bill would provide the public with much faster access to the many opportunities made available with net metering;

(5) acknowledge the importance of providing these opportunities in advance of the next building cycle for residential construction in Whitehorse, expected to start in one year, when this government is expected to finally avail new building lots to the public;

(6) demonstrate that this afternoon's discussion on the bill is another opportunity for all parties to work in collaboration and cooperation, as they did in advancing the *Smoke-free Places Act*;

(7) demonstrate that, in the absence of alternative legislation, it should support advancing this bill to the Committee stage, where amendments can be proposed in the fall sitting;

(8) demonstrate that, if it cannot support this bill simply because it was introduced by the Official Opposition, then to state so on the record; and

(9) alternatively, commit today to bring in its own bill on net metering in the fall sitting to demonstrate that it is prepared to act in the public interest.

Mr. Elias: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to find another way to provide financial support to the upcoming 2008 biannual Gwich'in gathering in Old Crow, in light of the Minister of Economic Development's refusal to approve the Gwich'in gathering community development fund proposal.

Mr. Edzerza: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to set timelines and target numbers and take any other action necessary to reduce the number of Yukon nurses working in part-time employment, which is well above the national average, and to reduce the number of nurses in casual or on-call positions, which is two and a half times the national average.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to table the *Final Report on Supported Housing for Persons with Psychiatric Conditions and Acquired Brain Injuries* by Kobayashi and Zedda Architects Ltd., John Currie and Leslie Knight, dated October 21, 2007, complete with appendices covering costing reports, Supported Housing case studies, the Pocket Housing case study and the Stepping Stone Clubhouse case study.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to hold public consultations to review the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, and in the amendments, to provide for:

(1) enforcement of minimum housing and health standards;

(2) clarification on the relationship between the act and the *Public Health and Safety Act*;

(3) establishment of a formal hearing process for evictions;

(4) a mediation process for conflicts between landlords and tenants;

(5) protection for tenants who complain about their housing; and

(6) redrafting of the whole act in plain language.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to provide adequate, appropriate and stable funding to the Yukon Human Rights Commission, so that this important organization can do its work more effectively.

Mr. Hardy: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Environment to study the actions taken by the B.C. Climate Action Secretariat with the goal of strengthening the Yukon's climate change ac-

tion plan and shortening the timeframe for implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motion? Is there a statement by a minister?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Before proceeding to Question Period, the Chair will rule on a point of order raised yesterday by the Official Opposition House Leader. The member raised this point of order in response to a comment by the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice began a response to a question by saying, "It is obvious the opposition's *raison d'être* is to complain and criticize." The Official Opposition House Leader argued that the use of this phrase was contrary to rules of the House.

The Chair does not believe there is a point of order. There are limits to the kinds of unflattering characterizations that members can make of one another and each other's parties and positions that they hold in this House. However, the Chair does not believe that the comments by the Minister of Justice in the context in which they were made yesterday exceeded those limits.

On a related note, the Chair would ask members who wish to intervene on a point of order to restrict their comments to procedural information that may be useful for the Chair in reaching a decision. Negative reflections on points of order are not helpful and the Chair would appreciate it if members contained the urge to offer up such comments.

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Asset-backed commercial paper investments

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance about some money that went missing under his watch — \$36.5 million worth of Yukoners' money.

The Premier made some bad investments last summer. He was not alone. There were other companies and governments across Canada who got caught as well, and they're paying the price for those bad investments. They are reporting losses on their books. Just this week, for example, Redcorp Ventures Ltd. released financial statements. They bought \$91 million worth of ABCP last year. It is now worth \$68.3 million. They have been honest about taking the loss.

The Yukon government bought \$36.5 million of the same stuff last summer. When the Auditor General of Canada was here this spring, she said it was a question of how much was lost, not a question of whether any money had been lost.

Why is the Premier not following the lead of numerous private sector companies and other governments and writing this investment down?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Given the extensive demonstration by the Leader of the Official Opposition on his limited knowledge of this particular investment, I'm not sure what part of this the member does not get.

Governments are guided by the public sector accounting guidelines. Corporations aren't guided by public sector ac-

counting guidelines. In many instances, corporations in such circumstances as this would take writedowns, because it's deductible from their taxes. That's not the case for government. By the way, at this time we have no direction from the Auditor General to take any writedown whatsoever; in fact, quite the contrary. The Auditor General said the process is not concluded, and we need to get to the end of the process so we understand fully what is going to be put in place before any of these types of decisions can be made.

Furthermore, the money isn't missing, and I'm going to challenge the member to stand up here and provide the evidence that the money has gone missing. The money is in an investment and our investments have earned millions of dollars for Yukon Territory.

Mr. Mitchell: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll challenge the member opposite to show us the money.

When the Auditor General addressed this Assembly on February 12, we asked whether there was a difference in public and private sector accounting and she said to this Assembly, "In this case, they are the same."

Ontario and Alberta have already accepted losses on this type of investment. Day after day, companies across Canada are reporting losses as well. Dundee Wealth Incorporated announced its first-quarter earnings this week. Again, they were honest and up front with people. They have recorded a writedown on their ABCP investment of 45 percent.

They owed almost \$380 million of this toxic paper last summer when the market froze. They have taken a considerable writedown and admitted it is not worth nearly as much as that today. When the Auditor General was here she made it clear that she expected the minister to writedown this investment. So far this Premier has refused to be accountable for this bad investment. Why is the Premier refusing to take a writedown on this investment?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Before the Hon. Premier answers the question, Leader of the Official Opposition, you make reference to "honest and up front", the implication being that the members from the other side are not being such. I ask the honourable member not to make those kinds of references.

You have the floor, Hon. Premier.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, this is the same question, same answer. There is no writedown and we have not been directed to take a writedown. The money isn't missing. The money is invested. The notes regarding what the restructuring is all about have been articulated and tabled in this House. There is going to be a court ruling on this, and we will continue on through the process to its inevitable end. This is the same member who said that there wasn't a guarantee in place. Well, I challenge the member again. How does the member explain the guarantee of liquidity by the banks as laid out by the federal regulator — OSFI — that allows for conditional guarantees on these investments?

Mr. Mitchell: Well, I'll explain it again to the Premier. The Premier made some bad investments. He told this House and continues to tell this House that they were guaran-

teed. The Deputy Premier said they are guaranteed. The Auditor General determined they were not guaranteed. She says so in the report. When making the investments she said the Premier didn't follow the *Financial Administration Act*. On top of that, the Premier has signed away our right to sue the banks. The Premier had lots of tough talk about the banks, but in the end he caved and signed away our right to sue — so much for standing up to the banks.

At the end of October, the government will close the books on this budget year. The final report on the year's finances for last year will be produced. This will be another opportunity for the Premier to provide an accurate value of our ABCP investment. Private sector companies have been up front and said their investments are worth anywhere from 55 to 75 cents on the dollar. When the year-end report on the last fiscal year comes forward — the public accounts — will it have a write-down on these bad investments?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, it is this government that fully disclosed this matter in the year-end for 2007-08. There was full disclosure to the public and to the Auditor General. The Auditor General also requested and essentially directed this government to get a legal opinion on the matter. The legal opinion clearly demonstrates that, given OSFI's regulatory changes in these investments, conditional guarantees were allowed for and that is exactly what was in place — conditional guarantees on liquidity should there be a market disruption.

So again the member is incorrect in his statements. Furthermore, the member will see that when we get to our year-end. As we work continually with the Auditor General on the matter, we will do the appropriate thing. The investments are in place, by the way; there is not a loss. The total value of the investments right now is \$36.5 million. What's yet to be determined is who gets the accrued interest — and how much.

Question re: Climate change action plan

Mr. Elias: I am positive that the Environment minister has his list ready, so I am going to continue my line of questioning on the climate change action plan.

Climate change is the number one issue facing us today. The Premier himself said, and I quote: "It is number one on the priority list."

I want to be as productive as possible in my questioning today. I ask myself where in the climate change action plan is the action to help homeowners install real-time, in-home SMARTnet metering or create a climate change action team. I see the commitment to youth and that's good to see. Except for the implementation of a hybrid-cars-only policy for government purchases and leases, the draft climate change action plan has very few details in its commitment to action. Yukoners wanted to see a vision backed up with specific actions, time frames and budget commitments. These are totally missing in the climate change action plan. Why is this minister so willing to produce an action plan without enough action?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Before we get to all the action items in the plan, I am going to have to point out to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin that the action plan is the culmination of a great deal of work done by many — hundreds, by the way, were involved.

The first step was the development of the climate change strategy, as we went forward with a number of years ago. Then we went on with the work, along with hundreds of Yukoners, other governments, other NGOs and youth. There was tremendous input from the Yukon public and other areas of expertise in the development of the action plan.

What we have tabled is what came to government through that very extensive process. The member should be careful about criticizing all those experts, all those other governments, all those NGOs, all those Yukoners, all those First Nations who involved themselves in the development of what is an action plan full of action.

Mr. Elias: It's the Premier who should be careful, because we're getting calls from Yukoners saying their views and opinions were not reflected in this draft. I'm trying to appeal to the minister's moral aptitude on this one. Unless the Premier missed it, the time for imagining is over.

One of the few suggestions under the heading "continue to explore" is found on page 28 under section (g), and I'll quote from the report: "...reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector through public transit..."

I wonder if the minister has even read his own report. The report actually endorses our expanded and free city bus proposal. He claims he has to do public consultations, but he is dismissing a positive and forward-thinking initiative of the Yukon Liberal Party without allowing any public input.

Will the minister go back to the drawing board and give this draft plan to his officials so it can be filled with real action items?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: That's very comforting to hear the Liberal Party has now become forward thinking, as we spent the latter part of the last two years listening to them trying to reconstruct the past. So forward thinking is a very good sign.

Furthermore, the member alludes to public transit — \$466,000 invested in public transit equipment — buses, for the City of Whitehorse. I call that 466,000 examples of action.

Mr. Elias: I'm going to have to try to use an analogy the Premier can understand. The Premier is our captain, and we're not faring well in the game against climate change. Team Yukon needs leadership right now. We need a captain to set an example, to sacrifice and to work hard. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, sometimes the captain has to drop the gloves and that time is now. Climate change has looked our captain in the eye and said, "You want to go?"

I guarantee that Yukoners will be banging their sticks in support of our captain if the gloves get dropped. The Premier's climate change action plan represents "turtling" in hockey terms and does not answer the call of our rapidly changing environment.

Will the minister get on his feet and answer the call to drop the gloves on climate change?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Yes, as the captain, we're very proud of the fact that this good Yukon Party ship is riding the wave of economic development and diversification, of environmental protection, of improving our health care system, of improving the quality of life for Yukoners in general, with a growing population and record-low unemployment. Yes, the

captain is very aware of the good ship Yukon Party government.

Now let's talk about action. In this plan, I'll just give some of the highlights: establishing a Yukon climate change research centre of excellence — action; enhancing support for climate change monitoring and education — action; increasing support for climate change adaptation initiatives — action; committing to establish Yukon targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction within two years — action. And by the way, \$15 million invested in hydro to do that, reducing thousands of tonnes of CO₂ in Yukon's atmosphere.

Committing to stop increase in government-related emissions by 2012 — action; making internal Yukon government operations carbon-neutral — action; establishing a climate change secretariat to ensure effective and accountable implementation of the plan — action; working in partnership with other governments, NGOs, First Nations, and Yukoners — action.

Question re: Climate change action plan

Mr. Hardy: There is an old saying: "I went to the fights and a hockey game broke out." I hope that's not what we're talking about as fighting in here. The NDP caucus also knows that —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. Order please. The honourable member knows full well he cannot refer to previous exchanges in his question. So you're on, please. You have the floor.

Mr. Hardy: The NDP caucus also knows that addressing climate change will require a fundamental transformation of how our society operates. This is a very serious issue. There are some good ideas in the government's draft action plan, but we would like to see them implemented right now, not two years after the final plan or 14 years from now, which the Premier didn't mention.

One good idea in the plan, though, is a community climate change initiative fund. One of the things this fund might do, for example, is fund commuter buses from outlying areas to reduce the impact of private vehicles. Instead of just examining this idea, will the Premier speed up the process and immediately instruct the Finance department officials to get this funding up and running so it can go to work supporting community efforts to reduce greenhouse gases?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I actually appreciate the Leader of the Third Party's approach because it is a very constructive one, and we recognize that this idea the member has just tabled is something that, in Yukon overall, in terms of our transportation, may have some resonance in the future.

But I can tell the member opposite that the Official Opposition and the third party can't have this both ways.

When the government wants to pass bills like the *Child and Family Services Act*, we haven't consulted enough. Yet when the members opposite want their ideas implemented immediately, they forget all about public consultation.

I remind the member: this document, this plan, is now going out for public consultation for further Yukoners' input, as it should.

Mr. Hardy: I'd like to remind the minister as well that we've read this action plan and we've looked for the good in it as well as the areas of concern.

We're not just up here bashing. Yesterday the Premier spoke about what Yukon Housing Corporation is doing to address climate change, such as interest-free loans to improve energy efficiency in homes and other buildings across the territory. We support that program but it doesn't go anywhere near far enough.

As part of its climate change action plan, the B.C. government is working with industry, professional and community representatives to develop a green building code. In the Yukon's action plan, the government promises to, "...explore amending building regulations and codes to require higher energy efficiency standards for all new buildings in the Yukon."

Instead of merely exploring this idea, will the Premier immediately direct his officials to start crafting a green building code for the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: On behalf of the Yukon Housing Corporation, we've done exactly that.

The Yukon green home standard is far beyond the R-2000 and is often referred to as "R-2000 on steroids" and what was formerly known as the athletes village — the seniors facility at the Yukon College site — was built to that level.

Many of the other programs that we're looking at are what we call "super green." Our Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has said in the past that, with super green standards, you could heat it with a cat. For some of the bigger ones, you might need two cats. They are that efficient. It will cost approximately an additional \$18,000 to build an average home, but that will save approximately \$13,000 in the heating plant and the balance would be recovered in a matter of a couple of years. From that point on, the operation and maintenance cost would be extremely low.

Those things are already in place. Yukon is the national leader on those programs and we are working closely with the State of Alaska to share our knowledge, as well as with the housing corporations of Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Mr. Hardy: Mr. Speaker, they didn't answer the question. It's not a building code. This is where it gets confusing on the other side for them. That's what we asked for. I would tell the minister who just spoke that I took the R-2000 course when I was an apprentice carpenter and I've been on steroids and I can tell you — they don't fit very well.

Now, the B.C. government has committed to making its own much bigger operation carbon-neutral by 2010 — just two years from now. Yet this government is talking 2022 — much further. Why the difference? All B.C. government travel is already carbon-neutral. Every tonne of greenhouse gas emissions from government travel is invested into offset projects somewhere in the province.

Will the Premier take a bold step toward a more environmentally responsible Yukon by moving up the date for Yukon government operations to be carbon-neutral by at least 2013?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Once again, Mr. Speaker, the action in our very detailed and comprehensive action plan to deal with climate change — both mitigating measures and adaptation — is one that has been, to the largest degree, constructed by all those who provided the input for this plan. We're going back out to the public with these targets; that is first and foremost.

Second, our targets are based on what we feel as a government can be achieved in that timeline. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I think we all recognize something here, or at least we should. In the north, our emission factors that make a contribution to global warming or climate change — whatever you'd like to call it — are minimal. Our impacts that we are experiencing today are severe because of global warming. That is why this action plan has a very large emphasis on adaptation, as it should.

Question re: *Landlord and Tenant Act*

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Community Services acknowledged Monday that there has been an internal review of the *Landlord and Tenant Act*. As far as we can tell, this review took place over approximately the last 18 months or so. The whole thing was done privately and without public notice. It was even necessary for permission to be granted from the department for anyone interested to make a presentation if they managed to find out that it was being done.

Now the minister says they are continuing to work with stakeholders in compiling their issues and their concerns. Will the minister tell us how the public can have access to the continuing review of this important act?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I previously stated with regard to the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, this is a very important piece of legislation here in the Yukon. It provides a balance for both the landlord and tenant with regard to their rights. If a dispute does arise, both the landlord and tenant have a variety of methods with which they can resolve their issues, including those provided by Community Services, either through mediation or arbitration.

Information about those services is available through our department, as well as consumer and protective services, and they are being provided. We have been providing educational material on all these issues throughout the Yukon.

Mr. Cardiff: On Monday, the minister said all that needed to change with this act was to educate the public. Perhaps he could start that process right now. For example, section 17 says, in part, that if any rent is payable and there exists no express right of distress for the recovery thereof, the person entitled to receive the rent has the same right of distress for recovery thereof. Section 24 says that a landlord may take under a distress for rent any livestock belonging to or appertaining to the premises in respect of which the rent distrained for is payable.

My question for the minister: for the sake of members who might have slept through the Elizabethan era, could he please explain those two small sections in plain language.

Hon. Mr. Hart: If he wishes, I'll provide him with a written comment with regard to that.

Mr. Cardiff: Obviously he's not a lawyer either.

Mr. Speaker, when the minister is sending out pamphlets to educate the public, maybe he should send a lawyer and interpreter also. The other day the minister said the act is well balanced. I suppose if both landlords and tenants dislike the act, that's some kind of balance.

There's no real protection for either tenants or landlords in the event of disputes. There's no formal process for evictions. There are no minimum health and safety standards for rental property. One national housing association says it's the worst act in Canada. Instead of trying to defend the indefensible, will the minister agree to consult openly with stakeholders and commit to real changes in this archaic act following that consultation?

Mr. Hart: As I have indicated previously to the member opposite, there are a number of services available for landlords and/or tenants to deal with their issues. These services are being utilized currently. If, however, there is a case where the landlord and/or the tenant cannot resolve their issues, then they each have the option to go to court. That provision is free. Nowhere else in Canada is that provided; we provide that for nothing.

I would also like to state at this time that our court cases are heard quite quickly and, for the number of inquiries that we get in regard to the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, the number that actually go through mediation and/or court is very small.

Question re: Taser use

Mr. Inverarity: An inquiry into the use of tasers is underway in British Columbia right now, and we are getting both sides of the taser story. The manufacturer claims the device is safer than other enforcement tools but admits there are still risks involved in the use of tasers.

Opponents claim that the use of tasers is unintentionally killing people and should be banned. Others conclude that there is not enough research on the effect of these devices and some suggest that tasers are not being used by enforcement officials as intended.

Can the Minister of Justice tell Yukoners where we stand on this issue? Has the minister reviewed this issue with the RCMP and other agencies that might use a taser, and is she satisfied that tasers are not dangerous and that the enforcement agencies are using them appropriately?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I mentioned in our last sitting, there are several reviews regarding the use of conducted energy weapons by police organizations, including the RCMP. These have been undertaken within the last few months. The Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP issued their interim report on the RCMP use of the conducted energy weapon, or CEW, in mid-December. This report did not recommend a moratorium on the use of CEWs by the RCMP.

The report also recommends regular reviews of RCMP policy on the use of tasers and we are doing our own review with Justice Canada. That report will be final in the later part of this year.

Mr. Inverarity: Perhaps the minister should strap on a taser and see how 50,000 volts might actually affect the human body.

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: Order please. Does the honourable member think that type of conversation is appropriate for this House? That is violent terminology and it's not appropriate to this Legislative Assembly. The Member for Porter Creek South has the floor.

Mr. Inverarity: We have been told that ministers from other jurisdictions have committed to sharing information on best practices of using the taser. It would be nice to know if they have made good on their commitment. There are a number of inquiries going on across the country as we speak.

The views and opinions being expressed at the inquiries are all over the map: we have heard that tasers are good, we have heard that they are bad, that they are safe and that they are dangerous.

We have heard that the problems are with the way the enforcement officers are using them, and we have heard that it is the victim's fault for not responding better to a taser blast.

So where does the minister stand on the taser issue?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As you know, we have a moratorium issued on the use of tasers at Whitehorse Correctional Centre, and as I just stated, we are doing our own internal review with Justice Canada, and these are being done by justice departments across Canada. We will have this final report toward the end of this year.

Question re: Housing shortage

Mr. Inverarity: Housing conditions in many of Yukon communities are inadequate for many government employees who live in them. In many cases, there are simply not enough units to meet the need. The number of people requiring accommodation has increased over the years, but the supply has not kept pace. This has resulted in employees having to rent what is, in some cases, substandard housing, and in other cases having to share with other employees.

This is not the way to attract people to come and live in Yukon rural communities, nor is it the way to keep the ones we already have.

Will the minister responsible tell the House what the government plan is to address the growing housing problem?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: The Yukon Housing Corporation has made significant investment in rural Yukon by adding six staff housing units. In Dawson City, for instance, the corporation is purchasing an existing unit and will undertake repairs and upgrades prior to occupancy.

In addition, the corporation is also building a new house and it will meet the corporation's green home standards.

In Watson Lake, the corporation has purchased two units. One is already occupied while the other is being repaired and upgraded. The corporation will also build two new staff units in the community, and they will feature building techniques and designs that will improve the overall energy efficiency standards of the new units in excess of the corporation's existing green home standards.

So we are addressing the problem. We have these additions underway. As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, they will be built

to green home standards to keep the operation and maintenance cost to a minimum.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to be just a little bit shy on the details. However, there are several housing units that are simply in a bad state of repair. Requests for maintenance can take a very long time to be complied with and replacement of worn floors and drafty doors can move them even further down the priority list. No employee deserves an accommodation that is substandard, whatever the job is. They deserve housing that reflects the quality enjoyed by many other Whitehorse colleagues. Many employees leave a community for just that reason and the government spends thousands of dollars trying to recruit replacements. The situation is not good for employees, the community or the government. Since the minister does not have a clear vision of what they will do, will he undertake to report back during the fall session and tell us what his plan is?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: To clarify for the member opposite and give him a little bit of a better understanding of what is going on, I am disappointed at his lack of faith in the people within Yukon Housing Corporation, who currently maintain 144 units. Employees are charged a maximum of \$600 per month rent. Employees are also responsible for the cost of fuel oil and electricity in those cases. The departments contact Yukon Housing Corporation and provide information on upcoming staff housing requirements. The Yukon Housing Corporation is noticing that the retirement of current Yukon government employees who own their own homes is generating increased demands from departments for additional staff housing units. It is those things that we are working with.

Again, Mr. Speaker, unlike the member opposite, I have full faith in the employees of the Yukon Housing Corporation and their efforts to keep these buildings, with limited resources, in good repair. The Yukon Housing Corporation does a great job and I'm very proud of them for that. I hope the member opposite will rethink his position on that.

Mr. Inverarity: It sounds like the minister is acknowledging that resources are the problem. Mr. Speaker, I've checked in Watson Lake, Teslin, Beaver Creek, Burwash, Mayo and Pelly Crossing. In all of these communities I hear complaints about housing and the lack of it. One teacher told me that she felt pressured by her principal to take a new teacher in because there was no other unit available. She eventually did because she was kind and compassionate. However, Mr. Speaker, everyone is entitled to have their privacy and no one should feel pressured to share their home.

The new employee should not have to share with another colleague unless they both choose to do so. That is fundamentally wrong, and the problem has been there for quite a few years. It's not new. Many communities have homes on the market at reasonable prices relative to building new ones.

Would the minister consider buying some of these and offering them as rental units, or perhaps even offering a purchase program to employees as an incentive to stay longer in these rural communities?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Yukon Housing Corporation, through its good board of directors, maintains well over 500

social housing units, as I mentioned, and 144 of the units are charged at a maximum of \$600 a month, I might add, less fuel and electricity, and are for staff housing.

The retirement of some employees in communities has posed a challenge, but we are responding again significantly by adding six staff housing units. In Dawson City we have purchased an existing unit and will undertake repairs and upgrades prior to occupancy. In addition, the corporation is building a new house that will meet the corporation's green home standards.

In Watson Lake, the corporation has purchased two units. One is already occupied, while the other is being repaired and upgraded. The corporation will also build two new staff units in that community.

The Yukon Housing Corporation and its board of directors are approaching this problem. I have great faith in the Yukon Housing Corporation and its board of directors. Again, I would encourage the member opposite to take a closer look at this and try not to be critical of the Yukon Housing Corporation's good employees. I have every faith in their ability to work, unlike the member opposite.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

BILLS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 106: Second Reading — *continued*

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 106, standing in the name of Mr. McRobb; adjourned debate, Hon. Mr. Lang.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I have to apologize for my cold. I'd like to thank the Member for Kluane for bringing this forward. The *Net Metering Act* is a bill that was brought forward by the member opposite on a proposal that would institute net metering into the process. I don't know, in the explanation, why we'd have to put it into a bill, when we could actually work with the energy strategy for Yukon, which is before the general public at the moment.

But of course we only have three-and-a-half hours this afternoon, so I'd like to move forward with the debate on this very important issue.

When we adjourned two weeks ago, we were looking at net metering. At that point, we had talked extensively about it and how we understand it. To remind people about net metering — and I know the Member for Kluane will be interested in this — what is net metering? That's important because the issue is very important. What is the difference between net metering and IPP — independent power producers?

How do they work together? It's timely, Mr. Speaker, in that we just released our energy strategy draft consultation this week. I'm sure all members in the House would like to speak to this net metering bill and fold it into the energy strategy that this government has brought forward for the next step, which is

more consultation and, hopefully, having it in front of Yukoners again in a final draft this fall.

Net metering is interesting. As I get into it, I'm sure the members opposite would be very interested in the fact of how it is utilized in the western world. There is a use of this in many parts of the world. There are 40 U.S. states that have a net metering program. That's just the program — it's not a law.

Great Britain — United Kingdom — they've looked at it; Germany; and of course let's look at Canada. Canada has the provinces and the territories. In Canada, we have BC Hydro, Manitoba Hydro, Maritime Electric for Prince Edward Island; Énergie NB Power; Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, Ontario Energy Board, Hydro-Québec and other jurisdictions in Canada.

Of course, there was the hard work of the consultation on the energy strategy, and we tabled that information for the House and brought it into the general public for the final stages — or the final consultations — so this government can bring the energy strategy to the House here and to Yukon with a final draft in the coming fall or early next year.

Net metering has been mentioned in the consultation. The Member for Kluane will be interested to know that it was one of the many issues that were brought up, ideas from the general public and also from a very extensive group of individuals and organizations in developing the draft energy strategy. In the Yukon government, several departments worked on the net metering question and the energy strategy: Economic Development and Community Services; Department of Education; Energy, Mines and Resources, who was lead on this; Environment; Executive Council Office; Health and Social Services; Highways and Public Works; Tourism and Culture; Yukon Development Corporation; Yukon Energy Corporation and the Yukon Housing Corporation. That was just in-house here, in the government.

Of course all those departments are managing energy in one way or another, and certainly net metering was brought up in this draft. Look at the other interests that participated in the consultation — the organizations and of course other governments — and you will see that we had participation from the Association of Yukon Communities, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and of course the City of Whitehorse. The City of Whitehorse has to manage its energy as well.

I remind members opposite that we all understand the necessity of this energy strategy, because we all fuel our vehicles, we all heat our homes with one form of energy or another, and we all pay for our hydro. All of those costs have, in the last year, escalated with the price of petroleum.

It is a good time to put this energy strategy out, because there are questions or individuals out there that say we might be looking at \$200 per barrel. Those costs would have to reflect in our society. The Dawson Renewable Resource Council was part of this, as well as EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd. and F.H. Collins school. It is interesting that a school would take an interest in energy and all of these things relating to this net metering bill. These kinds of questions would be asked.

There's the First Nation of Na Cho Nyak Dun; Halliday and Company; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada — the federal government participation — Kluane First Nation; Kobayashi and Zedda Architects — again, one of our larger corporations or architectural companies in town who are actively building structures in the city that hopefully meet the energy questions of tomorrow — Leading Edge Projects; Natural Resources Canada — another federal organization; New Era Consulting; Northern Climate Exchange; Outside the Cube; Selkirk Renewable Resource Council; Ta'an Kwach'an Council; Teslin Tlingit Council; Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, Utility Consumers Group; Vector Research; Yukon Chamber of Commerce and of course Yukon Chamber of Mines; Yukon Conservation Society; Yukon Electrical Company Limited; Yukon Environmental Network; Yukon Utilities Board; Yukon Wood Products Association; Village of Carmacks; Village of Mayo and the White River First Nation.

So it is a very very extensive list of participants that we had talking about net metering — which by the way, Mr. Speaker, is a very small part of this Yukon government's energy strategy for the Yukon. This draft was put out this week.

Mr. Chair, I don't want to lose track of the fact that we're talking about the bill put forward by the Member for Kluane — Bill 106, *Net Metering Act*. Certainly, we have talked at great length about this with members such as the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation and Economic Development and other members in the House. Hopefully the third party and the opposition can talk about this issue this afternoon. So what are the merits of this bill?

If this net metering act were passed in this House, independent of any of the consultations that we've done — extensive consultations that this government has done regarding the energy strategy for Yukon — as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, I feel the member opposite, through this bill, will have neglected to read the energy strategy. Like the Premier said this afternoon, you can't pick and choose which issues you want to consult on.

This government works in the process in which we have consultation. With whom do we consult? Certainly, all of these people who went to work over a long period of time to put this draft energy strategy together.

It gives me great pleasure here to be able to review that and provide some of the high points of the energy strategy over the next three and a half hours. I would like to give everybody an understanding about how this net metering act would fold in with the final draft that will be coming out in the next six months.

Like anything else, consultation takes time and it takes commitment to get it right. It has been 12 months to get it to this point and we are looking forward to the consultation process and finalizing it so we can bring it forward.

Net metering was brought up in this energy strategy for the Yukon. It's one of many ideas that Yukoners have brought forward and that the extensive list of NGOs, governments and government departments have been working on over this period of time.

I recommend that the member opposite take some time — he will have time this summer to do an overview of the energy plan — to see how net metering would fold into that energy plan.

We can't lose sight of the importance of independent power producers. We need to weigh the options to address the energy issues and manage energy in the territory. How can we best maximize the involvement of individual Yukoners and corporate citizens in supplying energy to the territory and how are they rewarded at the end of the day?

Certainly, this energy strategy covers many, many of those. Now, this is just a draft, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the document has to go out again and be reviewed and then, of course, be brought back to us, the government, to put out the final draft, which we're looking forward to doing.

Certainly, this afternoon, in the next three and a half hours, we can go over, detail by detail, the net metering process. I guess, to remind members — I guess the member opposite, the Member for Kluane, seems to have knowledge about net metering and, of course, he has brought it up many, many times.

I have been working and reading about the pluses and minuses of net metering. Like everything else, we're looking at a situation of where we get that information from. Of course, we get that information from working with and reading about other jurisdictions that have been working with net metering.

I guess another thing is — where does net metering fit in with renewable energy considerations? Could it be small or microhydro? Well, it could be. What would we do with wind energy, solar energy and biomass? Those are all things that are being worked on and, of course, in other jurisdictions. Yukoners, by the hard work they did as shown with this strategy, and we as a community, as a society, are very serious about how we move forward with this energy strategy for the territory.

If the member opposite would read the overview, he would see that the work was well done — very thorough. I'm looking forward to the input from the community on the final draft.

But if we were to look at other jurisdictions, net metering isn't new. Obviously, by the information I have, it's a concept that has been out there. It has been out there for quite awhile in some jurisdictions and, of course, it has been moving forward a little slower in other jurisdictions.

As far as the information I have, net metering can be very complicated and it can be very expensive to install the actual mechanism to gauge the power consumption and also the exit and intake of power.

It's a process for reducing your electrical bill from the utility, not for selling a net amount of electricity to the grid. That in itself is very clear. It's not a form of generating revenue for individuals — it's for reducing your electrical bill from the utility, not for selling a net amount of electricity to the grid.

In Ontario, to become a net metering client, one must enter into a net metering connection agreement with the supplier, which is Hydro One, and get confirmation from them that all equipment is approved. This feature is standard for all utilities that offer net metering. That in itself puts a burden on the individual who wants to participate, because there is cost to all of this.

So these are issues that we have to balance. When you talk about small or microhydro, wind energy, solar energy — if you were to look at a consumer — would the consumer be better served with a net metering bill or would he be better served if he were in a solar situation with a subsidy on storage? That is a question. Would you be better off storing your energy, using your energy internally? Is that a better way of working with solar energy? Those are all questions that will come out of the discussion this afternoon.

With net metering, we're looking at independent power producers. An independent power producer is similar to net metering. But independent power producers have constructed the electrical generated capacity to supply power to their larger business, with surplus being sold to the main grid. In other words, the net metering and IPP, if you produce more power, or if somebody were to invest — let's bring it to a local level and I think that's important.

If you were to bring it to investment on a hydro project that a First Nation was going to invest in — let's say the Teslin-Tlingit were going to look at a hydro opportunity — that would make them an independent power producer and the Energy Corporation would enter into an agreement where they would buy that power — it's independently produced. They would buy the power and, of course, that is designed around the Yukon Utilities Board setting rates and that would be an independent power contract with source.

If you had an interest in a mining operation where they were going to produce power in some fashion, whether it was hydro or some other source, and they had an excess of power that was convenient for the power grid, it would be folly for us not to participate in an independent power contract. Those are the kinds of things that we can address here today in the next three and a half hours. I think it is important that the net metering — the Member for Kluane again is talking about votes and doing this; I think it is too important an issue to bring to a vote at the moment. I think it is important for all of us — Yukon Housing Corporation, Education — because all of the individuals on this side of the House would like to talk about this concept brought forward by the Member for Kluane, understanding that we are down to our last day. Tomorrow is our last day here in the House.

In moving along and looking at the energy strategy — which, by the way, Mr. Speaker, I again discussed the net metering because it is all part of the energy strategy for the territory — the overview is very important. What is the overview of the energy strategy and how does this net metering fold into that?

Again, we go back to public consultation. Net metering came out of one of the many ideas that put this extensive strategy in front of us last week; it came out of public consultation. Again, the member opposite has to agree that net metering was part of that line of thought. It is part of the Yukon's energy strategy draft for moving next to public consultation.

We have to work with the goals, strategies, the priority actions for electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, conservation and oil and gas that are presented in those sectors. We have all of these issues that have impacts on our energy strat-

egy. How do we as a government — and more so, how do we as a society — expect to have and to manage petroleum at \$200 a barrel?

The members opposite — the opposition — have been very vocal on their objections or their thoughts on this government's investment in the expansion of the power line between Carmacks and Pelly. They are very negative about the third wheel: a waste of \$5 million; should have bought bikes.

That is the idea of conservation or energy management. Instead of getting ourselves off the dependency on petroleum, we would buy — I don't know how the bikes would be handed out, but the seriousness of the day dictates that this government made some energy decisions, and we certainly appreciate the effectiveness of us, as a government or as a community, moving forward with managing our hydro.

Managing hydro — of course, we're talking net metering, Mr. Chair, so it's very important we talk about how some of this would work. Certainly, this government has been very aware that if we were going to have any economic development in the territory, energy is part of that. How do investors invest in the territory if, in fact, the energy is so expensive that it makes the investment moot?

The members opposite would understand that, and that's why the Member for Kluane brought this net metering bill forward. There is an interest in how do we, in our society, handle the management of our energy.

It's a pity because we narrowed it down to just this debate this afternoon. I know the Minister of Economic Development would like to enter into the debate on net metering and the options we have. It certainly narrows down the dialogue on the options. It minimizes the decision-making process that we're working on with this energy strategy.

I am sure all the members will have time in the next month or so to go through the energy strategy and digest it. I recommend that all members opposite and government members participate. I remind the members that this is just a draft and it is going out for public consultation. There is a process for how you can participate in that.

We as a responsible government recommend that all Yukoners not narrow their view to just net metering. I guess, in addressing this and talking to the member opposite, the Member for Kluane, I'm not minimizing net metering; that's not what I am doing here today. I am just putting the argument on the floor. I am sure everybody in the House will want to enter into this discussion in the next three hours so we can discuss it.

I could spend days on net metering and talk about the pros and cons, and talk about the experiences of other jurisdictions. We have done that. We have talked about this extensively and we have come to today, the second last day of the sitting, and we are discussing net metering.

Obviously the member opposite, in his request to bring this bill forward under opposition business, must think this is a very important debate.

I will talk about net metering, and we will hopefully move on and get down to other business that this House has in front of it for the next two days.

We had public consultation and extensive participation in this energy strategy for the territory, as I read into *Hansard* here this afternoon.

I went to a couple of the consultation projects — or workshops, I guess we would call them — and there was certainly large participation by the general public and work done by departments, NGOs and First Nations regarding the energy cost and what it costs to manage energy today.

How are we as a society going to manage not only economic development but our own homes in an economic way that is feasible? Those are all issues that we have to take into consideration.

I guess if you were to look at us today and what we have done as a government and what the Opposition will probably vote against down the road — we'll see that when it happens — to ignore the fact that this government went out and committed itself to the energy strategy for the territory and went the route we did, with thorough consultation, we didn't forget about outside communities and the urgency of the issue. Of course, net metering was mentioned as one of the alternatives.

I am not sure if you took net metering and actually worked on it and did an overview of it, and you had the expertise — and I'm sure nobody in this House really has the expertise to do a real breakdown on net metering — what I read in my extensive overview of net metering is a very negative process that consists of individuals getting credit for power they put on the grid; that is a credit. Then somehow there is an obligation of that individual — let's talk about the individual in Carmacks and the individual in Watson Lake — and the metering process is a cost that has to be borne by the individual and, of course, the meter has to be read and all of these issues have to be done.

I again bring up the interesting scenario that, if you have an alternative to net metering, which is a credit for the power that you consume and that you put on the line, and if it can be done by biomass, it can be done by solar, wind energy or a small microhydro. Take solar energy, for example, which is number three on the list — that is workable.

In our community there is much participation of individuals especially out in the hinterland, who utilize solar. They utilize solar because of location, for the most part. With the cost of diesel energy and transportation — all of these costs have to be added together. You can manage a home with solar energy, if it is well managed.

If somebody in Wolf Creek, let's say, like myself, had a solar system with net metering, and if I had this opportunity, would it not be a better investment? That's just me as an individual living in the community. I look at net metering and say, "That's a very cumbersome system." First, you need a thorough inspection of your home, which is very important. Second, you have to install all the apparatus for monitoring, which can be a meter coming in and a meter going out, which is fine. Then you need to have somebody manage it. In other words, the Yukon Electrical Company would read it and balance it off.

In some jurisdictions, if you were to read further into net metering, there's an obligation with these credits in terms of time expired. In other words, you have a 12-month window of opportunity to work with these credits. If these credits are not

used, you can't expand it into the next year. That's one or two jurisdictions, not all of them. I'm just giving examples.

In talking about net metering and going back to an individual like myself or any one of these members in the House who might have solar, would it not be more beneficial if we as a government were to look at some kind of a partnership or program where we would work with them on storing that power? That means we need batteries and we need investments. That's where the energy strategy comes in, Mr. Speaker.

The Member for Kluane wants to talk about net metering. Well, guess what? This thing is very thick — a very interesting document and a very thorough document, because it opened my eyes to the needs of the territory and what ramifications we have for energy. Certainly, the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation gave us a thorough overview of the programs they have in place. I'm sure that the member will talk on this same issue to remind people that this energy strategy is coming forward. We as a government have not neglected the fact that we have the vision to understand that, in the last three or four years in Yukon Housing Corporation — and I'm sure the member will speak to this — energy conservation was part and parcel of our decision-making.

As we speak here this afternoon and we talk, for instance, about Yukon Housing Corporation and the last six years — here's a statistic that we should bring up because this is all about energy and energy efficiency. This government has constructed 100 new units — energy efficient units. Now, this is all part of the net metering energy strategy for the territory — all part and parcel of that. This government has done more expansion in the housing for Yukoners in the short time we've been here than all the other governments have done in 11 years. We are committed to making sure that the housing situation and the energy situation is handled in such a way.

The member opposite from Kluane in his speech talked about the goals and the micro and so on, and it is all very interesting — and the net metering bill, which is an odd way to approach anything, Mr. Speaker. Do we need another bill to do the right thing?

I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. I think what we can do is manage our energy. In the discussion, in the big picture, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is limited to a very focused and narrow vision of the territory. They represent the ridings; we as government represent the Yukon. By putting Yukoners to work and bringing out this strategy, we are addressing the issues overall in the territory.

If you were to take a look at a community like Old Crow and the urgency of their energy issues, they are dependent on transportation and cost and, when they buy a litre of gas in Old Crow, there is not only the cost of buying the gas — wherever they buy it from wholesale — but also the shipping and handling. Old Crow, from an energy point of view, is very dependent on petroleum.

Those are the kinds of things the energy strategy can look at. Part of this thing, and again the net metering question, is how we as a government address the Yukon, whether it is in Old Crow, Keno City, Watson Lake, or whether we are produc-

ing the energy by diesel, hydro, solar — and net metering could be part of that. What do we do with the negativity?

I hate to be critical, Mr. Speaker, but I sit in here day in and day out and listen to the Opposition talk about the third wheel in Aishihik and what a bad idea that was. That money was resourced from the federal government, a \$5-million commitment. We had to meet certain criteria so we could get that investment. This government made that commitment. The members opposite talk about buses. What did this government do? In the last two years we have bought two modern buses for the City of Whitehorse. We are contributing to the community of Whitehorse on the busing issue. We are contributing almost \$1 million over a 24-month period.

In the past this government has been very receptive to ideas. We work with the City of Whitehorse and respect the fact that the City of Whitehorse is the lead. They are the ones who run and manage the buses. We contribute to that by investing in buses but the idea of transportation has always been a big concern for us as a community, and a responsibility for us. The energy strategy addresses some of those issues.

The member opposite and his net metering — if you could go through the success of this net metering process bill, it is corporations like ATCO Gas that participate. Alberta Energy emphasizes that existing legislation, regulation, inspection, certification, costing, compensation systems and taxation systems were written for larger generators and distributors.

No individual who would participate in net metering would want to have the list of regulations, inspection, certification, costing, compensation system and taxation systems involved in their decision-making process.

When I say that, I don't minimize the net metering question. We are talking about individuals, so it has to be simple, because people like me, like everybody in this House, have other parts of their lives and things that they do on a daily basis. So anything that we put in place for the general public — the consumer — has to be doable.

Being a Yukoner and understanding the shortage of workers and understanding the need to be self-sufficient, I realize that things should be doable with very little input from other individuals.

In other words, I am not against hiring an electrician. I think it's very important, if we are going to talk about net metering, that electricians are involved. The fact is we want to make sure that people do things responsibly, but I don't think that putting unusual obligations on individuals solves any issues.

Also, we have to be very aware that anything we put on the backs of individuals, families, the more complicated it is, the less buy-in you have. That's just the nature of individuals.

I could get into a program where I as a small homeowner could cut my power, for instance. I could invest in a small portable light plant. Why would I do that? I would do that because everybody should be responsible for their own energy, for a minimum of 70 hours. That's what I am told, so I went to work. I did not do the work myself; I hired an electrician to come in and do the actual wiring, and now I have this little light plant, which will maintain the heat in my house and a few lights. It's

not something that is going to run my whole building. Those are the kinds of things that we do as responsible homeowners, but there is a cost to that.

Net metering would be another cost.

I really think that we as a society have to learn how to conserve energy. That is something that has to be done home by home. That is something we all have to be aware of.

In our workplace — the Leader of the Third Party spoke about managing power here in the building. We do the same thing upstairs on the government side. I turn lights off now. I'm very aware of lights. In my home, I'm very aware of power. We try to be as frugal as we can and still live in our home, and that's important.

From the pages and pages of information I have on net metering — I'm looking forward to the final draft of the energy strategy to see what they come up with — I think if you were to look at it from a professional level, net metering is a lot of work for very little return.

The member opposite says I'm wrong; that's his opinion. I appreciate any opinion, and I'm certainly looking forward to the outcome of this energy strategy and the final documentation on how this would work if, in fact, it's one of the things that comes back to us in the final draft.

Certainly, there are discussions and arguments on both sides about net metering. I read the story about Manitoba and how they've been working with it over the years. They had net metering but they had very little uptake on it, so they cancelled it. Now they call it "customer owned generation". I think what we're looking at here is their renaming it, hoping it would come back and be more successful than the first time they brought out net metering.

I'm not going to argue the point here today because we've only got another two and a half hours where we can talk this issue through. I've had opportunities here in the last couple of years to look at net metering and to critique the number of jurisdictions. It's interesting that the member opposite says that I'm wrong on the process — that it isn't expensive, that it isn't complicated, and that it does the job it is cut out to do.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that we get a buy-in from Yukoners, for one thing, and that at the end of the day it does work. I don't think we as a society want to set up net metering so it fails — any more than we want this energy strategy to fail. This energy strategy is what this government is putting out for Yukoners to take another look at so we can come back with a final draft. We are concerned about issues. We are looking at net metering. We are looking at all of it though. We're reading up on Manitoba's situation. Why did they cancel it? What happened in Prince Edward Island? What happened in New Brunswick? Why did it not work? In many of the states, it is all part and parcel of their policy, but there is very little uptake and why is that? Those are legitimate questions. I mean, those are Yukon questions.

I look at IPP — independent power producers — and think, "You know, that might work." If somebody had the opportunity to have a small hydro project on their property where they could maximize the hydro off the creek and sell it to the grid, that would be strictly a business deal. At the end of the

month they send you a cheque. The Utilities Board sets out a rate of return and you get your rate of return. What an investment for First Nations. What an investment for the government, Mr. Speaker. We do that; we produce power; we have the Energy Corporation and it produces all of our hydro power, except for Yukon Electrical. Yukon Electrical virtually is an IPP. Fraser, Mr. Speaker, is powered by hydro — now that's in British Columbia, mind you — but they produce independent power and they sell it to the territorial government and to White Pass in that area. That is a small hydro operation but, Mr. Speaker, that is a business deal.

That is something you produce. The Yukon Utilities Board sets a rate of return and you pay the bill. If the Teslin Tlingit were to do something in their traditional territory that would produce hydro power or produce power in some fashion that was economical, think about the opportunities a group or government like that would have. Power is something that's produced 24 hours a day. It produces revenue 24 hours a day. Our economy is growing.

Is it better for us to build the infrastructure, to work with partnerships, other individuals or governments and have them put the investment in the ground and we, in turn, buy the power?

I think in the rationale statements about net metering, we're looking at too narrow a focus. I'm sure everybody here in the House is anxious to stand up and talk about it, but I think what we have to do is expand our vision. It's too bad we narrowed it down with this bill to limit our discussion to net metering, because there is so much more in energy we could be talking about today. There are so many more opportunities in our territory.

We as a community and as a society have come together and put the energy strategy together and are moving forward with it. But as a very large group, we didn't just look at net metering. We looked at the whole picture. We want to critique what comes back in the final draft and open the doors and opportunities for Yukoners to better understand our energy and also how we can manage our energy independence. What it boils down to is that, with all the policies in the world, all the things we do, unless we get a buy-in from the community, it's hard to make anything work.

There is the energy strategy and the commitment this government has made to work with these groups and individuals to go out into the Yukon communities and talk about not only net metering — that is one very small part of a very large wheel — but all our energy issues. I respect all the individuals and I have to thank them. I have to thank Jackie in Energy, Mines and Resources. The work that individual did with Energy, Mines and Resources to get this thing out the door is very commendable; a very solid process and of course it reflects in this draft that we have in front of us today.

It is being received very well. We are getting very complimentary statements made about it and there are some questions about it. Again, public consultation; today the Member for Kluane wants us in this room, these individuals, to vote on something without consultation. There is no consultation in this bill. This is a group of individuals, by the way, with very little

background in what we are going to vote on. We always have armchair experts in everything we do, but in fact at the end of the day, would that be a responsible way of managing our energy issues in the territory? Is that what Yukoners voted for us to do, to stand in here and vote on something without going out into the communities, especially given the urgency of this issue?

This is not something we can minimize by sitting around this House having discussions on net metering. The member opposite says it is a good idea; I read here that it is not such a good idea. The Member for Porter Creek North has another idea; the Department of Education has another idea and, at the end of the day, we vote on net metering and the loudest individual gets his way.

That is not the way this government is going to do it. This government is going to fold net metering in; not us, Heaven forbid — not the government. This was done by Yukoners, not by this government.

This government worked with that group to bring this thing forward. Net metering is a very small part of this strategy.

When I go back to what we're going to do as individuals, I think the responsible thing to do is to move forward with our plan — Yukoners' plan; the strategy — and give them the time they need to bring out the final draft. I went through the extensive list of participants and, of course, that didn't shut out Yukoners. More people than that came to these workshops.

The first workshop I went to was roughly 150 to 200 individuals and it was interesting because they talked about not only net metering but all sorts of energy issues. I look at this and say to you in the House that net metering is part of this. As you go through it, you'll see how responsible these individuals, governments and corporations are and how very effective their contributions to this draft are.

The members opposite say that it's a good idea. We'll just have a show of hands here, and then we'll get net metering put into a bill, and that will take care of the energy problems in the territory.

Well, then I look at my information — pages of it. I have pages of information about net metering not working. Net metering was not working in Ontario, to the point where they had to rename it. Net metering obviously had a bad name, so they renamed it to try to jumpstart the net metering process.

What kind of burden are we going to put on individuals who want to participate in this? Anything we do in this House, or anything we do as a government or as a society, has to be doable. We can't just sit here today, have a great discussion on net metering, and have a vote at the end of the day, not having proper understanding. First of all, with no consultation, there is no guarantee you're going to have a buy-in because, in fact, why would you?

Secondly, where is the expertise to tell me, as the representative for Porter Creek Centre, that one of my constituents could do this?

Let's say we get this bill passed; we rush out with it, and it becomes front page news. I short-circuit the energy strategy draft that we have in front of us today, take net metering out of it, pick a winner — that's what we have done — and then say

to one of my constituents, "Let's go to work and see if it works. Let's see if you can afford to do this, and find out what benefit it is to you and your family."

I think that we look at window dressing, and this window dressing is not good enough. Yukoners want to participate in decisions like this — whether it is net metering, whether it is hydro, whether it is solar energy. They want their government or their representatives in this House to take their opinions into the decision-making process. We will consult with individuals and be serious about it, and not pick what we'll consult on and what we won't. This has been a very good example of total consultation on a subject that is near and dear to all Yukoners.

At the end of the day, there are not many Yukoners who are not talking about energy. They are talking about energy, their lights; they are talking about the price of filling up their vehicle; they are talking about heat; they are talking about alternative heat. How will we manage that? I'll tell you. Yukoners are concerned — and Yukoners should be concerned — because, if you were to look ahead, and if you were to believe what is coming out, fuel could go as high as \$200 a barrel.

So what are we as a community going to do to make sure that we can heat our homes, drive our vehicles and manage our energy?

In the dialogue we have had today on net metering and the many areas where it has been done — Prince Edward Island, interestingly enough, is almost totally on wind energy. I think it's somewhere over 50 or 60 percent — don't hold me to those percentages, Mr. Speaker. At the end of the day, they have really grown into managing wind, and it reflects on their generation of power.

Yukon Energy has worked with many communities to see the value of wind and we have a very large investment on top of Haeckel Hill and that, in turn, is supplying power to the grid. I guess, in going back to net metering, it is interesting. The argument is there and the members opposite say it works. Nobody has proved to me it works, but if they say it works, it must be factual. The opposition is never not factual.

At the end of the day, how would we explain to Yukoners if we were to discuss this and go to vote and find out that what we've done is taken the energy strategy plan and just short-circuited it? This is what worries me: that the opposition minimizes the work that went into this energy strategy and the hard work of the individuals who worked on this. This government is going to give the energy strategy; we're not going to pull net metering out of this consultation period or consultation obligation. We're going to move through with the process. Part of that process, if the member opposite from Kluane had read, was net metering.

Net metering was one of the many debatable points put out by this energy strategy. All the member had to do with net metering was go to the meetings, participate and argue the point. That would minimize what we had to do in the House here today or any day. I appreciate the fact that we have one more sitting day and we have a lot of work to do in that period of time.

Of course, I'm not going to question the Opposition — this is their day on business, on the motion day and it was urgent

for them to bring this forward and I appreciate that. They are very adamant that net metering — out of all the things we've done in our energy strategy — is the only thing, really, to come out of it that requires urgent debate here today. I look at the energy strategy and say there is so much in that, Mr. Speaker, that it would take a period of time to digest it and analyze the work that individuals did.

What are we going to do looking ahead for energy? What are the key issues? Strategy framework, electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation — a big factor because, at the end of the day, without that efficiency and conservation any community — I'm not just picking the Yukon — but all communities in Canada have to manage their energy. We're seeing that in other jurisdictions.

This government thought it urgent and invested \$15 million in tying in the grid so we can eventually manage the hydro in north and south Yukon, maximizing the individuals who are going to be large consumers of energy. It hasn't been supported by the Opposition. When you think of Minto mines and the potential there for tonnes and tonnes of CO₂ that is happening today, that will be corrected with hydro. Pelly Crossing — a small community in the territory — will be another success story as we move our hydro.

I want to go through the facts of what this government has done and not minimize the bill today on net metering. It's a discussion we should have and it's part and parcel of how we as a community are going to manage our energy and how we can encourage individuals to participate not only in consuming energy but on how they can get involved in producing energy. It's not without its interests.

If you were to look at six years ago — the members opposite always talk about the past and how we should ignore the past, and justly so.

When he was in the other party, before he moved over six feet, the Member for Kluane was after me as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to have a public hearing over the energy management by the Liberal Party between Mayo and Dawson. It was a huge investment for Yukoners six years ago. The corporation is still in court trying to sort through the decisions the Liberal Party made.

They talk about individuals and whatever, but there is one thing they didn't do in the whole equation about the decision-making to go from Mayo to Dawson — by the way, it was not a bad decision. We had a hydro project there that was under utilized and could supply the power to the Dawson City community and other communities along the route. They missed out on one thing, however. The one thing the Liberal Party did was give instructions to short-circuit the Utilities Board. The Utilities Board was not part of that decision. They did that for a reason: the Utilities Board would not have gone along with the process the Liberal Party brought forward.

The proof is in the pudding. We are looking at an expense for Yukoners that far exceeded the budget that was put in place. I remind everybody that we are still addressing that issue in court.

By the time this government arrived, the decisions that the Liberal government of the day had made had the Energy Cor-

poration and the contractor at loggerheads, and in fact nothing was being done. We had to resurrect the actual project. There has been a lot done in our —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: On a point of order, Member for Kluane.

Mr. McRobb: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, you have cautioned members on previous occasions to speak to the subject at hand. Today we are dealing with net metering. The Energy minister has wandered off into an entirely different area and I would ask that you ask him to keep his comments relevant to the subject matter of the bill.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: From the Chair's perspective, I don't believe there is a point of order. From my understanding from listening to the member on the government side, he is encompassing the whole net metering aspect within the boundaries of his conversation; however, it doesn't hurt all members — and I thank the Member for Kluane for bringing that up — to tighten up their verbiage here, if they would.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has the floor.

Hon. Mr. Lang: All these decisions come out of the Yukon management of energy, and a lot of these decisions made today are only possible by the management of the corporation. I'm just bringing people up to date on what happened in the past, and now we're talking about a whole energy strategy for the territory.

Of course, the member opposite is very adamant about net metering, and limits his conversation and limits his vision to net metering.

Net metering is not going to fix the energy situation in the territory. Net metering is just one tool that Yukoners could use if, in fact, it were to prove to be successful or doable.

The members opposite remind me — "This is a great idea. This is doable. This is the beginning of energy independence." I certainly don't want to minimize the Yukoners who go out and work to create energy and benefit from the energy they create.

Certainly, this afternoon, we have to compliment individuals in our community and in our territory who participate in thinking about how we as a community could better use our potential in creating energy. Geotech — all of that high tech — not so high tech any more, Mr. Speaker. If you want to talk about net metering — net metering is a thing that has been around for a very long time in other jurisdictions.

Would it have been better if we had been talking today about high tech energy components, energy potential, or about using hot water, or using earth heat, or using solar energy or hydro, or whether we should be using biomass instead of net metering, which is the thing we are talking about extensively.

The member from the third party talked about waste, garbage dumps — what are the opportunities there? There are communities that generate energy from their garbage. Now,

there is something a person could discuss; there is something that is an environmental issue.

One community in British Columbia — this is just an example — put a refuse situation together with a 10-year plan. It was maxed out in three. It was a 10-year investment that in fact did not last three years. There is a potential.

I go up to the dump, whether I am in Mount Lorne or in Marsh Lake or Watson Lake, and I see that we throw away a lot of things. We eventually are going to have to be more responsible for what we use — in other words, what do we use in our homes and what do we put in our landfills?

You can't get away without landfills, but they are an energy source. How do we address the issues like that? We get back to net metering, and the member opposite is talking about net metering.

Again, the energy strategy talks about net metering, and it's not a negative overview; it's another one of the opportunities that Yukoners have.

And of course we talk about biomass; we talk about all of these other things we have been talking about this afternoon. We are very much aware of the opportunities there are for independent power producers. I, as a layman, think that how net metering works seems fairly self-explanatory. To be fair, with everything I have read, I am a bit of a naysayer.

That is because at the end of the day, I put everything into a box and I say to myself, "Net metering, would it work for me? Would it work for me and what would it cost for me to do it? How cumbersome would it be for our family, as small as it is, to manage something like that?"

As we look at this and go through the net metering process in these different jurisdictions, we've got very few successes. We seem to have a lot of obligations on the part of consumer and seller to the hydro company to participate in this net metering process.

As I said earlier, Manitoba Hydro was one of the first jurisdictions to come out with this process. Manitoba Hydro, like us, looked at it and thought, "Boy, this seems like a very reasonable thing to do," but when they went out into the general public, they found that individuals weren't receptive to something that involved a large investment, very little return and was very complicated. They discontinued their program. Manitoba Hydro discontinued their program in 1989. There were only two net metering sites in the whole province. Think about that and the price of that program, Mr. Speaker. There were two individual power producers in the Province of Manitoba — a province with hundreds of thousands of people. The two producers were a one-kilowatt wind turbine and a small wood waste plant that were located at a pulpmill. It didn't work, so they cancelled it.

If you were to look at the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board when you critique the net metering service, they had a regulation effective 2005. People wishing to become a net metered client of Nova Scotia Power must file an application — again, obligations — with their address and installation and wiring drawings of their plant. In other words, some expertise is needed to do all this to present to the hydro utility.

They must apply for a wiring permit. That is going to generate inspections and things of that nature and that is very important. I don't want to minimize the fact that if we are going to enter into a thing like this, there would be some obligations for government — well, maybe not the government, but the energy corporation that is supplying you with the power.

Then they need a wiring permit and they need to have the installation inspected and approved prior to reaching a contract with Nova Scotia Power. You really don't even know if you've got a deal with Nova Scotia. You go through the installation and wiring drawings of the plant — you must apply for a wiring permit, have their installation inspected and approved, and then you are eligible to go in front and get the blessing of Nova Scotia Power.

Who in their right mind is going to go through all that work —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Mount Lorne, on a point of order.

Mr. Cardiff: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention that the member opposite is violating Standing Order 19(c) by persisting in needless repetition. I believe this is the third time we have heard about wiring permits and how net metering operates in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: As the Chair doesn't have the Blues in front of him to be able to verify whether or not the honourable member has or has not been repeating himself, one can only ask the honourable member, who now has the floor, to be concise and, if in fact there is repetition, to not do it.

Mr. Cardiff: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if it is appropriate or not but could I ask that the Blues be reviewed and that something come back to this Legislative Assembly on this?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Following the advice from my very capable Table Officers, we will review the Blues; however, that will not prevent the member from carrying on with the vein of conversation he's presenting today.

You have the floor, Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again, I'd like to remind the members in the House here, especially the Opposition, that these are examples of successes and failures in this program. So it's not a matter of repetition. It's a matter of there being some questions out there that I think the House should be aware of if, in fact, we're going to vote on this at the end of the day — that members are aware of some of the success stories and failures.

Manitoba failed. I can't say it enough. Nova Scotia is complicated. P.E.I. is reluctant to embrace it. New Brunswick has been supportive of renewable energy sources being allowed

to generate electricity in a net-metered fashion but, again, it doesn't have the individuals participating. I'm sorry if the Opposition doesn't like to hear that, but there has to be two sides to every story.

That's why we had the participation on the energy strategy. Maybe I shouldn't be allowed to talk about the energy strategy, Mr. Speaker. But there's where this debate should be. It should be out there with Yukoners putting together the final draft of the energy strategy. But today we're going to talk about this narrow vision the Liberal Party has on how to manage the energy into the future for the Yukon. That's what I'm pointing out.

I'm fully supportive of the public consultation that went through with this package which, by the way, talks about net metering. I believe that when this draft comes out they will have a thorough overview of net metering, and I will bet that it will be thorough, scientific, and the facts will speak for themselves. That's what we're talking about today.

So when the member opposite talks about net metering, you can't ignore the fact that there has been the lack of participation in other jurisdictions. Why would we as a government and why would we as a legislature vote on something that won't work? Or why would we sit here and discuss something without looking at both sides of it? That's what I'm talking about today. With my review of other jurisdictions it seems again that a lot of these areas — United Kingdom, 40 states in the United States — with all of these figures that are there, why is there such a small amount of participation in the programs they have? That should be addressed.

When the Province of Manitoba has an issue where they have two individuals participating in the program — a small pulp mill and a small hydro — then I have to address the fact that if Manitoba cannot maintain a net metering program, is it a wise move for us to extract this out of the energy strategy and discuss it today with any merit? Are we serious in this House or are we living in a different world?

People in the territory, the general population, the people who participated in this consultation — and by the way will be participating in the next step in this draft process — are serious. They're serious about the energy issue in the territory. They're having problems at the pumps. They're looking at the fuel bill for heating their home. They're looking at their travel plans. All of this energy issue has ramifications on all of those things.

When we take net metering and discuss it today, we're discussing a very small part of a very important issue. I'm not going to stand up here today in the next two-and-a-half or three hours and discuss this issue without putting some merit to it. There is merit to net metering, because guess what? I believe what they did in the energy strategy is probably close to the mark and net metering is mentioned in here.

Now this isn't the final draft, but I appreciate the fact that they brought it forward in a timely fashion. This government is going to take a look at it and work with Yukoners on their energy strategy plan. We are serious about that, Mr. Speaker. We as a government are not going to take net metering out of the energy strategy and debate it in here and decide that that is the be-all and end-all of energy programs.

I fear for the country. This is a very small thing; net metering is a very small part of energy management. I know we can't mention other jurisdictions that have failed, because that would not bode well for their argument, but in other jurisdictions there are successes and failures. When you weigh the success and failure of net metering, there is more failure. I have to seriously take umbrage with the members opposite talking about the success of net metering when I read how unsuccessful the process was in the Province of Manitoba.

We've got to move along, because we only have another two hours to get everything out here on the floor, and certainly the members opposite are anxious to do that. I agree with them; this is something we can talk about and wrap up in this spring sitting when we are doing the business of Yukoners. That is why we were elected. The business of the day was brought forward by the Official Opposition, and net metering was the topic brought forward for discussion on the second last day of the sitting. We work with the Opposition; we have an obligation. If they want to talk about net metering, we are quite capable of standing up and discussing net metering with the members opposite. We certainly appreciate the fact that the members opposite are interested in this, and so they should be. I encourage the members opposite.

Again, I can't say enough about the energy strategy and how this group of individual Yukoners put together this strategy for how we as a community are going to move forward with energy management.

I will remind the members opposite that net metering is one thing, but we have to compliment our community — over 90 percent of our consumers are now on hydro; that in itself — if you look across Canada — is a success story.

The energy strategy looks at all of these things, including net metering and IPP. All of these issues jump out of the strategy. You could discuss them for days. Oil and gas — what's our potential? What can we do with oil and gas in the territory to minimize our dependence on offshore product and the transportation of it into the territory?

We could talk for days on that. Electricity — what are we going to do in partnership with the Energy Corporation and Yukon Electrical to make electricity more available to more Yukoners? There are a couple of weeks of work to be done on that conversation.

How do we move forward on the other issues? What are the trends in the territory? What about the environment? What about the framework? What do we have here? It's the framework to move forward with this energy plan. By the way, net metering is part of that.

If the member from the Official Opposition had read the energy strategy, I am sure we would not be having this discussion today. I am sure the open-minded member would be working with the groups, participating, expanding on his knowledge of net metering and selling the groups on net metering.

Obviously, he has background in net metering. I am sure that the groups would like to hear his background, and I am not minimizing the input of any of us in this place, because we all consume energy.

My family consumes energy; and we as a society, as a community, as Canadians, as North Americans, by the way, abuse energy.

If you look at how we managed it in the past, and how we are going to manage it in the future, it is very important that we get hold of our energy plans and become responsible users of energy. That's a must.

The rest of the world is not going to keep feeding us if we're not responsible and if we don't manage our energy, so that it maximizes the benefits to the community and we use it wisely. Net metering is part of that, and I don't disagree. I agree with the member opposite that it is something that we could discuss and we're doing that this afternoon. I appreciate the time that I've had this afternoon to look at it.

We can't minimize the work that these people working on the energy strategy did because the workshops were so impressive. What are the conclusions? What did this draft produce? Well, it certainly produced something for us in the House to talk about. It does bring out the fact that the community can get together and it can come up with an energy strategy for Yukon.

There are recommendations and it is the public draft — it is not the government draft. We participated. We certainly funded some of the dialogue and we look forward to working with them if the groups need some expertise. We open the door to opportunities for expertise to come in. If it is net metering, that is one thing. If it is IPP, it is another. What about hydro? What about solar? What about — as I said to the member opposite — what are we going to do about our biofuel? How are we going to manage our dumps? How are we going to manage our communities as a whole? How are we going to educate?

Another important thing — net metering is one thing — but again buy-in comes with an investment of education. At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, education will be very important. Now, as for our net metering conversation this afternoon, I'm disappointed it's so limited.

It says right here, "Net metering: Electricity consumers who own small, renewable energy generators such as wind or solar can receive a credit for a portion of the electricity they generate."

That is right in the middle of this very important document. Also we are looking at the agricultural sector; we are looking at the commercial and institutional sectors; demand-side management — all part and parcel of managing our energy.

The electrical grid — how do we improve on that and maximize the return on hydro and how do we manage the grid? Geothermal — as I said to the members opposite, there is an opportunity that is becoming more and more realistic as the science gets easier to understand and the actual investment gets smaller. We have a great potential.

Independent power producers — again, there we are. How would they partner? Is there an opportunity for individuals to do that? Industrial sector — don't forget about them. As our economy grows we will have a bigger industrial centre. Again, I remind you of net metering. There are performance-based regulations, petroleum products, public administration sector, and the residential sector, including personal residences, single-

family residences, apartments, apartment hotels, condominiums and farm homes. The member responsible for housing can talk to you about what they are doing at the Yukon Housing Corporation.

The transportation sector, including railroads, airlines, marine, pipelines, road transportation, urban transit and retail pump sales. Think about this: we have shrunk that whole thing down to our dialogue this afternoon to a conversation about net metering. Out of 17 points, we are going to talk today about net metering. That was the choice of the Opposition and we acknowledge that.

Today, as our energy strategy is rolling out and going out again for public consultation — and again I remind everyone it is for the public and we are all part of that group — what are we doing to do as a government to manage energy for the territory? We have a limited responsibility for that because Yukon Housing Corporation does a lot of that, the Department of Education, Property Management Agency, manages territorial government buildings; we also manage the new buildings and things that are being built out in the communities and, of course, we are very aware of energy because of the growing cost of energy.

At the end of the day, how are we going to expand our potential in hydro? Is there a potential expansion? Those are decisions that will have to be made. Those kinds of things will be made by the Energy Corporation and the powers that be. We certainly will participate in that decision, but again we will hire the expertise, not like we did today with net metering. We would hire the expertise we need to make those kinds of decisions, the same kind of expertise we hired to manage and finalize the Mayo-to-Dawson power line.

Another issue that has been brought to my attention is that the engineering of the Mayo-Dawson line doesn't compensate from Stewart to Mayo for the expansion. This is another lack of foresight on the part of the Liberal government. We have to rewire that and put in a bigger line to accommodate that, but we will. We will invest in that — which we have. We've put \$15 million on the line for the first phase. We had a corporate partnership and a commitment from Sherwood Copper of \$7 million. Of course, 100 percent of the line from Minto into the mine is being constructed by the mine as we speak.

Net metering is one of many, many questions but, at the end of the day, we've been very concerned that we keep the power line on time and on budget. At my last meeting, the capable people of Yukon Energy Corporation are doing that. We are looking at a final customer base as of October of this year. We'll have hydro and Minto off diesel. We can't minimize the impact that will have on our environment, on being able to manage the profitability of the mine and bring us another large customer.

The Selkirk First Nation and the community of Pelly is very excited about the opportunity to expand and build at Minto, which is another opportunity brought forward by the investment we made. It's a good-news story. It has been a long, drawn-out process because of the nature of what we're doing. We've been aware of what has happened in the past. We as a government think it's very important to make sure that Yukon-

ers understand that we are capable as a community to bring a job in on time and on dollar value. We're very pleased with that.

We're very pleased with that, and certainly working with the corporation on the next expansion, which would be to tie the Mayo-Dawson grid into Pelly, which is another investment we as the territorial government will make with the corporation. And, if we can, we'll be looking at another corporate sponsorship. So that's good news.

That sort of brings us back to net metering and it's important that we keep on the subject here. I think it's important that we look at — net metering is so narrow in its impact, certainly on the management of energy in the territory. It's a tool.

The Member for Kluane certainly brought that up, and I appreciate that, but is it as important a tool as independent power producers? Is it a way we could manage our energy? Or is it something we could discuss as a tool — as a small part of the tool? That's where I can't emphasize enough — here we are today talking about net metering, when we have the potential of talking about the energy strategy for the territory — a whole document, Mr. Speaker. The document, by the way, as I read, has net metering in it.

And, you know, there's the disappointment of the individuals — I really have to apologize to the individuals who worked so hard on this. It's obvious to me that people have not read the document. It's not a big document. You know, it's 30 or 40 pages — whatever it is. It took me a couple of hours to go through it, and I recommend it. I think it's very important that we go through it.

But, at the end of the day, we talked today about a narrow part of the energy strategy which, in turn, doesn't give Yukoners the confidence that we really are taking our energy seriously — and that's what I'm saying today.

I'm trying to take this net metering discussion and broaden it and make sure that we're aware of it as a tool, but that there are other tools out there for us to use as Yukoners — and don't minimize other jurisdictions. When I bring up the fact that other jurisdictions haven't found success, that's very important. I'm sure the groups that worked on this energy strategy are certainly aware that you can't ignore other jurisdictions.

You don't have to always reinvent the wheel. Now, maybe the argument that the member opposite can give me is that there's a modern way of doing that. Is there a better way of doing it? Is there a more manageable way for the individual to make this a successful program?

I look at all the other jurisdictions and find out that it is cumbersome, it is expensive and, of course, there are the inspections and all of the things that fall into place. By the way, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, those have to be addressed. They have to be part and parcel of the decision. So as we go through the program here today and as we talk about the net metering issue that we have in front of us today, there is a balance. It is not without its merits and I appreciate the member opposite bringing it up. I look at it and I think that it is an interesting concept.

The essence of how it works is a bit complicated. How do they meter it? In my naivety, Mr. Speaker, when I first looked

at it I thought it was a process where people were compensated financially for the power they sold back to the corporation. In fact, I got IPP mixed up with net metering and, in fact, that in itself is wrong. The strategy covers both of them — net metering and the independent power producers, and both of them have been addressed in this document.

Another interesting thing about the document is the looking ahead section, the global trend. It is interesting, when we talk about net metering, what is happening out in the world. It is not just Canada — what is happening in the western world? What are the Americans doing? What are our partners in Europe doing and what are they doing in Asia? What is happening in the Arctic? I mean, we're a big investor in the Arctic, as the Minister of Environment says. The mitigation that we have to address in the Arctic is huge and yet we, as a small jurisdiction, are not the cause of it. It is because of our location.

So first of all, through this draft policy or the draft strategy, we have to look at all that and we have to be aggressive at looking ahead at the global trends — that's important.

What is the future for the Yukon? Potentially we've got two or three new mines coming in; hydro electricity capacity could be reached and we might have to rely on diesel again. Is that good management? No. We've got to think ahead and again net metering is one very small part of that. At the end of the day, it is how we manage our energy. How can we encourage economic development if we can't guarantee the investors or the community that they will have a reasonably managed power source? There is another question: what are we doing as a society for climate change on permafrost? Hydrological cycles and forest productivity could affect our energy infrastructure and energy resources.

Those are all issues about our energy. What are we going to do about the situation that we find ourselves in on the Alaska Highway? There is a cost to the consumers of the territory in excess of \$2 million a year to maintain the permafrost thing. That is directly related to global warming.

That is all part and parcel of the energy strategy and again, and I can't say it enough, I am impressed with the work these individuals did to bring this document in front of us for just this debate. This debate is going on not only here in the House, but also in a bigger circle, which is the Yukon. The individuals out there are concerned that at the end of the day we could end up in a situation where we have energy efficiency and energy costs, so we can stabilize the costs and become less dependent on energy from foreign sources.

If you were going to talk about net metering or IPP — independent power producers — and I did go through the opportunities there. We talked about net metering this afternoon and about how we do it, who would do it, what makes it work, what are the benefits and what is the investment. The members opposite have a very narrow view of the energy issues here in the territory.

Net metering is one of the tools that could be used in our community, but it's not the only tool and that's what's wrong, I think, in the bigger picture. I think we focus on small issues. Hopefully that's what the strategy will bring out: an expanded vision about the territory and its management of energy, as well

as how we look forward and how we partner with other jurisdictions to minimize this energy crunch that's appearing on the horizon.

As we talk here this afternoon and work on this issue — and appreciate the members opposite and their attention — as a community, what are the implementation plans? How can the Yukon government be committed to implement the energy strategy, the core Yukon government strategy for implementing and evaluating?

In other words, we can't just go ahead. The member who brought forward this bill today about net metering, talks about the urgency of bringing that forward and making that available to Yukoners. We really have not thought it through. How are we going to monitor the success? What is the process?

As a community, will we encourage individuals to work within this net metering process without the checks and balances to give them the confidence that their investment will have some return? And that again is another process. To take it out of the energy strategy and cherry-pick net metering, to decide that is all that was in the hard work of the groups that worked on the strategy, is folly.

The government has to demonstrate leadership. Part of that is working with our community to incorporate the strategy principle in the decision making; in other words, once we get the final draft in front of us, we have to be sincere about it. We have to be willing to work on it, and we are. It might be that net metering is part of that.

We have to build partnerships with others to develop and manage Yukon energy resources: we've got First Nations, we've got neighbours; we've got the State of Alaska, we've got British Columbia — they are all discussing energy and they have urgencies too, so they are a form of information. Again, the net metering program has been used in many jurisdictions across Canada, and I don't have the feeling that, at the end of the day, it's the best tool.

And that's important because we don't want to set something up just to fail. When we come out of the chute here with our programs, we want to make sure that they're workable, they're economically sound and that, at the end of the day, we can get some product.

By looking at the energy strategy for the territory and working with the public through the consultation process, I think we can come out with a process that will work for Yukoners. Now, I'm not minimizing net metering, and I'm not going to minimize IPP. What I am going to do is work with the public consultation and what comes out of this draft and be sincere about it and, of course, commit myself, as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — which is going to be important, whether net metering comes out at the end of the day or not — that we have sufficient resources to implement the strategy. That's going to be important, Mr. Speaker. We have to implement whatever comes out of this plan.

It's not limited to net metering. There are 16 or 17 other issues that have been addressed in this program, and it certainly goes on to discuss many other issues in the energy strategy. We as a government are certainly going to take net metering under advisement. We're certainly going to encourage the groups —

the public consultation process — to finish the consultation on all issues, net metering being one of them, and see what comes out of it at the end of the day.

Then, of course, as a government — or as a partner in this — we have to work with them to monitor the implementation of the strategy, report on the progress, and review the strategy to ensure that it remains relevant and current. So, in other words, what we're saying here is that this energy strategy is not the end of what we're going to do; this is the start of what we're going to do.

So, we as a government, or we as a community or society, are going to work on this on the basis that this is a living document. This document will be brought up to date — this will not end up on a shelf somewhere — and will be utilized to the benefit of all Yukoners. Again, that's a commitment I make, as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

I also make the commitment to the member opposite on the net metering. I'm very aware of his feelings on net metering and I appreciate that. That is why I am thankful for the consultation process that was done in the territory and, at the end of the day, with net metering as part and parcel of the plan. I'm not going to minimize the fact that I feel that we're talking too narrowly about a subject when we are only discussing net metering, but I appreciate that the member opposite has brought this forward. The House has time to discuss it today.

I really can't say enough about our energy strategy for Yukon. I remind everybody that net metering is part and parcel of that document. It is not a big document, and they did a great job, Mr. Speaker, in consolidating it and making it very readable. It is important that we make sure that things go out into the community that make sense and that are readable. This is a very thorough overview and the individuals who worked on it have to be complimented, because at the end of the day, this is something that I look forward to working with when the final draft comes out. When the final draft is brought forward, and whether net metering is part of it or not, we will move forward with plans and we'll work with the document for the benefit of all Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, seeing the time and considering the urgency of other individuals who would like to discuss this, I will say that I appreciate the bill and I look forward to working with our energy strategy and I look forward to being able to present it to the House as early as this fall or early in the next year.

Thank you.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus to respond to Bill No. 106 — considering I've been waiting since last fall to do this and this is the third time that we've had the opportunity to speak to it. I'd just like to put a few things on record as far as time frames go. The minister informed us that it took him two hours to go through the entire Yukon energy strategy. I'd like to make special note of the briefness of the mover of Bill No. 106. He spoke for eight minutes and 13 seconds when introducing this bill. So there is a big contrast — eight minutes and 13 seconds for the mover of the bill, and it took the minister two

hours to go through the energy strategy and yet he spoke to the net metering bill for six hours over three separate occasions.

I'd like to expedite the business of the House. The minister has gone on with needless repetition and has used his expertise to educate us here in the Legislature, the pages, the public and on the radio about his thoughts on net metering. He asked a question: why would we sit in here and discuss net metering? Well, I'm not sure, because he spoke for six hours on net metering. So, I'm asking the same question.

It seems the minister has predetermined the outcome of today by the length of time he talked and that it's the government's intention to talk this bill out so that it doesn't come to a vote.

This is a bill to which we in the third party could give our support. We think it's particularly worthwhile, because it does promote environmentally responsible energy generation. There's a possibility that it could help reduce our reliance on fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases. Every step that we can take to reduce the impacts of climate change is worth considering.

I think the minister said something like how it's only one tool that they can use. It's unfortunate, because if the minister was to take up the challenge and pass this bill, at least he'd have one tool in his toolbox instead of having an empty one. When he goes to fix something, he has no tools.

At the same time, we did identify a few very small areas where we thought the bill could be improved and clarified. Specifically, we wanted to see a definition of "distributor" added to the definitions section. We would like to see geothermal energy added to the list of eligible green energy sources. We noted, as well, that there was one place where the word "utility" is used in place of the word "distributor". For the sake of clarity and conformity, we would suggest that be changed.

We think the bill would be good to pass, should it come to a vote. Should it pass second reading, we would be proposing some amendments. However, we don't think the government is willing to vote it through to Committee of the Whole.

There are other matters at play here. It is now almost 4:00 o'clock. We have approximately one and a half hours left today and approximately three hours tomorrow.

There are other matters at hand here. We would like the ability to scrutinize Bill No. 46, for starters. There is also \$306 million in the main estimates in Bill No. 11 that have yet to be debated. In the Legislative Assembly, there is \$5.2 million, the Elections Office is \$365,000, the Office of the Ombudsman is \$500,000, the Department of Economic Development is \$16 million, the Department of Highways and Public Works hasn't been completed yet — \$170 million. The Department of Justice is \$51 million, the Department of Tourism and Culture is \$20 million, the Yukon Development Corporation is \$11.5 million, which is —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Hon. Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On a point of order, I believe that the Member for Mount Lorne has gotten confused with his budget speech. He is reading through the list of all the departments in the budget and the cost and I would urge you to remind him that we are in fact debating Bill No. 106, *Net Metering Act*.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: On the point of order, I can understand, as I did with the previous speaker, that there may be a circuitous route but I know the Member for Mount Lorne has the *Net Metering Act* in his route there somewhere.

Please carry on. You have the floor, Member for Mount Lorne.

Mr. Cardiff: Most certainly. The Yukon Development Corporation has \$11.5 million, which is about the third wheel in the Aishihik power turbine and the Carmacks-to-Stewart line, which the previous speaker went on about ad nauseum. There is the Yukon Housing Corporation of \$30 million and the Yukon Liquor Corporation for \$1.

The public expects us to take our responsibilities seriously and we are trying to debate the net metering bill; but since the government has not permitted us to even debate the question of extending the sitting, we need to use the limited time left to our very best advantage.

Debating the net metering bill at this time when the government has already indicated that it intends to act on this idea is not necessarily the best use of our time. I would urge the government to act expeditiously on the energy strategy, and especially on the net metering portion — which I believe is on page 26 and it falls under renewable energy. Actually, the net metering portion is a policy; it is not a piece of legislation. A policy might actually be easier and more expeditious to implement. I would urge the government to do that. At this time, I think that if we continue much further here, all Yukoners would quite rightly complain that we have had unproductive afternoon, as we saw two weeks ago when we listened to endless quotations from Wikipedia for three hours.

Motion to adjourn debate

Mr. Cardiff: With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, and in the best interests of serving the Yukon people, I move that debate be now adjourned.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne that debate be now adjourned.

Motion to adjourn debate on second reading of Bill No. 106 negatived

Speaker: The Member for Mount Lorne has the floor and has approximately nine and a half minutes left.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the interest of allowing somebody else to speak, I would prefer to debate the budget. There is \$300 million and some yet to be debated. We have the *Liquor Act* amendments to be debated. The minister asked the question: why would we sit in here and discuss the *Net Metering Act*?

I would ask them why they disagreed with adjourning debate, so that we could talk about the budget. It's good to see everybody here, and I look forward to hearing the Minister of Environment's comments about net metering.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I assume that I'm going to debate the motion to adjourn?

Speaker: No. It was defeated.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Thank you for that clarity, Mr. Speaker.

I think it's clear that the Member for Kluane and the Official Opposition have chosen, instead of debating the public's business, to bring forward their own business and essentially engage this Assembly in matters that are already being addressed in the overall energy strategy.

Net metering is but one small component of this territory's, this government's, and the Yukon Energy Corporation's overall comprehensive, very detailed, forward thinking energy strategy. It has great synergy with our climate change action plan, so the connection here is obvious. Much of what we have before us, as far as the public business is concerned, is related to these two strategies and the overall plan, because some of the budgeting we do certainly has effects on these areas.

So, once the Official Opposition decided to bring this forward, it's incumbent upon all of us to make sure that the public record has the information required, so the Yukon public can draw their conclusion. I think the Minister responsible for the Yukon Energy Corporation — and indeed energy overall in the territory — was obligated to go into great detail on what is going to take place from today forward when it comes to energy in the Yukon Territory. It's relevant to the debate.

But it was not the government side or the third party that brought this bill forward. The Official Opposition could have just as easily done the same thing as the third party yesterday: contribute to the debate by standing down on private members' day. The Member for Kluane fixated on his issue and decided that that wasn't in the best interest of the public.

We disagreed at that time, however once brought forward, our responsibility is to debate whatever the private member has brought forward and make sure the public is fully aware, fully apprised of all the information, all the details, so that they understand that the energy strategy brought forward by this government is far more constructive and forward-thinking and comprehensive than some small little initiative called "net metering".

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I have to reiterate basically what the Premier has said on this. I scratch my head, given the fact that there is so much left to debate. This has been an unusually humorous — at the best of times — display of not wanting to get near the debate of the budget by discussing bills and the timing makes no sense.

Net metering is indeed part of the energy strategy, and in fact is all there. So why it was the intention of the Liberal Party to bring this forward at this point in time is, quite frankly, beyond me.

But the Premier is correct: once that has been put on the table, it is our duty and responsibility to give it full debate. We would then be guilty and be accused of not following what the Official Opposition wanted. We are kind of wondering why, but we will continue.

The debate has gotten off track in many cases in the last few moments, and we have to really look at what net metering is all about.

We've gotten confused with independent power producers; we've gotten confused with a wide variety of topics, but really net metering is an electricity policy for consumers who own generally small, renewable energy facilities, such as wind or solar power, or in some cases vehicle to grid.

Net, in this context, is used in the sense of meaning what remains after deductions. In this case, the deduction of any energy outflows from metered energy inflows; in other words, under net metering a system owner receives retail credit for at least a portion of the electricity they generate.

This is quite different from an independent power producer. The ideal has the existing electricity meter spinning backwards, effectively banking excess electricity production for a future credit.

The reality of that, of course, varies significantly by country and possibly state and province, if it's available at all — and how long you can keep the bank credits, how much the credits are worth, retail versus wholesale — so there are a wide variety of those things. That really is what we're supposed to be debating today. That — and of course in context of Bill No. 106 — which for some unknown reason has been put on the agenda today, rather than the roughly \$120 million to \$130 million per hour that we seem to be debating tomorrow, thanks to the delays that have been put on the table by the Official Opposition.

If we look more creatively at net metering, it has certainly not worked in a number of jurisdictions and we have some real problems with that. If we use it as a simple in and out, it's a way of reducing our electrical bill from the utility. It's not for selling a net amount of electricity into the grid. It's not an independent power producer. It's quite different. It might require agreements that are done between the user and the distribution network. It could follow a wide variety of things. That's why it's in the energy strategy and why we're really looking at that whole thing.

I think we have to look at how that energy is generated. That's certainly a part of what net metering is all about. Is it going to be generated by a renewable method? Is it going to be something that is potentially feasible or something that could be feasible for a large corporation? Or is it only residential? How do you define residential? We can go on and on.

I think we had a good overview of nuclear energy the other day and I think that's so well regulated at this point in time that it's not very feasible for what we're looking at here. I won't go into that aspect at this point in time.

We do have to look at other means of generating electricity. The vehicle-to-grid is one potential, although sitting there running your car or some variation on that is probably not the brightest way to do it.

We look at other things that we have at our disposal. Solar energy is certainly one possibility; we have the potential of hydro; we are sitting on enormous coal facilities and deposits of coal in many parts of the Yukon, so coal would have to be something that we would have to look at as well.

Coal would not likely be something that would end up here, although anything is possible given the things that we see in this business. You can't necessarily rule it out, but it would perhaps not really be a good way to do it — renewable, no; extremely abundant, yes. But it is also potentially destructive if done on a small scale and not done in a proper clean coal plant. It would be more dangerous to do. I have seen operations involving coal that are very good, efficient and clean, but I don't think the average home user is going to use that.

Given the rising cost of energy overall and the effects on Yukoners, we do have to look at all of these different possibilities. The price of oil is becoming higher and higher; there is no sense that will be going down at any point in time. It affects every Yukon household and every Yukon business, for sure.

We are not in control of the cost of energy. Many would like us to be but the reality is we simply are not. But we can play a part and an important and vital role in a pragmatic approach to energy efficiency in new and existing homes. That is one way we can approach this.

This Yukon Party government has, through the Yukon Housing Corporation, put in place a residential energy efficiency programming strategy, which includes zero percent financing for energy renovations, retrofits and the addition of alternative energy systems — so the potential is there to even be funded in something that could be used in net metering — and grants to existing homeowners and builders who are willing to improve the energy performance of their dwelling to meet a recognized standard.

During Question Period, the Member for Mount Lorne asked about a green building code. He is a very accomplished tradesman and, of all people, should be aware of the fact that it's primarily the National Building Code that we follow. The Yukon Housing Corporation green home standard is on top of this, and we certainly encourage people, at every point, to build to that standard.

Through the Yukon Housing Corporation, we are available to assist Yukon households to make wise decisions in upgrading the energy efficiency of new and existing homes, and the staff of Yukon Housing Corporation and the Energy Solutions Centre are available to review the needs, discuss options, and assist in providing technical information. These activities and initiatives were designed to be beneficial to Yukoners, whether or not net metering is an option. It doesn't matter. It is still something to be looked at.

Now, net metering is a matter that needs to be explored in a careful and deliberate manner. New solutions might have a downside that needs to be dealt with. I don't know off the top of my head, but it needs to be seriously looked at, which is why it is in the energy strategy.

Why the Official Opposition and the Liberal Party have been so fixated on this, which is already there and out for consultation — and they prefer to simply push it through without

consultation and without talking to anyone — simply makes no sense.

The concept is noble. The concept of Yukon residents contributing power to the electrical grid, which in turn will be available for use by other Yukoners, is indeed a noble goal — especially when the power is clean and green, which is why I somewhat limit my thoughts to ways of doing this to certain technologies. The premise that we may be able to increase total generating power across the Yukon, through the efforts of individual home owners is intriguing. But, we have to ensure due diligence. We must ask for a careful review and technical input from some key stakeholders — the Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Electrical Company Ltd. certainly lead that list, but it is a list.

My concern is that Yukon needs to carefully consider all the pros and cons involved in net metering issues. This doesn't mean that the government is not interested in providing even more energy related options and benefits to Yukoners. My concern speaks to the need for solutions to be well thought out and beneficial for all concerned — as well as beneficial in the long run.

Some of my individual concerns on that go back to — I'll give an example, Mr. Speaker. Solar energy has some merits, has some benefits. It has some uses — off-grid is certainly one of them — providing power or power to charge batteries, or something like that. It has more limited use, however, when we have a long dark winter as we do here. The effectiveness of a solar panel is going to be extremely limited sitting in the dark. During the summer, often we don't really have to produce much in the way of light, because it is light most of the day anyway. So, there are limitations in that respect. There is another limitation certainly in terms of solar power and it is at least one study that I've seen, but I'm not an engineer. I would like to see more detail on that and I'd like to see it confirmed in other ways. One of my concerns is that I have seen a study that showed that the energy and the carbon and everything else going into the environment to produce a solar panel or to produce enough solar panels in order to be useful is actually more than that solar panel will save. In other words, your net loss in that is going to be significant.

I might be wrong about that; I don't know, but I have seen one study of that and I have some concerns. I have other concerns with some of the other things. I haven't seen any good data on wind power and certainly not on the wind power from the generators that are in the Yukon. I don't know; I would like to see that data in a proper, due diligence consultation as we are doing through the energy strategy and not simply push it through because the Liberal party seems to be fixated on producing that.

I would like to see the uptake in that consultation. For instance in Manitoba they offered net metering to customers between 1989 and 2003, and the participation rate was extremely low. Manitoba Hydro discontinued their net metering program. Manitoba Hydro has had a program in place since 1989 and, as of 2000, there were only two net metering sites in the entire province — a wind turbine and a small wood waste plant lo-

cated at a pulp mill. There does not appear to have been any additional installations since 2000.

Those are the statistics that I see. I would like to do due diligence. I would like the public and proponents to go through the energy strategy to look properly at this.

Earlier the Member for Kluane, and actually several members, referred to the fact that net metering is only one tool in the drawer. The Member for Kluane says my information is wrong, but I think he would agree with me that we need to have more than one sharp tool in the drawer. We would like to take this out to consultation and not depend on one or two people who think it's a neat idea but have no basis at all on which to make that determination.

I won't get into all of the different statistics on who has done it, and the number and everything else. But there has been a wide and varied success rate. I don't know anyone in this Legislature who is an engineer. I don't know anyone who is an electrical engineer; I don't think any of us are. It would be nice to ask someone with qualifications to find out what they have to say about this.

From my perspective, I only see a couple of ways that this could even be done and have any benefit, but I don't know. It would be nice to find out if people who do, for instance, have the propensity or the possibility of a small hydroelectric facility could actually put something back into the grid — I've seen a few that will work on a local basis off-grid, and that's a good thing.

We are aware of the fact, of course that, for generations, water has been used as a source of energy by industry and some utility companies. A good percentage of our facilities in the Yukon are hydroelectric, but in most cases we have seen large rivers or large streams harnessed.

Does that preclude the possibility of using a mini hydroelectric plant as a source of energy for supply for home or farm? Harnessing a stream for hydroelectric power is a major undertaking: careful planning is necessary if successful and economical power plants are to exist. We have concerns with fish streams; we have concerns with the run of the river and the effect on the environment; we have water licences; we have an enormous number of hoops to jump through on that.

So we have to get the precise field data to come together, to gather, to compare the amount of power that can be expected from such an installation to the electrical requirements of the home, the farm, and what would be available to put back into the grid. Detailed plans that consider both construction and maintenance can be drawn up.

Probably the biggest mistake of all when considering small hydroelectric installations is the overestimation of the proposed plant's capability. We have to look — and plan — at that small power plant on a given stream of water, and one of the first steps in planning is to measure the power potential of the stream.

The amount of power that can be obtained from a stream depends on things like the amount of water flow, the height from which the water falls — or the head of the stream — and the efficiency of the plant to convert the mechanical energy to

electrical energy. Then, of course, all water laws and environmental concerns have to be looked at.

It's a major undertaking; it's huge. To do that is not an easy thing. Stream flows vary greatly from season to season and, depending on the nature of the terrain, a typical discharge from a 22-square mile hill-to-mountainous drain area, some run as far as — some stats that I have here — a maximum discharge of 502 cubic feet per second down to 0.6 cubic feet per second.

Some of the smallest plants are at least commercially available; it's possible to build your own but again, it's a huge, huge thing. So, overall, we have to look at all of these things and all of the things that can be utilized for net metering. That's the reason why it's in the energy strategy. That's why we want to look overall at these things. To be determined by us in this House simply on the whim and enthusiasm of what appears to be one person I think is a very bad waste of time. I do agree with the Member for Mount Lorne: why in the world are we debating this with \$120 million to \$130 million per hour tomorrow? I have no idea why anyone would call this bill.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I would like to talk for a few minutes about this bill. I question the Member for Kluane bringing it forward. Methinks it's a little premature in that the minister's final draft and consultation is not complete. I think there are a few components to it that we need to examine very carefully.

First, I would like to look at the focus of this bill, which is to enable people who generate their own electricity to sell it back to the grid. Second, I would like to talk about the source of that electricity, which needs to come from renewable sources, namely wind, hydro, solar radiation or an agricultural biomass resource.

Third, I would like to spend some time on the amount of energy that can be put back into the system. Fourth, I would like to talk about some safety implications to net metering. This is an important, practical consideration to this bill.

Finally, I would like to talk about the panic the Official Opposition seems to be in to pass this bill. I don't think they have done a very good job of consulting on it and I would like to spend a few minutes on that, given my concerns with safety that are raised in my fourth point. I feel that this bill needs the benefit of public consultation. My colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, has done this the right way. He has developed a draft and is now consulting on it. I would encourage the Member for Kluane to learn from the example of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about the importance of energy to our economy. I have talked about this previously, about the things that help an economy grow — things like communication and transportation infrastructure, things like realistic and responsible regulatory regimes, and of course, energy.

I don't want to spend a great deal of time on these items but I do want to mention them. They are the context in which people's visions can become reality.

This topic today is about addressing our energy supply which is part of a larger framework. Net metering involves

providing an incentive for developing and using renewable energy. It increases the supply of renewable energy for electricity and enables individuals and businesses to contribute excess renewable energy to the grid.

With net metering in place, electricity consumers who own small renewable generators, such as wind or solar, receive a credit for a portion of the electricity they generate. Those who may sometimes generate more electricity than they require for their own use are only billed for their net consumption, or the total amount of electricity used minus the total produced when they produce more electricity than they consume.

In this scenario, the electric meter literally runs backward as the consumer feeds extra electricity back to the utility company, which then credits the consumer for power supplied to the grid.

The concept of establishing a net metering policy to allow homeowners and businesses to connect renewable sources of energy to the grid to reduce their electrical bills has been a topic of interest as we prepare to develop an energy strategy for Yukon.

In the document entitled *An Energy Strategy For Yukon: Draft for Public Consultation, May 2008*, on page 19, the draft speaks to an interest to: "Establish a net metering policy to allow home owners and businesses to connect renewable sources of energy to the grid to reduce their electrical bills." I am given to understand that it has been presented and discussed at recent workshops.

The use of net metering would help us increase the supply and use of renewable energy to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions. As anyone can imagine, there are questions about how net metering would be administered and the costs and benefits for consumers, as well as how it would impact the supply of renewable energy. Without detailed consideration of these factors, it would be premature to move forward with immediate legislation. This government will take a measured approach to pursuing net metering in the Yukon and consider net metering with a benefit of a full analysis and an opportunity for public input.

I would like to note the good work that my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, is undertaking on this file. I would also like to talk for a few minutes about what we as a party have committed to Yukoners to do with respect to energy.

We committed to implement the Yukon's climate change strategy, which includes a high-level vision guiding principles. In addition to making any more energy available to this system, we also have to find ways to reduce the energy wasted. I think all of us in this Assembly are looking for ways to improve our energy efficiency. We stated that we would promote the development of the Yukon's own energy sources with a goal of ultimately achieving energy self-sufficiency, including the development of a comprehensive Yukon energy framework strategy. We have also committed that we will ensure Yukon's energy resources are developed in an economically and environmentally responsible manner.

I would like to point out that some First Nations are interested in exploring options so they can participate in the produc-

tion of electricity themselves. I do not see how this bill would accommodate their concerns.

Moreover, access to affordable energy will enable more projects to be developed in our territory. We will not do this through environmentally responsible processes. Our environment is very special to me, Mr. Speaker. We need to leave it as a legacy for future generations.

That brings me to the second point, which is that the electricity generated needs to come from renewable resources, specifically wind, hydro, solar radiation or an agricultural biomass resource. If there was a way for people to convert biomass from non-agricultural sources into energy, I think at least we should look at it. Under this bill, that would not be an option.

As I read this bill, someone who produces power from a biomass source other than from agriculture would not be able to put that back into the system. I really question the wisdom of that thinking. Is this logical? I think it is not.

The member opposite knows something about net metering but what he doesn't know would fill volumes. If someone were to clear land for a new house or perhaps to build a new road or widen an existing road, this bill would say, "No," to that wood being used for fuel.

Here is a definition of the member opposite's bill: "'agricultural bio-mass resource' means organic matter produced on a farm as a direct result of and solely from farm operations..." According to this bill, the material has to come from wind, hydro, solar radiation, an agricultural biomass resource or from any combination thereof. In other words, using slashing to produce energy is a no-go. Is that really what the member opposite intended? I hope not.

Let's think this through logically and cohesively. What would the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources think about this? Mr. Speaker, I really don't think this bill has been thought through and I think it needs more consultation.

I'm going to come back to this point in a little while.

As to my third question, when I look at this bill, what I see is a mechanism being set up to supply the grid with a small amount of energy. I do wonder if the maximum amount in the act that can be provided back to the system is enough to make it worthwhile investing in the capital costs. I understand that some jurisdictions have implemented net metering measures that have had very little uptake, because the equipment costs for the small procedures are so exorbitant that there is no financial benefit in participating.

I looked at other jurisdictions in Canada and the U.S. where there is net metering. Is the amount of energy being put back into the system really enough to make it financially viable? Where did the member opposite come up with his numbers? I'm going to quote here — "The maximum cumulative output capacity of the equipment used to generate the electricity that the generator intends to return to the distributor for net metering purposes is no greater than 500 kilowatts, based on the rated maximum output capacity of the equipment." How did he decide that? Looking at the Bureau of Statistics report on energy costs in the Yukon, I see that in 2005, the per kilowatt hour consumer cost was 11.5 cents. So we are looking at a

recovery of what? It is 500 kilowatts times 11.5 cents per kilowatt, which works out to about \$57.50.

Now that brings me to my fourth point, which has to do with safety. Doing things safely as we all know can be very expensive — more than \$57.50. The biggest problem with feeding excess energy into an existing electrical system is safety. Countless power linemen have been electrocuted by systems that back-fed into an existing electrical grid, for example.

Let me give you an example. Independent power producer A is running power from his or her system to keep the lights on during a power failure. Usually the power company will sectionalize this line and assume the power is off.

If this power is being back-fed into the system from producer A, these linemen are at risk from this unknown power source, which means they will be working on a live service without their knowledge. For example, the transformer will be back-fed with the house voltage of 120/240 volts and it will come back through that transformer as a primary voltage, or around 14,000 volts. Imagine that.

If there is a group of independent power producers who wish to sell surplus power to an electrical utility, there are all sorts of safeguards that have to be in place:

(1) There has to be isolation protection so that this system is stand-alone and isolated from the main grid. This requires termination switching to an approved transfer switch which the electrical utility can have access to control;

(2) There has to be a contract to supply power at required times, which is probably nighttime. Hydro producers and dams let the water reservoirs build up at night so they can generate during the day;

(3) This power has to be consistent in its quality before a utility would even consider a purchase. This is pretty much beyond the capabilities of a single power producer or even a group. It takes deep pockets to generate power of consistent quality;

(4) Generally, utilities pay very little for this power because once it is introduced into the main grid they are responsible for maintaining the quality and maintaining the electrical grid;

(5) Usually most independent power producers will stay with supplying themselves and storing their excess power in battery banks et cetera, because they are entering a world of very high finance if they don't.

There could be financial repercussions for someone who feeds power back into the system incorrectly. Even if no one is seriously hurt, something as simple as causing a power outage may result in a lawsuit, and I know this has happened in Alberta.

That brings me to my final point, which is a need to consult. The concerns and questions such as I have outlined above are but a few examples of the questions that need to be addressed before legislation is brought forward.

I do wonder why the Opposition is so reluctant to do a proper consultation on this bill. I listened to the member opposite ask why the government would force Yukoners to wait

another two to three years for net metering instead of supporting the Liberal bill, so it can happen now.

I could hardly believe my ears when I heard the member opposite ask such a foolish, foolish question.

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: Order please.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I am sorry. I did not mean to call the —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Please. We seem to be having some conflicting discussions here. The reason I called the honourable member to order is it's inappropriate to describe another member's conversation in this Assembly as "foolish". We treat all members as if they are honourable.

You have the floor please, and you have about three minutes left.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Thank you. I apologize. I was bad.

The member opposite really ought to know that Yukoners need to be consulted on significant bills like this. We want to hear the feedback from Yukoners. If there is one thing I have learned in listening to the members of the Official Opposition it's that they like to talk but not listen. They don't like to consult with Yukoners.

I saw this with the Member for Porter Creek South's bill. I heard it again yesterday from the member from beautiful Kluane. I remember the previous Liberal government did not like to consult and I see that this Liberal opposition also has a very strong dislike for consultation.

We need to be logical and consider and research this concept further before moving forward. I commend my colleague for doing it the right way. He has developed a draft which is now being consulted on.

Thank you. Günilschish.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. McRobb: I will be very brief, although what we heard this afternoon and earlier in this sitting and last fall, which raged on for more than six hours from what I understand, really could deserve a lot of response, but I won't go there.

Earlier today, I read a motion on the record that called on the government to do the right thing and avoid wasting the time of this Assembly. I challenged the government to make its position on this bill known — simply yes or no and bring it to a vote. Hopefully, it would then get to the Committee stage where we could address it in the fall sitting.

We heard the Energy, Mines and Resources minister go on for hours about how his own special energy strategy — that's what he calls it — will be ongoing over the summer. Mr. Speaker, there is time for the energy strategy to produce results and come back in the fall. Another point I made earlier today regardubg the bill was if the government wants to defeat this bill because it is from the Liberal Party, then fine. Bring in your own bill, that's what I challenge the government. We heard

hours and hours of debate this afternoon that completely ignored that challenge. I invite anybody out there with common sense to review the debate this afternoon with a critical eye. Go back to the bill. Go back to the other day earlier in this sitting when the Energy, Mines and Resources minister went on and on. Go back to last fall when the bill was introduced and he went on and on for two hours or more. Compare that to my introduction speech, which was eight minutes and 13 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear who wasted the time of this Assembly — it is the Yukon Party and there should be no argument about that. I'm ashamed to see the picture the Yukon Party painted this afternoon trying to blame the Liberal Party for wasting time when in fact it was all the doing of the Yukon Party. If they didn't agree with the net metering bill, we could have called division and had a vote and they could have voted it down. But no, they didn't have the courage or fortitude to do that so we wasted another complete day in this sitting.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to feed into that. I'm not going to take the debate. Let's have a vote.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Disagree.

Mr. Nordick: Disagree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. McRobb: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Inverarity: Agree.

Mr. Cardiff: Agree.

Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are seven yea, nine nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the motion negatived.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 106 negatived

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 11, *First Appropriation Act, 2008-09*. We will now proceed with Yukon Housing Corporation, unless members need a recess.

Bill No. 11 — *First Appropriation Act, 2008-09* — continued

Yukon Housing Corporation

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now proceed with Yukon Housing Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: It is my pleasure to introduce the Yukon Housing Corporation's main estimates for the 2008-09 fiscal year. This Budget Address outlines the corporation's mandate, vision, goals and activities that support the government's key commitments to achieve a better quality of life, protect the environment, support the Yukon's economy and practice good government.

The mandate of the Yukon Housing Corporation is to assist families, individuals, seniors, students and government employees to obtain appropriate accommodation. The mandate and vision of the corporation states the quality of life in the Yukon is enhanced by the availability of choices for housing that meets the needs of Yukoners.

In support of that mandate and vision, the Yukon Housing Corporation has four strategic goals. First is programming to address gaps in housing markets by supporting activities and programs for Yukoners. Second, technology and information play an active role in sharing information and technology with the public and housing industry. Third, community partnering to work with communities to develop the capacity of communities to define and address their housing needs. Fourth, housing market development to support the Yukon's housing industry to address market deficiencies and encourage the marketplace to fulfill long-term housing needs.

This year, Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to offer specific programming created to address emerging issues that developed in 2007.

Last summer the Yukon Housing Corporation, in partnership with the Energy Solutions Centre, introduced six new energy initiatives to assist Yukoners with ever-increasing home heating costs. These initiatives are available until March 2009 and the Yukon Housing Corporation staff will undertake an evaluation to determine their effectiveness as well as approaches for the future.

Last fall, in response to flooding in many areas of the Yukon, the Yukon Housing Corporation introduced the 2007 flood relief initiative to assist Yukoners whose homes were negatively affected by flooding. Due to the proximity of winter, the majority of repairs completed last year dealt with mould and the preservation of the homes. This year, clients will undertake comprehensive repairs to mitigate the damage incurred last year.

The social housing program is intended to provide affordable housing to those with the greatest need. The Yukon Housing Corporation has already introduced a number of policy changes that ensure those with the greatest need are offered access to units first. Yukon Housing Corporation plans to conduct further policy reviews this year to augment the policies that are already in place.

In support of government priorities, the Yukon Housing Corporation is undertaking the following initiatives: working with the Women's Directorate on the construction of a 30-unit building in Whitehorse for women and single-parent families; assisting homeowners with radon testing, the development of remedial measures and funding options; partnering with stakeholders to develop recommendations for revising and improving oil burner appliances; process, training and regulatory controls; redefining, promoting, supporting and demonstrating a new standard of energy efficiency construction; supporting the City of Whitehorse with the sustainable development of the Porter Creek lower bench; constructing an additional three units in the Haines Junction seniors building; and assisting in the intradepartmental response to the 2007 flooding.

A key strategy of the Yukon Housing Corporation is to work in partnership with other government departments and agencies to achieve a common goal. This year, the Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to work with the Women's Directorate on the housing needs of women; the Energy Solutions Centre on residential energy initiatives; the intergovernmental working group that is dealing with the negative health effects associated with prolonged exposure to radon; and the working groups dealing with the government's energy strategy and climate change action plan.

It is through effective partnerships that the Yukon Housing Corporation can lend its expertise to the development of effective and innovative solutions to address the housing needs of Yukoners.

This budget will guide Yukon Housing Corporation's efforts to achieve key priorities for the next year and it is an energetic yet focused budget that will continue to generate many positive social, economic and environmental outcomes. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you might have.

Mr. Inverarity: First of all, I would like to thank the corporation officials for attending today and for all the work that you've done in the past. I find that my experiences with the corporation have been pleasurable. As a customer a number of years ago, I found the experience to be very fruitful. I found that, with the difficulties that I was experiencing at the time, departmental officials went out of their way to assist me with trying to find solutions to a unique problem that was created. For this, I am very grateful.

I think that overall the general approach that most Yukoners feel toward Yukon Housing Corporation has been positive. I did bring up an issue earlier today regarding staff housing in communities. I think this is a particularly soft spot that needs looking at again. I think that we need to find some creative ways to retain government employees in the communities. I know, having come from the private sector, that quite frequently looking at incentive programs in the housing area could

be a positive approach to employee retention, particularly in the rural communities.

I find that if an employee has a vested interest in a home, for example, it lends itself to that employee buying into that community. Not in all cases but in a lot of cases, a particular individual would be looking to stay in that community and become part of it. Over time, the individual ends up spending the majority of their life there. There was a case in point back in the 1970s, when I first moved to the Yukon. The company I was working for at the time decided to actually hire locally and went about training the local individuals. I think there was an initial batch of about five or six. Twenty-five years later, when they were due for retirement, I think six or seven employees that were hired in the mid-1970s were still working for that company here in Whitehorse. They chose to stay and make it their life and I think it could be a viable option for two issues: one is employee retention in rural communities and the other is having housing that could support these individuals moving into the community.

I think it makes for a stronger community, rather than having transient individuals coming and going. The added cost that the Public Service Commission would have to bear to replace them — particularly teachers or nurses — if they were to be offered some kind of an incentive from a Yukon Housing Corporation point of view it could prove to be very cost-effective over the long term.

It is a suggestion and a positive one for me today. I know in the private sector a lot of corporations offer mortgage incentives, housing incentives, or upgrades to existing premises. If you choose to continue to rent, it is important that the Yukon Housing Corporation look at keeping their buildings in good repair, so at the least those individuals who are staying there will have a reasonable place to live.

I'm sure the majority of them are, but I know that we have received some complaints lately, and it's important to stay on top of that.

I'm not going to ask a lot of questions here this afternoon. I only have a couple.

The first one is regarding the Whitehorse Copper surveys. As you know, there were some issues around the Whitehorse Copper subdivision. The survey work was awarded to a company that I believe was the lowest tender, and the work looked like it had to be redone. In fact, I think there are contracts to be let on some of the resurveys.

I'm curious about how many people are using Yukon Housing Corporation for bridge financing and how many have actually started construction using this type of financing. Has there been any significant feedback, positive or negative, regarding the proposals that Yukon Housing Corporation has done regarding this bridge financing? When do they expect the surveys to be completed? The minister may not be able to answer that question, but perhaps he knows after having discussions with one of the other ministers.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I'll address some of the member opposite's concerns in order here. Yukon Housing Corporation doesn't have any programs that are specific for Yukon government employees, but we do, of course, have the staff hous-

ing. I certainly agree that home ownership in a community is a good thing, and that's why we have a number of programs.

For instance, there are mortgage financing loans in the capital budget. The loan program assists Yukon residents to become homeowners. The program provides mortgage financing for modest homes, except for green and accommodating mortgages, to clients who are not normally able to access bank financing. This program also encourages clients to invest in houses designed and built to meet high energy and indoor air quality standards, as well as to specifically look at specialty design features to accommodate persons with disabilities. The projected average uptake is roughly 50 loans, at an average of \$120,000.

We have looked at the capital funding needs for 2008-09, and the review indicates an overall increase in energy efficiency construction. This will likely place increased demands on Yukon Housing Corporation's financing loans. The availability of country residential lots in the Whitehorse area and the recent energy programming grants available to homeowners who build certified green homes is also placing additional challenges, shall we say, on some of those things.

We also have home completion loans, should any of the people moving into the communities want that.

This essentially assists eligible home owners in rural Yukon with financing to complete the construction of their home. This program also encourages clients to invest in houses designed and built to meet high energy and indoor air quality.

Basically, this enables rural residents to complete the construction of a home and it may include the refinancing of an existing mortgage to cover the cost of completing the home. Typically, these home owners have the ability to afford the cost of home completion but bank financing is not available because of the length of time required to complete construction and/or the difference between market value and the cost of construction. Projected uptake for next year will be three loans, with an average loan of about \$66,000.

We also have the owner-build loans, which account for about another million dollars. This program assists Yukon residents to build or manage the construction of their own homes. This program also encourages clients to invest in houses designed and built to meet high energy and indoor air quality standards, as well as speciality design features. So those are some of the programs that you can access. That is another one that I forgot in there: the extended mortgage guarantee program, which gives additional mortgage insurance in rural Yukon, over and above what is available through CMHC.

So those are some of the programs for staff, for government employees, who wish to relocate into communities who don't want to rent but want to buy something — so we have a good smorgasbord of programs there.

The member also asks about the Whitehorse Copper subdivision legal survey. It is still incomplete and more work is required before the legal survey plan can be registered. Title for each individual property cannot be raised until the legal survey plan is registered.

Community Services is working with Natural Resources Canada — NRCan — and the City of Whitehorse to expedite

completion and registration of the legal survey plan. Conventional financing for new home construction usually requires a mortgage to be registered on the property title. Yukon Housing Corporation has developed a financial option that allows clients to obtain interim construction financing through the Yukon Housing Corporation without securing a mortgage and title.

Individual lot surveys can be completed and registered at no expense for clients holding agreements for sale who need to register the title.

If I can go into a little more detail on that, we have sent notification letters to all clients explaining the current situation and offering assistance. We have requested three individual lot surveys to date. We have received numerous requests for interim financing and provided financing to some of the clients who hold agreements for sale in the Whitehorse Copper subdivision.

Community Services is really the lead on this. They have asked city council to approve an extension to the completion of the overall legal survey plan and to sign off on an individual plan on an as-needed basis until the overall plan is registered. The contractor hired to complete the Whitehorse Copper legal survey has made three plan submissions to NRCan to date that do have deficiencies in both the field work and the survey plan and need to be corrected before the plan can be registered.

In the event the survey issues cannot be resolved quickly, Community Services, in partnership with Yukon Housing Corporation, will arrange to accommodate an agreement for sale holder by providing surveys for individual lots at no expense to those holding agreements for sale. The normal timelines would be 60 to 90 days for land title registration to be completed.

Community Services is also working with the contractor to complete the submission of a corrected plan to the satisfaction of NRCan. If this effort is not successful, alternative ways are being examined to complete the survey. Another contractor has been hired to complete the individual lot surveys and two of those surveys are nearly completed.

As the member opposite probably knows, there are 42 clients holding agreements for sale in the Whitehorse Copper subdivision. The phase 1 lottery was held with the full knowledge that the legal survey plan was not registered.

There are also 12 clients holding an agreement for sale in the Mount Sima industrial subdivision who cannot obtain title for their property at this time, and the Yukon Housing Corporation will work with individual clients one at a time if there are issues in this area.

We certainly have a smorgasbord of plans that will allow us to deal with Whitehorse Copper subdivision.

Mr. Inverarity: I will just follow up on that and then I'll actually move into a new question.

Has there been any action taken regarding the individuals that did the original survey, either from a legal point of view or from a contracting perspective?

The second one is on those lots of Whitehorse Copper: if anybody wishes to have a building extension, there is normally a time frame that you have to actually start for complete construction, because some may or may not want — for whatever reasons — to go through a mortgaging issuer looking for some

sort of lot. I believe it's a year or two years that they have to complete the construction. I have been asked by a constituent whether or not they can actually get an extension until those surveys are complete.

That's two questions on that particular item and I'll wait for the answer to that one and then go to my final question.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: First of all, Community Services is the lead, not us. We are trying to solve the problem, but we are not dealing with those aspects of it, so, no, I have no information or knowledge of what the status is with the contractor.

In terms of building extensions, yes, any of the affected people can contact Yukon Housing Corporation. We will meet directly with the people. Our project officers will arrange for the extension. I also believe if anyone has hit a brick wall and wants to simply return the lot, we would take it back.

Mr. Inverarity: Just moving on to the single-parent housing project, we are getting some confusing numbers. We have seen — or we have heard in the House — the \$9-million figure. It may be between \$9 million and \$11 million. There was a notice sent out or some of the contract documents had an estimate of up to \$13 million. I am just trying to get a handle on the minister's perspective of what the final costs are roughly going to be — whether \$9 million, \$11 million or \$13 million. If it is ideally in the \$9-million to \$11-million range, I understand that the money is coming from the \$50 million that we've received from the federal government, of which I think \$37 million has gone to First Nations. That would lead roughly to about \$12 million to \$13 million left.

If there is some surplus after this single-parent housing has been constructed, are there any plans for what the balance is going to be used for?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: The affordable family housing project has been confused several times by the Opposition with other projects. For the record, we are looking at a requirement of probably 17 two-bedroom units, 10 three-bedroom units and three four-bedroom units, for a total of a 30-unit housing project. When the extra amenities proposed for the complex are removed from the cost, the average cost estimate for each of the units is approximately \$245,000.

We are still doing consultations and talking about what people who would use the facility want in it. Those are the other things that are built into this. We have common space, depending on amenities required, at roughly 2,500 square feet. That could include a daycare and a library. It could include meeting areas, a small community centre of sorts and play areas. There may be some interest in indoor play areas or doing it in such a way there would be a sequestered area for children to play in. The idea of putting a daycare in there would seem to be a good idea, but again, we are going to be consulting with other people on that.

The reason for each unit costing \$245,000 is that the units will have accommodating home features that require greater square footage than conventional housing. For this and other reasons, it's unfair to use a comparison of a condo built downtown with no specific purpose and see who buys it. They will have rough-duty finishes in anticipation of the additional wear

and tear that a large number of active children will likely require.

It will also be built to Yukon Housing Corporation's green home standard in order to lower the operating costs. Lowering of the operating costs will be essential in terms of long-term operation and maintenance.

I will go into a little more detail on the common features that we are considering in there. I already mentioned the daycare I mentioned. We are looking at secure and monitored parking and access paths and the use of safety glass — because there are children involved in this. There will be video monitoring — or this is one thing we're putting out to consultation, I should say. I mentioned a multi-use common area, indoor activity areas and outdoor playgrounds. There may be a computer area or library or study area put into this, secure fencing, office intercoms, emergency call and steel passage doors.

There are a number of different things that we're looking at. As the site hasn't been selected yet, we certainly have a challenge there in terms of trying to estimate costs.

So once those consultations are complete — that's all being handled through the Women's Directorate, and I ask the member opposite to aim the questions on that there — then the Yukon Housing Corporation will take the lead with the final design tendering and construction. Once complete, the building will be occupied by eligible social housing single parents.

We are looking at the use of the northern housing trust. Our portion of that is, of course, \$17.5 million and, yes, there will be other plans for the remaining money.

Mr. Cardiff: Earlier today I tabled a letter to the minister. I provided him with a copy of that at the beginning of the budget debate with a list of questions. If he could respond to those questions, it would be much appreciated. Some of the questions have been answered already today.

The only question that is not in the letter came up after the letter was written and delivered to the minister. I was wondering if the minister could give us an update on the seniors housing fund as well.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: As I've just received the letter, it's a little difficult, of course, to respond to that. The affordable housing funds — there is approximately \$327,000 remaining in the fund, and projects that will complete the use of that are planned. But our agreement is that we have to announce them jointly with Canada and CMHC. So stay tuned for that. It will be coming very soon.

As I mentioned, the cost projections for the family housing is still in the \$9-million to \$11-million range. I can't be more specific than that because we're still doing consultations.

We are working on that. That depends on when we start and where it is located; we don't know. In terms of the Whitehorse Housing Co-operative, I have to specify that while that is in the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to discuss that in the Legislature.

On the other items, I will have to get back to the members opposite. They asked questions that will require going back and getting some financial data that we don't have in front of us.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister can't answer the question about flood relief, whether the grants have ended, how much

was given out, how much is from Canada, what plans and support will be given to prevent the same thing from happening again, and what support will be given to owners for long-term problems such as black mould or rotting foundations that may arise over the next years.

Under another heading of questions, there are two units earmarked for Watson Lake to showcase environmental solutions to construction. I am wondering how far along those units have come, what green objectives are being sought, how will the experience be applied in the future, and is the Yukon Housing Corporation doing any study on the development of a green building code? I emphasise a code, not best practices, but an actual building code for the Yukon such as the one that is soon to be introduced in British Columbia.

As well, could the minister give us an update on the seniors housing fund, how much is in it, what expenditures have been made from it and if there are any plans for that fund?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I apologize if I miss any of the long list that has been thrown on the table but to hit of the member opposite's favourites: the Yukon government has developed the 2007 Yukon flood relief initiative to provide access to financial assistance for the affected property owners whose dwellings suffered damage from record high water levels in the Southern Lakes, Lake Laberge and Liard River regions. The 2007 flood relief initiative provides two financial assistance methods, based on the normal use of the property. Grants will be available to repair flood-related damage to principal residences and low-interest loans are available to repair flood-related damage on recreational dwellings.

The Yukon flood relief initiative is available to help property owners with a range of flooding impacts, from removing harmful mould that may have developed, to flooring repairs and repairing structural damages that may pose hazards for occupants, and improvements that will protect the dwellings from future flood damage. In the coming months, the Yukon government will be examining what can be done to mitigate the impacted areas for future flood threats but, of course, the lead on mitigating factors within the area is Community Services, not Yukon Housing Corporation.

In terms of green objectives, I'd like to spend a couple of minutes, since the member has an interest in that. For instance, when we talk about the green home initiative and the super green home initiative, the super green is the highest standard and we're just looking at that. They are well beyond anything else that is in Canada.

We are definitely the lead on that. We are sharing information actively now with the State of Alaska and will be working with Nunavut and Northwest Territories as well.

The super green unique wall design provides a continuous blanket of super insulation without all the thermal breaks that standard construction contain. The wall system incorporates an insulation settling replacement design — self-filling potential insulation voids created by settlement. It is extremely efficient with 16 inches of thermal insulation in the walls and 20 inches in the attic, reducing heat loss to a new super efficient standard. EnerGuide rated in the high 80s reduces heating costs poten-

tially to approximately one-third of the standard two-by-six construction.

It should be comfortable. Super green reduces unwanted air leakage through the wall by eliminating exposed ceiling and floor junctions. It should be healthy. Properly designed ventilation systems ensure good indoor air quality for the occupants of super green homes. It should be quiet, because it will greatly reduce the outside noise transfer. It should be extremely economical. Pre-manufactured wall studs require less labour, resulting in quicker construction time for super green homes than standard double-wall framing. It is accommodating, because the super green floor plans are fully accommodating, providing safe, well-lit and complete accessibility, quality living for everyone — including the elderly and disabled. It is sustainable, because the super green homes are well-designed, well-built efficient housing that will provide comfortable housing for generations.

I think the member opposite is aware of the fact that we built a model showing the construction type on this and what we could do with it. I'm very pleased to say that the response at the trade show, for instance, was exceptional, even to the point that one of our employees there trying to explain it over the time was quite hoarse and lost her voice by the end of the show. The uptake and the interest on that have been pretty impressive.

Some of the other things in terms of green homes — I think that was on the list. We've basically decided that it's both timely and appropriate to lead the development of improved energy efficiency standards in the Yukon. The new standards will employ enhanced building techniques and designs and will improve the overall efficiency of new homes.

The Yukon Housing Corporation plans on utilizing these new standards for the construction of two new staff housing units in Watson Lake this summer. By generating performance data, Yukon Housing Corporation will be able to track the actual level of increased energy efficiency performance and quantify the payback time for the additional cost to construct to the new standard.

One estimate for an average single-family home is that it would add approximately \$18,000 to the cost of construction; however, it would also lead to a savings in the necessary infrastructure for the heating plant of approximately \$13,000. The remaining \$5,000 would probably be paid back in a matter of a couple of years, and then after that it obviously becomes extremely energy efficient.

We will continue to offer reduced interest rates, based on the corporation's green home standards.

The existing programs and incentives are not affected by the corporation's decision to create new energy standards, and we plan on conducting industry and consumer information sessions later this year to explain the new building techniques, design, features and performance.

The green home mortgage program was established in 1999, along with the green home energy standards. If the standards are met, either during new construction or through repairs or upgrades, then the home will be energy efficient, provide

proper ventilation and save homeowners money through the consumption of less fuel.

As oil prices go up — and we are all well aware of that — this will be something that people should be looking at, either bringing standards up to that or at least taking advantage of some of the many programs that we have available to us on that. Homeowners are paying significantly more to heat their homes and we are well aware of that, and Yukon Housing Corporation wants to be a proactive leader in the design, development and testing of new energy standards for Yukon homes and home buyers.

The higher cost of heating a home means it's economically viable to invest additional money into the construction of a highly energy efficient home, since the payback time to the owner will be realized in a very short period of time.

We are just about ready to tender the construction of new staff housing units in Watson Lake and, as I have said before, they will be built to energy standards.

One of the things is that we will be able to monitor the construction and generate performance data, which will be shared with the industry and general public. That will all be available.

At that point, I've got more to go, but seeing the time I move that we report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kenyon that Committee of the Whole report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 11, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2008-09*, and directed me to report progress on it.

Speaker: You have heard the report of the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled May 14, 2008:

08-1-77

Area Development Act regulations (OIC Nos.: 2007/203, 2008/21, 2008/22, and 2008/37 (Lang)

The following documents were filed May 14, 2008:

08-1-63

Yukon Geographical Places Name Board 2006/2007 Annual Report (Taylor)

08-1-64

Fleet Vehicle Agency 2008-2009 Business Plan (Lang)

08-1-65

Yukon Housing Corporation 2008-09 Main Estimates, questions re: letter (dated May 14, 2008) from Steve Cardiff, MLA, Mount Lorne to Minister Jim Kenyon, Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation (Cardiff)