

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, April 6, 2010 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Yukon Biodiversity Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House, today it is my pleasure to pay tribute to Yukon Biodiversity Awareness Month. This is a homegrown success story that we should all be proud of. Throughout the month of April, there will be plenty of opportunities to do just that. More than 35 events are planned in 10 communities during Yukon Biodiversity Awareness Month. These include spring stories around a campfire with Elder Ida Calmegane in Tagish; a bat and bird box building workshop at Swan Haven; and an Earth Day challenge organized by the Yukon Environmental Network. The biggest event is the annual Celebration of Swans held at Swan Haven at north M'Clintock Bay. This event is now known around the world. More than 3,000 people visited Swan Haven last year, including 23 school groups, and we are expecting a similar number this year.

Biodiversity is important for our health today and our future tomorrow. For too long, society failed to see the importance of having a variety of life on earth or the complex interdependence of living things. We now know that losing even a single species can have unexpected and often dangerous consequences for an ecosystem. The Government of Yukon recognizes habitat loss can harm biodiversity. We have protected habitats of vital importance to the swans migrating through Yukon. Tagish Narrows and Lewes Marsh provide precious open water at a time when most of our lakes are still iced over.

The Yukon government is pleased to be a major sponsor and supporter of Yukon Biodiversity Awareness Month. Environment Yukon staff have coordinated a household flyer that lists the many activities that will take place, and they are keeping the wildlife viewing website stocked up with plenty of events for residents and visitors alike to enjoy the amazing array of plants, animals, fish, birds, amphibians and, yes, even insects that call Yukon home.

In closing, I would urge members to sit down and have a good read of the *Yukon Celebrates Spring 2010* flyer coming to your mailboxes. I commend the dedicated organizations and individuals who have made Yukon Biodiversity Awareness Month the success it is. We are truly fortunate to be able to celebrate the diverse range of life we have here in Yukon in so many ways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.
Returns or documents for tabling.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. McRobb: I have for tabling an energy-related document already filed with the Clerk.

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT Ray Hayes, chair of the Yukon Development Corporation Board of Directors, and Dave Morrison, chief executive officer of the Yukon Development Corporation and president and chief executive officer of the Yukon Energy Corporation, appear as witnesses in Committee of the Whole from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 12, 2010, to discuss matters relating to the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to reinstate a long-term substance abuse residential treatment program for those needing continuing assistance with addictions issues after completing the first steps in the stages of recovery that would:

- (1) assist people in recovery from drug and alcohol abuse to avoid falling back quickly into old patterns of behaviour;
- (2) assist people in recovery to avoid falling under the influence of former friends and associates who are continuing to abuse drugs and alcohol;
- (3) reduce the number of repeat visits to the current 28-day program by people suffering from drug and alcohol abuse;
- (4) assist in recovery over a longer period of time by creating a 12-month residential treatment program to assist those in need of a longer support period; and
- (5) reduce long-term costs incurred by Yukon's health care and justice systems by people faltering in their initial attempts to break their addictive behaviours and suffering long-term, negative health outcomes or becoming involved with the justice system through criminal behaviour.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of the current 30-day cash flow statement for the Government of Yukon, including current financial position and current balance sheet.

I give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of any and all health care studies regarding the delivery of hospital services in Watson Lake and Dawson City.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to immediately release the feasibility study completed by the Yukon Energy Corporation for a proposed wind farm on Mount Sumanik, north of Whitehorse.

I give notice of the following motion:

WHEREAS the current minimum wage of \$8.93 is not a living wage and is inadequate to meet basic needs;

WHEREAS on April 1, 2010, the minimum wage was increased by \$0.04 an hour, as per the regulation tying it to increases in the consumer price index;

WHEREAS the cost of living is far higher in the Yukon and the minimum wage should reflect this reality;

WHEREAS the Yukon's minimum wage is the fifth lowest of Canadian provinces and territories; and

WHEREAS the minimum wage in Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan is higher than in the Yukon;

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to immediately raise the minimum wage to at least \$10 an hour.

Speaker: Any further notices of motion?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Autism programs

Mr. Mitchell: I have a question for the Premier. Last Thursday night, parents of autistic children met to discuss this government's plan to scale back the services they currently receive. Neither the Premier nor the Minister of Health and Social Services attended the meeting to hear directly from parents, even though they were both invited. The Official Opposition was well represented by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

It was a very emotional night, and it would have been a good opportunity for the government to hear directly from a large group of parents, but the Premier and the minister chose not to attend.

The Premier did give a letter to Autism Yukon, and in it he backed partway down on his plan to cut services. Why did the Premier or the Health and Social Services minister not attend this meeting as parents requested them to?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I thank the member opposite for his question. For the House and the member opposite, we met with delegates from those attending that meeting on Thursday night. We had a thorough discussion on Thursday morning, which took us long into the lunch hour. We reached an agreement with those individuals in question. We provided them with a letter indicating what we'd be doing to assist them in their process and ensuring that their programming could carry on as it had in the past.

They requested a letter from us to assist them, which we did provide, and we plan to follow through on that letter.

Mr. Mitchell: Well, the Premier and minister also could have attended a public meeting, where a larger group was in attendance, but they chose not to. The Premier did send a letter, and in it he backed down partway on his plan to cut services.

It's interesting that when we raised this question last week, the Health and Social Services minister said no services were being cut. The Premier then sent a letter apologizing for the planned cuts.

Parents of children with autism have enough going on in their lives that they should not be worrying about the government pulling the rug out from under them. They just don't need the added stress. In order to save some money, the government made a decision to start scaling back services. If the Premier hadn't lost \$36 million playing the stock market, there would be money available for this much-needed work. That money would sure come in handy now. Parents want a commitment that they will continue to be allowed to design services that work for their children. Will the Premier allow that to happen?

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: Before the Minister of Health and Social Services answers the question, Leader of the Official Opposition, there are several creative ways to speak about the money in question in ABCPs, but "playing the stock market" is suggesting that it is of a gambling nature. I just ask the honourable member not to use that terminology.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated and I'll reiterate for the member opposite, there have been no cuts to the program, which we've also provided to the parents during our conversation with them. There have been no cuts to the program in that process. We are providing the facilities to those parents. We will continue to provide all the facilities — both those available here in Whitehorse and those available outside of Whitehorse for those children with special needs or who require special attention from specialists outside of Whitehorse. We will continue to provide that service to those parents, as we have in the past.

Mr. Mitchell: It's very disappointing to see the Premier refuse to answer questions about this. He didn't attend the public meeting to hear from parents who continued to be upset about this issue, despite the meeting in the morning, and now he's not answering questions.

Parents are looking for an advocate for their children. We're prepared to be that advocate and provide that energy, but we'd like to see the government get on board. The Premier has backed down somewhat from his initial plan to cut services — that's a good start. Parents want a commitment to follow through on the original workplan that was agreed to when this service was first put in place.

In his letter, the Premier was unwilling to go that far. Parents and families deserve certainty on this issue. Will the government allow parents to stay in control of how services are delivered to their children, not for a trial period but on a continuous basis? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, you know, he's an advocate — he just said they were an advocate for the child — who voted against it last week. Who voted against our budget? It wasn't on this side. It was the members opposite who voted against that budget.

We're going to go in there; we're providing our services to those families, as I indicated previously. We're working with those families to look at and review the plan that was developed some years ago to see if we can revive that plan and follow through with that program so that we can enhance the care for all of the children — and not just autism — but all our children with disabilities.

Question re: Autism programs

Mr. Mitchell: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll try to follow up with the Premier on this issue again. Parents who attended Thursday night's meeting are putting a lot of energy into fighting this government. This is an added burden that they could do without. As one person put it, "Three out of five meetings is battling the system."

A couple of weeks ago, the government announced new funding for three youth groups. It was a three-year commitment. Parents of children with autism are looking for a similar arrangement. They don't have the energy to keep fighting this government and they want some certainty. Parents want to be in control of how services are delivered, and they want it nailed down for more than a few months at a time.

Is the Premier going to continue to be part of the problem, or will he make that long-term commitment to parents?

Hon. Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. With regard to the question, I will follow up what I said before. We are providing assistance to these parents. We are providing them input. We are allowing them to have input as they have had in the past. We are proceeding along those lines.

We have indicated we're looking at reviewing the plan that was developed with these parents along with outside specialists who provided them with assistance. We plan to follow through with that plan and get back to those parents to ensure we are providing the best care available for parents of disabled children.

Mr. Mitchell: You know, Mr. Speaker, if everything was just fine, why did the parents have another emergency meeting? Parents are having a hard time trusting this government and with good reason. No one trusts this government any more. The current delivery of services is working. Parents are looking for some continuity and a commitment from the government.

We are making some progress. Last week, the Premier was cutting back services and now he has agreed to keep everything as is for at least this year. He has backed down somewhat. The Health minister has said it will stay as it was for at least this year. Parents quite rightly want a commitment that lasts more than just this year. Why are the Premier and the Health minister unwilling to make that commitment?

Hon. Mr. Hart: The meeting that was called for Thursday night was called prior to the meeting we had with

those parents and officials regarding the subject we are discussing here today in the House.

We had a long discussion with those individuals. We came to the realization on where we were going to go with the programming, with those parents. We gave them assurances that we would carry on as we have in the past, and that was to ensure the parents had input into what was going to be good for their children.

As the member opposite put forth and as we've discovered with regard to those parents, the parents have the best knowledge for looking after those children.

We are going to follow up, as I said, on the draft plan that was developed with the parents in question. We are going to work with those parents to ensure what we'll do over the future years to provide continued and enhanced help — again, I will emphasize, for all children with disabilities.

Mr. Mitchell: I want to thank and congratulate those parents for standing up to this government. Those parents knew the cuts were wrong; we knew the cuts were wrong; it's one of the reasons we were voting against the budget.

Earlier this year, these parents were told those services would come to an end on April 1. The government was going to take those services in-house. Parents opposed this decision, and rightly so. They want to remain in charge of how services are delivered. The government plan is a one-size-fits-all approach, which parents don't want. Now we know the government is broke and looking to save some money, but cutting back services for autistic children and children with disabilities isn't the right place to look.

The Premier likes to answer the final supplementary; that's where he has the courage to stand, so will the Premier give parents his assurances that the services they depend on will be there when they need them this year, next year and the year after?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, I guess the level of decibel makes a difference, but frankly, the member has made some statements that are incorrect. There never were any cuts. In fact, it's this government that actually implemented — implemented — programming and put the dollars to those programs to help families with children with disabilities. Those members, year in and year out, voted against those investments. The members opposite are hardly advocates for families who have children with disabilities.

The government, in discussing this matter with the parents, listened to the parents and recognized immediately that we must ensure a more family-oriented process. That's exactly what we're doing.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the member's situation is thus: the member has said we have cut the budget. The member knows full well that that is not the case. We do know that the members will not support the hundreds of thousands of dollars in this budget that will help families with children who have disabilities. Shame on the members opposite.

Question re: Human rights

Mr. Hardy: On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

When the United Nations signed this declaration, it agreed to accept all the rights as a common standard, that those rights should be kept constantly in mind and that it had an obligation to promote respect for these rights and freedoms.

So do the Premier and his colleagues support the declaration and the obligations that go along with this signing?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, I think we all recognize that the United Nations has played a significant role worldwide when it comes to basic human rights for all. We know that there are challenges — great challenges — throughout the world today where in many countries those rights are not being realized by their citizens.

That said, Mr. Speaker, the Yukon does have legislation that deals with this particular area. We know that we've been working on amending that legislation, and always for any government, the concern of making sure that human rights are indeed the situation that we all base what we think to be appropriate on — the Yukon continues to work diligently in this area and so does the country of Canada with its *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

So to the member's question, we all must be concerned about ensuring that human rights are accessible for all.

Mr. Hardy: Now this government is finally moving toward a policy of inclusion through its departments, and the purpose behind the policy is to help it address the issues of poverty in the territory in a more comprehensive and holistic way. The New Democratic Party supports this move completely and is proud to have been a part in establishing it. In a recent motion, however, we called for a housing strategy that would be comprehensive, integrated, innovative, practical and achievable. We would see it as a framework for improving the affordability, the availability, safety, stability and range of housing choices in Yukon. Adequate housing is the basis for combating poverty and poor health. It is the first and most important element toward inclusion of everyone in our society. Does the Premier agree that housing should be part of any policy of inclusion in this government?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I thank the member opposite for the question. I also thank him for supporting our social inclusion and if he hasn't been advised, he will be receiving an invitation to that symposium also on the 8th and 9th of this week. Mr. Speaker, we are looking at social inclusion as a matter of leading edge in dealing with poverty. There are currently three or four other jurisdictions within Canada that have something that is similar.

We're looking at trying to obtain many ideas from those stakeholders that attend this symposium so that we can get an idea of where we can go and what solutions have to be done. Later on this fall we'll look at the results of what comes out of this meeting, as well as the data that we collect. We're hoping then to set those priorities.

As the member indicated, housing is an important issue. Housing is always an important issue with regard to poverty. With regard to that, we have also had discussions with the anti-poverty group, who have also indicated that dealing with the housing issue will be very important, and it will form a portion of how we deal with our social inclusion and how we go for-

ward. We will determine the priority of that, and I'm sure that housing will be one of the high priorities when it comes to dealing with poverty in the Yukon.

Mr. Hardy: Article 25 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states in part: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services." That is the basic statement of what inclusion is all about. In some provinces, human rights legislation applies to tenants and landlords and underlines that everyone has the right to equal treatment in housing without discrimination and harassment under the various grounds listed in the human rights acts of the provinces. This does not go far enough. What we need is to recognize that the right to housing is a human right. I state that very clearly — "the right to housing".

So, my question is, will this government add "the right to housing" to Yukon's *Human Rights Act*?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I think the concern is a good one here, and that's why, since 2002, this government has increased social housing stock as an example — 35 percent. It has gone up, and soon there'll be something like another 162 units being added, everything from the athletes village to the replacement of Alexander Street, Korbo in Dawson. It's something we've taken very seriously with more planned in the future.

The criteria for that is 25 percent of income charged for housing. The national standard in every other jurisdiction in Canada is 30 percent, so we're running the best in Canada on that. Does that mean there should be no room for improvement? Of course there's always room for improvement. My figures also don't include the Habitat for Humanity and other projects that are being taken on by private groups.

Housing is being taken very, very seriously by this government.

Question re: Lake Laberge road improvements

Mr. Cathers: I'd like to return to a question I asked the Minister of Highways and Public Works, which he did not answer. Last week, I began by thanking the minister for including funding in this year's budget for asphalt on the north Klondike Highway, and then asked whether the \$1.24 million for bridge inspections and minor upgrades includes money for the Takhini River bridge.

The minister's reply seemed to be a response to Liberal rhetoric from earlier that day, as it certainly was not an answer to my question. So I'll ask the minister again today: does this year's budget for the Department of Highways and Public Works include funding to examine and report on options to improve safety at the Takhini River bridge on the north Klondike Highway, including improving the approach to the bridge, widening the bridge and adding a pedestrian walkway?

Hon. Mr. Lang: There is no money in this year's budget for an upgrade of the Takhini River bridge. There is money being spent throughout the Yukon on bridge upgrades, but at the moment this is not one of the bridges we're looking at.

Mr. Cathers: Although that wasn't the answer I was hoping for, I do thank the minister for that answer and would

encourage him to look at having that work done at the earliest opportunity.

Last week I also asked the minister a question about another project in my riding. In fact, the minister has announced a dollar amount for intersection upgrades but has not yet indicated whether that includes funding for a project that is important to my constituents.

I know that the work has been planned but the minister has not yet indicated whether the money for that project has been allocated this year. Once again, I will ask the minister whether this year's budget for the Department of Highways and Public Works includes funding to improve turning lanes at the intersection of the Alaska Highway and the north Klondike Highway.

Hon. Mr. Lang: There is some money in this year's budget to do exactly what the member opposite has asked for.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for the answer and it was exactly the one I was looking for. I appreciate that inclusion in the budget.

I would like to follow up with the Minister of Highways and Public Works about two other intersection projects and whether or not they are included in this year's budget. Is there money in the budget to improve sightlines at the intersection of Boreal Road and the north Klondike Highway? Secondly, is there money in the budget to assess the possible need for new turning lanes at both Couch Road entrances where they meet the north Klondike Highway?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, as far as intersections on our highways, we assess them all the time on a yearly basis. There is no money or resources in this year's budget for the Couch Road intersections and there is no available funding for Boreal Road either. We are doing work on the Deep Creek Road and the Shallow Bay Road.

Question re: Yukon Energy Corporation/ATCO

Mr. McRobb: I have some real questions for the Premier relating to withheld energy documents. The Yukon government started spending money in 2008 on the Premier's secret parallel plan to privatize the Yukon Energy Corporation. At least four contracts were let to lawyers and consultants, for which taxpayers shelled out \$275,000. Last summer, we filed access-to-information requests to try to allow the public to see what they got for their money, but those requests were denied by this government.

Last fall, we again asked for those documents in a meeting with officials from EMR who said they would look into it. Last week, we met again with officials, yet still have no documents. The Premier says that he runs an open and accountable government. Here is an opportunity for him to prove it. Will he now commit to release the four contracts and the work that was done by these consultants?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Before the honourable member answers, the Chair has a bit of a quandary with a "real question" comment by the Hon. Member for Kluane in that, you know, the implication was that the previous questioner wasn't serious, when in

fact, we take all questions seriously in this Legislative Assembly. So just keep that in mind, Member for Kluane.

Hon. Premier?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: You know, Mr. Speaker, I think the Member for Kluane has forgotten some recent work by this House and all its members. There was a time when the Yukon Energy Corporation was deemed not to be ATIPP-able, where that corporation — a public utility — was not eligible under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to forward information.

The last I looked, those amendments to the ATIPP act have taken place and have passed this House, so I'm not sure what the member is actually referring to when he mentions accountability and openness. I think that's a demonstration of the highest standard of transparency, accountability and openness by ensuring the public utility is now governed under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Mr. McRobb: For everybody's information, EMR is not YEC. It's a government department.

The Premier told the House last spring, and I quote, "We're not involved in any process to privatize any public corporation in the Yukon, whether it be energy, hospitals or whatever the case may be."

In fact, the Premier had been in negotiations with ATCO for months. This kind of contradiction doesn't inspire confidence in Yukoners. At the end of the day, Yukoners know who has been straight with them and who hasn't.

We'll give the Premier another chance. We are looking for four contracts and the work done by lawyers and consultants. There isn't a viable reason to refuse to release those documents. Will the Premier do the right thing and allow the public to see what they paid \$275,000 for?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, now the Member for Kluane actually wants the government side to interfere in the process of access to information and protection of privacy. I would emphasize "protection of privacy" in my response, Mr. Speaker. That is why we don't get involved in it.

If decisions are made on what information is provided to those who request information through the act, those decisions aren't made by government or by the side opposite, Mr. Speaker. They are done so to ensure that access to information is actually accessible — the information, that is — and that the protection of privacy is paramount. The member knows that.

As far as his comments about privatization, yeah, Yukoners do know. They know a lot more than the member opposite gives them credit for.

Mr. McRobb: Well, Mr. Speaker, based on the Premier's responses, one would assume I've been trolling for red herrings. Again, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is not the Yukon Energy Corporation.

The Premier just inferred that we're asking the government to interfere in the ATIPP process. That wasn't the question. There is nothing stopping this Yukon Party government from releasing these documents. Yukon taxpayers paid \$275,000 for these documents. If this government is so open and accountable, it would have provided those documents by now.

I want to ask the Premier about another energy-related document — the wind study that has been requested by the Yukon Conservation Society. Will he produce that document?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Once again, I think the member misses the point. We do not determine what information is provided to the public through the act. It's done through due process and the member knows that.

Secondly, as far as wind studies, there have probably been many of them done. If the member is referring to this argument about whether or not an investment in wind turbines is a better investment than in the Mayo B, I can respond by saying this: the production of electric power from wind turbines is intermittent.

The whole purpose of investing in hydro infrastructure is consistent, steady, day-by-day, 365-days-a-year access to affordable electricity and in this case, green energy, reducing literally thousands and thousands of tonnes of CO₂ emissions. So if that helps the member — I hope it does, but it's very difficult to please the Member for Kluane.

Question re: Mayo B project

Mr. McRobb: It is often said that Mark Twain's famous quotation — "Figures don't lie, but liars figure" — has never had greater meaning than when it is applied to today's politicians and government accounting. Of course, I'm not accusing anybody here of lying. That would obviously be ruled out of order in our Assembly. But we do need to get to the bottom of a matter that has been topical in this Assembly lately and is an issue at hearings that started today before the Yukon Utilities Board.

According to the Premier, the Mayo B addition will offset \$20 million per year of diesel cost, starting in 2012, but Yukon Energy Corporation's evidence to the board shows that figure is only about \$3 million. That's an exponential difference. Who should Yukoners believe — Yukon Energy Corporation or this Premier?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, first off, that's the whole point of the Yukon Utilities Board conducting its process. Unlike the Liberals in this House, this government and the public utility bring projects before the Yukon Utilities Board.

Secondly, we on this side of the House would have to do a thorough analysis of what the Member for Kluane has just stated to make sure that we are dealing with the facts.

Thirdly, the Premier has not said that this diesel cost is something we've invented. This came from the corporation when it brought forward the project known as Mayo B to address the simple challenge of electrical supply to the customers in the territory, given our growth factor.

Mr. McRobb: Displacing diesel with new hydro projects is generally acceptable to all parties, and it's the usual standard by which utility companies justify the economics of new projects. It's not something this Premier just invented. It has been around for years.

The Crown-owned utility's own evidence shows a much smaller number than this Premier and his colleagues have been using, and Yukoners deserve an explanation.

Earlier today, I tabled a document that clearly shows the Premier's numbers are far from accurate. In fact, YEC's evi-

dence indicates the Premier's numbers may only be realistic in the year 2046, or 36 years from now.

Last Thursday the Premier challenged us to do the arithmetic. Will he now do the arithmetic and admit his numbers were way off?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, at great risk of disappointing the Member for Kluane, no, the government side trusts in its public utility. The project, as brought forward by the utility, was one to meet the challenges that the company — the public utility, the Yukon Energy Corp — demonstrated they were facing. It's called "supply challenges," Mr. Speaker.

The decision to go forward with the Mayo B project was not an easy one. It included a lot of due diligence by the Government of Canada. It included a lot of work by the Energy Corporation. It included a tremendous amount of work by this government in working with Canada on a partnership, and it resulted in a significant investment in infrastructure that makes sense for the Yukon today and long into the future.

I know the member will want to get into the debate about the difference between peak-load requirements and base-load requirements, and the government side can't wait.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Speaker, according to a recent public opinion poll, Yukoners are becoming increasingly concerned about this government's lack of disclosure, secrecy and false statements. People deserve good governance and they're not getting it under Yukon Party rule.

We've just witnessed further examples of how this government fails to be open and accountable despite its specific election campaign promises to the contrary. It is no wonder good governance has emerged as a top issue with Yukoners.

Let's get back to the numbers. Based on the Premier's set of numbers, he told the House the project would be paid for in only five years. Yukon Energy Corporation's numbers have amortized the capital requirements over 65 years. Again, Mr. Speaker, the difference is exponential. Whose numbers should we believe — Yukon Energy Corporation's or this Premier's?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: In the first place, Yukoners should check *Hansard* and then they will quickly come to the realization that the Member for Kluane is indeed trolling for red herrings.

Mr. Speaker, furthermore Yukon Utilities Board is addressing this matter. There is a hearing happening right now as we speak. Does the member have such little regard for the Yukon Utilities Board? Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the witnesses will be before the House — representatives of the Energy Corporation and the Yukon Development Corporation. So the members opposite can ask those real questions. It is all before the members opposite and the Member for Kluane — all that matters, all that is needed to be done so that they can address their misguiding position that the government is secret.

Everything we do is very public, including hearings, including witnesses brought before the House. That's the best I can do for the Member from Kluane.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the government private member to be called on Wednesday, April 7, 2010: Motion No. 1008, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, and Motion No. 999, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike.

Speaker: We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 83: *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 83, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. Horne.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I move that Bill No. 83, *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act* be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Ms. Horne: This legislation corrects an oversight and ensures that the law reflects the Legislature's intention. The *Human Rights Act* creates a board, or panel of adjudicators, to make decisions and award remedies.

The act, as it existed until an amendment was passed in spring 2009, called for a panel of not less than three members with no upper limit on the number.

One of the amendments made in the spring of 2009 changed this to not less than three and not more than six members. Last fall the Legislature inadvertently appointed two extra members to the Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators. The Assembly was working with the standing version of the act, rather than the amended version. The problem now is that when the last three appointments were made by the Assembly, this brought the total number of adjudicators on the panel to eight, although the act calls for only six.

This amendment corrects the oversight by repealing the 2009 amendment. This will ensure that the integrity of the Human Rights panel is assured.

Mr. Inverarity: I think I'll be brief on this. First I'd like to thank the department officials for bringing this oversight to the Legislative Assembly so we can fix it in a timely manner. I think they deserve a lot of credit in that area.

I would like to mention that I am pleased to see that they are looking at the *Human Rights Act*. It is certainly a good indicator that work is still progressing by picking up this particular oversight. We had a briefing this morning from the Justice department, actually, and it came to light that, in fact, there has been something in the neighbourhood of \$119,000 spent on modernizing the *Human Rights Act*. That has always been a concern of mine that the leftover work done by the Select

Committee on Human Rights continue and that the information we were looking for and the additional amendments that needed to be done would be taken care of.

So it is with pleasure that I will indicate we're going to support this change, and I look forward to it moving into Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Hardy: I think this is fairly straightforward. There was a mistake made in increasing the numbers from six to eight, and this amendment will allow that mistake to be corrected. There are a couple of concerns.

First, we all understand why a larger panel is necessary. I remember our discussion around that. Of course, it is to avoid conflict in smaller communities, provide a greater pool of people, giving more choice out there. It recognizes that cases should be heard by a panel as promptly as possible. If there's not a big enough pool of people to draw from, it could create delays in cases being heard.

But we have to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that there is adequate, ongoing training, not just for the people who are put on the panel, but I would suggest that we need to offer that kind of training to the public who, sometime in the future, may want to be part of a panel such as this. The government should open the doors a little bit and allow training opportunities to be available, which would enhance the pool of people we would be able to pull from for board and committee vacancies that we need to fill. Adequate training is a very important part and more expanded adequate training would be important.

We can't have it too large of course; otherwise, it can get cumbersome, but I think from six to eight is a very good move. There should be opportunities to gain experience. It would be a travesty of justice for people on the panel to hear a case if they had no experience whatsoever. That needs to be looked at and how we would address that, because it would be a travesty of justice for the person who wants their case to be heard. You do need experience in being able to analyze, assess and make decisions around the issues that are brought forward through the *Human Rights Act*. Ultimately this does take money but, on the other side of it, it also takes a commitment and volunteerism from the people of the territory to take that kind of training, especially if it is training when they are not even sitting on the panel.

With those concerns I have put on the table here, I think we're quite willing to go forward and support the changes and the amendment.

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

Hon. Ms. Horne: I thank the members opposite for their support to this amendment to the *Human Rights Act*. We do now have training for the panel members on the Board of Adjudicators, but I will certainly take into consideration the suggestions from the Leader of the Third Party. Again, I thank the members opposite for their support.

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: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. McRobb: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Inverarity: Agree.

Mr. Hardy: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Second reading of Bill No. 83 agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, 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): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 83 — *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 83, *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*. We will now proceed with general debate. Is there any general debate?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Chair, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all clauses and the title of Bill No. 83, *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, read and agreed to.

Unanimous consent re deeming all clauses and title of Bill No. 83 read and agreed to

Chair: It has been requested by Ms. Taylor that Committee of the Whole grant unanimous consent to deem all clauses and the title of Bill No. 83, *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, read and agreed to. Are you agreed?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Clauses 1 and 2 deemed read and agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I move that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, be reported without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Taylor that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, be reported without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Taylor 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. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, and directed me to report it without amendment.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I would request the unanimous consent of the House to proceed with third reading of Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, at this time.

Unanimous consent re third reading of Bill No. 83

Speaker: The Government House Leader has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of the House to proceed with third reading of Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, at this time. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is unanimous consent.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 83: *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 83, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. Horne.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I move that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Repeal An Amendment to the Human Rights Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

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: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. McRobb: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Inverarity: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 15 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 83 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 83 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, to grant assent to the bill which has passed this House.

Commissioner enters the Chamber, announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

Speaker: Madam Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed a certain bill to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

Clerk: *Act to Repeal an Amendment to the Human Rights Act.*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bill as enumerated by the Clerk.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I would ask the unanimous consent of the House to proceed with

Motion No. 1009, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, at this time.

Unanimous consent to proceed with Motion No. 1009

Speaker: The Government House Leader has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of the House to proceed with Motion No. 1009, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, at this time. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Unanimous consent has been granted.

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 1009

Clerk: Motion No. 1009, standing in the name of Mr. Nordick.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Klondike

THAT the terms of reference of the Select Committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, as established by Motion No. 850 of the First Session of the 32nd Legislative Assembly, be amended by changing the date of its reporting to the House from the 2010 spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly to the 2010 fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly; and

THAT the Government of Yukon introduce in the House legislation no later than the 2010 fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Nordick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to speak to this motion today. I will keep my comments quite short as this motion is very self-explanatory. It just moves our mandate for the select committee from reporting to the House this session and the government producing legislation from the spring session to the fall.

So I would like to thank everybody for their support and look forward to unanimous agreement on this motion. Thank you.

Mr. Elias: We in the Official Opposition have no problems with the amendment to Motion No. 1009 that is on the floor of the House today. Thank you.

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: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Inverarity: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 14 yea, nil nay.

Motion No. 1009 agreed to

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 18: *Third Appropriation Act, 2009-10* — Second Reading — adjourned debate

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 18, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Fentie; adjourned debate, Mr. Fairclough.

Speaker: Member for Mayo-Tatchun, and you have 16:52 left, please.

Mr. Fairclough: When I left debate, we talked about the numbers in the *Supplementary Estimates No. 2*. The Premier tabled the supplementary budget. I hope he listens to us on this side of the House as we talk about the numbers he presented to the Legislature.

Tabled in the Legislature at the beginning of the sitting was the 2009-10 supplementary budget. What we heard from the Premier in his opening remarks is that this is not a deficit budget — it's in the black. The government is in the black.

What he wants us to believe is that information provided by government to the opposition and his own colleagues is what the departments put together, and that same information is released to the general public. That information is in black and white, using the Premier's own words, and we are to debate and pass this budget in this House.

The Premier stood on his feet and said, "This is not a deficit budget." What are we to believe? When, in fact, on page S-1 of the very information that's tabled in this House, the supplementary budget for 2009-10 states that there is a change from what we voted on in this House. And the change is that we see a \$23,318,000 deficit. Is this a deficit budget or not? I think his colleagues feel that it is. I think we need to get to the bottom of it.

We'd like to know how long the Premier knew that this was a deficit budget. How long did the Premier and his colleagues know that this was a deficit budget? How long did they know that, and what are we now to believe? How do we change the information, according to the Premier, that has been given out to the public stating clearly in black and white that this is a \$23.318-million deficit budget? Because that's what it is.

We're concerned about that, Mr. Speaker, and when we had the briefing with the departmental officials on the supplementary budget, they confirmed that, in fact, this is a deficit budget, and the Premier in this House says it is not. "Wait for public accounts," he says, Mr. Speaker, and at that time it'll

show something different. This supplementary budget is a result of numbers that are representing activities in the 2009-10 budget. It also takes into account the 2008-09 public accounts. Somewhere down the road the government side is going to have to clear the air with this and show the public that in fact these numbers are wrong or right. The Premier says they're wrong; we're saying that they're right. Who are we to believe on this matter?

We asked the government officials, and they backed us. This is, in fact, a deficit budget. What about with further changes that we could see with another supplementary budget for this coming fall? Well, what we've been told by government officials is that is not going to really change. We are going to see a deficit budget. That means we're basically spending more than we are taking in.

One of the surprises in here, Mr. Speaker, is that we're getting less in transfers from Canada. We are getting more recoveries — some \$25 million and less in transfers from Canada — some \$15 million. We're increasing operation and maintenance of government by over \$12 million and that, I believe, is a huge increase from what we voted on in this House. We're asked to pass that and very little explanation has been given to us by the Premier. He has walked through some of the lines, and we on this side of the House are not satisfied with the explanation that has been given by the Finance minister, the Premier, because, for one, he is saying something that is different from the information provided.

If there is something different from the information provided to the Legislature, to the general public, then table that information; table that update and tell us how the numbers came about.

We on this side of the House believe the officials. From year to year they do their hard work, crunch the numbers — the Finance officials — and put those numbers in black and white for us to debate in this House, and we believe their numbers are the result of a lot of hard work.

I don't know where the Premier is coming from when he's making assertions of the opposition, on this side of the House. We've asked the question over and over to the Premier in Question Period — not today, but on previous days — and still we cannot come up with the Premier admitting that in fact there is a \$23-million deficit.

I would like to hear from the government side — they have an opportunity to speak on this — whether or not that number is true. If it isn't, then what are we debating here?

Really, the Finance minister is asking us to pass this — these are last year's numbers — to pass this budget and then wait for public accounts to come out next year some time that will reflect more accurate numbers perhaps. I don't believe anybody should be waiting. If the government has other numbers they're using and would like to share them, then we would like to see them.

In the meantime, how did this come about? Last year the Premier said that we're in the black, and now we have numbers presented in the House that say we are in a deficit position. I have to believe the numbers that have been tabled in this House, and that's what we're going with. I want to know how

long the Premier and his colleagues knew about this. Why are they saying something that is contrary to information that has been provided? That's the real question that's out there in the public's mind.

Are we discussing and debating today and tomorrow this supplementary budget — a deficit budget — or not? Are we debating a deficit budget or not? This is an important question for the Premier to answer.

Is this number on page S-1 of \$23.318 million wrong or right? Why are there brackets around it? Brackets normally mean that it's a deficit budget; that's what it means. I know that all members on that side of the House believe it. Then why is the Finance minister saying something different? This is troubling for me, Mr. Speaker. You talk about being open and accountable. We want to know why in fact that number is being presented in the House and the Finance minister is saying something else. It's as simple as that. I think those questions should be answered by the Premier, if he is really interested at all in answering the questions.

Hon. Mr. Hart: I'm very pleased to speak to the supplementary budget today as it pertains to the requested adjustments for Health and Social Services for the year just ended. I would also like to thank the member opposite for his comments with regard to the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the department faced a number of challenges that required increased spending. In total, the department requires an additional \$11.5 million in operation and maintenance and a reduction in capital expenditures of just a little over \$423,000.

Several non-governmental organizations required additional spending for 2009-10, including the Salvation Army, Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon, Yukon Association for Community Living, Challenge and Line of Life, for an increase of more than \$400,000. Adult Residential Services also requires an increase for Teegatha'Oh Zheh to respond to program expansions that now include not only residential services but a full range of support services.

Most prominent of these new programs is a successful day program that provides activities and community involvement for persons with disabilities, for whom employment will never be an option.

In addition, FASSY requires additional funding of some \$200,000 specifically for their Get By with a Little Help from My Friends program, which focuses on providing one-to-one support for up to 25 high-risk women with fetal alcohol syndrome disorder.

Additional funding is included in this supplementary to respond to an increase that we have seen in social assistance. In May 2008, this government took the steps to increase the social assistance rates by 25 percent as well as to increase the earned-income exemption.

Based on these new rates, and the increased income exemption, a large number of people are eligible for social assistance benefits. An additional \$2.2 million is required to respond to a 22-percent increase in the monthly average number

of cases. Our analysis indicates that 44 percent of these new cases are made up of clients who are new to the Yukon. Our analysis also indicates that the cost per case has increased slightly, by approximately six percent.

Increases in social assistance are always expected as a reaction to global economic downturns, and other jurisdictions experience similar trends as the safety-net program does what it is designed to do during challenging times.

The original five-year funding for THAF, which ended March 31, 2010, requires approval of the balance of nearly \$4 million for a variety of projects. One of the most notable initiatives worth highlighting is the social inclusion and anti-poverty strategy. The department is developing a renewable, publicly reported cross-governmental strategy to reduce social exclusion and poverty using an evidence-based approach built on universally recognized social indicators of well-being.

The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to the development of the wellness strategy. The aging and wellness strategy is an initiative that falls under the broad umbrella of the wellness strategy. Its intent is to improve the lives of elders and seniors in the Yukon using a multi-sectoral approach.

Continuing care accreditation — Accreditation Canada was invited by the Yukon government to provide an independent peer review of the quality of its continuing care services based on the national standard of excellence. The areas surveyed were Copper Ridge Place, Macaulay Lodge, McDonald Lodge, the palliative care program and home care.

Information was gathered through observation and discussions with community stakeholders, clients, family members and staff. Accreditation experts indicated that the heart of the continuing care is the compassion and engagement of staff. More than 700 criteria were reviewed and the branch scored a remarkable 94 percent.

I think this really speaks to the care that is being provided in our continuing care facilities throughout the Yukon. It demonstrates that the care being provided is care that is needed by the clients being housed in those facilities and is also the care that's being requested by the parents and custodians of those individuals there.

Children's mental health study — in order to improve children's mental health and help youth at risk, the Department of Health and Social Services investigated developmental assets. Studies done in the United States consistently show that the more of these developmental assets a young person has, the less likely they are to engage in high-risk behaviours and the more likely they are to thrive. Yukon engaged a consultant to teach professionals and communities about developmental assets.

Mental health complex cases and housing — individuals with complex mental health problems and in conflict with the law, who also struggle with substance abuse, homelessness and histories of trauma and self-neglect, are provided with the supervised residency, under the direction of the Yukon Review Board. This care is provided in partnership with a non-governmental organization.

Also, Mr. Speaker, there is the cancer care navigator program. The cancer care navigator guides people with cancer and their families through the physical, emotional and financial challenges that come with a cancer diagnosis. The navigator helps by preparing patients for cancer treatments; providing information about who will be involved in treatment; reviewing what to expect from treatment in Yukon, or out of the territory; explaining diagnostic tests and treatments; recommending contacts and counselling, home care and other support services; providing information and contacts related to medical travel, benefits and coverage; providing resources, including reading materials, videos, CDs, DVDs, Internet sites and cancer information lines.

Mr. Speaker, the other day a member of the Third Party gave this particular program resounding approval for its support in providing assistance and support to those with cancer. I think it just demonstrated the value of this service to those individuals who are afflicted with this disease — the value of this program to them and their families.

We also have a mentorship program. Mentorship has been an integral part of the territorial health access fund and has helped new nursing graduates enter the workforce with the skills they need to complete their jobs. It has been used to prepare experienced nurses for positions in community nursing, continuing care, specialty nursing such as the operating room, and leadership in all nursing areas. Recently, mentorship expanded to include our health professionals and social workers.

As everyone is aware, we are fortunate to have a two-year renewal to THAF, and many of these initiatives will continue under this renewal. As I mentioned the other day, we are working with our two sister territories on just how the THAF funding will be worked in with Health Canada and how the funds will flow into the territories and what type of flexibility will be provided each territory in assessing the staff funding, how it'll be utilized and when it will flow.

This budget also includes some forced-growth items. The most important worth mentioning at this time are the increased volume of physician claims and medical travel costs. For these items we are requesting an additional \$1.1 million for the mandated costs associated with physician claims and \$1.3 million for increases related to medical travel.

Finally, this supplementary budget includes costs associated with the H1N1 pandemic and the health response to address this unexpected health emergency. A total of almost \$1.7 million was required to respond to the H1N1 virus. Almost 50 percent of these additional costs were associated with increased staffing costs, primarily for nurses in Whitehorse and in the rural communities.

As everyone is aware, the national and international response to the H1N1 threat was unprecedented in our time. The Yukon responded quickly and thoroughly. The team effort that was displayed by all members of our health care and emergency management system was something that we can all be proud of. A special mention must be made for the extraordinary effort of Dr. Brendan Hanley, our chief medical officer of health; of the staff of the Yukon Communicable Disease Control Unit within the department and all of the nurses, physicians

and other health care professionals, as well as the emergency health management team and volunteers, all of whom assisted in dealing with our long lineups in the City of Whitehorse and throughout the Yukon and also those handled in our emergency ward at the hospital here in Whitehorse. All those staff members are to be commended for the service they provided, and I'm pleased to report that we have vaccinated well over 50 percent of those eligible clients in the Yukon with the vaccine for H1N1.

I'll speak briefly on capital highlights in the supplementary budget. \$370,000 is included for the northern strategy telehealth project. On the revenue and recovery side of the equation, the additional expenditures noted above are offset by an overall increase in recoveries associated with O&M and capital of almost \$1.4 million.

The most significant of these include additional recoveries from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. These include \$968,000 for costs associated for child welfare, \$99,000 for costs associated with residents of other continuing care facilities, and another \$25,000 associated with home care recoveries.

I will say that we have been working with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs substantially over the last couple of years in trying to reduce the amount of outstanding receivables to the government. I must say that we've been very successful to date, and we now have that amount reduced from what was \$42 million to just under \$10 million.

We also have \$294,000 in additional capital recoveries associated with system development projects. These are just some of the highlights that conclude my comments that relate to Health and Social Services.

Mr. Mitchell: I find it tremendously interesting to hear the Health and Social Services minister listing off some of the areas where the department overspent the budgeted amount, which helped to contribute to the deficit for last year.

I can agree with the member opposite that many of these are good programs — assisting FASSY with additional funding, the social assistance increases we fought for for years in here, continuing care expenditures, children's mental health, mentorship programs — but out of all of that, he also mentioned dealing with the H1N1 pandemic. I think that was the only expenditure of the ones that he listed off that was truly unexpected and something that one couldn't have budgeted for.

That \$1.8 million — yes, there was no way of knowing when the main estimates were tabled that that cost would be coming, because we did not yet know that there was such a serious pandemic coming. We, too, on this side commended Dr. Hanley, the chief medical officer of health, the department officials and the minister for the job that was done in dealing with that efficiently, effectively and rapidly in Yukon. But it doesn't change the fact that this government — which said it would never run deficit budgets; this Premier who said last year when he stood in this House and tabled the main estimates — our seventh-consecutive surplus budget, he said — has now turned it into a deficit budget.

It's as clear as the ink on the page — surplus/deficit for the year, \$23,096,000. The number is in brackets. The number wasn't in brackets last fall, but it was only very barely in the black. It was \$222,000.

Unfortunately, when the Premier first tabled the 2009-10 main estimates a year ago, it was listed as being a \$19-million surplus — \$19,388,000, the number that shows up in the financial summary on page S-4 of this year's operation and maintenance estimates as being the 2009-10 estimate. The 2008-09 actuals in the three-year comparison were \$1,368,000. Then they estimated \$19 million; we said it would never happen, we didn't believe it. By last fall, the Premier had to come into this House and table a supplementary budget, reducing that estimated \$19 million to just \$222,000 — just a small amount. Less than the average house costs in the City of Whitehorse was then the projected surplus for the year in a billion dollar-plus budget.

Now, with another \$23,318,000 in spending, the latest figures bring us a deficit of \$23,096,000. I think the members opposite know that. I think the Health minister knows that when he stands up and lists a series of projects and programs where the spending increased to explain why the government fell into deficit. It is only the Premier who tries to say that the sky is red, not blue, and tries to deny what's on the page. He argues with his own officials, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is not accepting the numbers that the officials have prepared. Surplus/deficit for the year: \$23,096,000 deficit. What does the Premier do? He points to the accumulated surplus including all the buildings — the buildings that we're standing in today, the schools, the health centres, the Whitehorse General Hospital. Well, we're not going to sell any of those, Mr. Speaker, so that is not the number that matters in Yukon. This isn't a corporate balance sheet where you downsize by closing a factory when times are tough or lay off workers when sales are down. That is not what we're going to do here. We're not going to close any schools. There are no buildings we can sell. We can't recapture any assets much larger than a used pickup truck, so that number is not the number that matters to Yukoners. What are our net financial resources at the end of the year?

Well, they're now projected, as of the year that ended last week, to be \$69,430,000. At the beginning of the year, it was \$92,775,000 — excuse me, just the revised vote in the fall was \$92,775,000. At the beginning of the year, the number was even larger. The estimate was \$122,071,000 and, at the end of this year, it's now projected in the main estimates that our net financial resources — the amount of money we have available to spend beyond what we owe — will be \$40,255,000. Out of that, \$24 million is untouchable. It's tied up as part of the \$36-million bad investment the Premier made in asset-backed commercial paper.

At the time, the Premier said to us: Don't worry, be happy. We don't need this money. It's only a small change in the term of the investment from a month to nine years. We have lots of money; we don't need it. Well, according to these latest projections in the main budget, we'll be down to barely more than what he invested in that one investment as available resources.

So we see this trend of not being able to stay within budget. It's not a question of which of these programs is or isn't valuable; it's a question of an overall failure to actually present a realistic budget and live within it.

During the year, the revenues actually increased. The transfers from Canada were reduced and the Premier explained why in terms of accounting, but the recoveries from Canada increased by \$25 million. The total revenue picture actually increased by \$6,135,000, and yet the Premier still blew the budget. He received total revenue during the year to date of last year of \$970,746,000 and ended up spending \$1,084,062,000. The Premier denies this number, but it appears again and again in the financial information and the long-term plans in the Budget Address.

There's the multi-year plan. Where do we start? Based on this supplementary forecast, "Surplus (Deficit) for the Year", what do we see for the year just ended? A \$23,096,000 deficit — in brackets, Mr. Speaker, on page 1 of the long-term projections, and a minuscule \$2,907,000 surplus out of a \$1,076,000,000 budget projected for the end of this year.

Well, if the government managed to miss the mark by \$42 million last year, going from a \$19-million plus projected surplus to a \$23-million deficit, how can we have confidence that this government — this political party that's in charge — can possibly maintain that \$2.9-million surplus to the end of the year?

We saw how one health risk ate up \$1.8 million. There's no cushion there. Again, as my colleague from Mayo-Tatchun asked, we'd like to know. When did the Premier become aware that last year's budget projected surplus had become a deficit? When did he find out? Probably it was in November, because it was down to \$222,000 with the budget that he tabled last October. He has probably known it for three months and yet he stands up in front of the Chamber of Commerce and talks about eight successive surplus budgets. He already knew that the one he'd tabled last year wasn't a surplus any longer; it was a deficit.

The Premier stands on his feet and confuses — I know he can't be intentionally seeking to mislead, so the appalling thing is that the Premier appears confused between the actual surplus/deficit position for the year, the net financial resources and, as he puts it, how much money we've got in the bank. He has these numbers all mixed up. That is frightening, Mr. Speaker. That does not inspire confidence, for a Minister of Finance to confuse those numbers. What does inspire confidence is the briefings we got from officials who said, "Yes, this is a deficit budget for the year just ended." They were very clear, Mr. Speaker. They didn't play games. They gave us the straight answers. I am sure they are giving it to the Premier as well, but he won't stand on his feet and give it to this House.

As my colleague from Mayo-Tatchun said, we asked the officials, "Well, there will be one more final supplementary budget. It will be the third supplementary budget and the fourth budget for the year that we will receive next fall, and those will be the adjusting numbers that will then go into the public accounts. Is this likely to all be erased by then?" And the answer

we got is, “\$23 million is a pretty large number. We can’t see that happening.”

Since the Premier said last week that they check with officials to see what they tell us during the briefings, I’m sure he knows that the officials told us that. That is what the officials said, and they said it in front of both opposition parties. There were a lot of MLAs and a lot of staff members in the room to hear it, so there’s no denying it.

Now, again, we’d like to hear the Premier, when he stands to close debate of second reading on this, how he explains this. You know, the Premier likes to pick and choose from among what the Auditor General says. When the Auditor General said that the investments in asset-backed commercial paper under his government — under his watch as Finance minister — were in contravention of Yukon’s *Financial Administration Act*, his initial response was to say, “That’s just her opinion — just her opinion. We have others.” But now I see the Premier, as recently as Thursday last, trying to explain it as being changes that the Auditor General required, in terms of accounting standards — that we couldn’t book, for example, all of the Building Canada fund revenue ahead of it being expensed. The revenue we could book was only that matching the money that was being spent.

Well, you can’t have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. You can’t say, “Look, the Auditor General made us do it or said it was so,” and then another time say that’s just the Auditor General’s opinion.

I might point out that part of these same accounting changes are the changes that allowed this government, and only this government — no previous government beside the Yukon Party government — has had the luxury of amortizing large capital expenditures over many, many years. It used to be, in all previous governments — in the Duncan government, the McDonald government, the Ostashek government, the Penikett government — it was, at that point in time, if you built a new school for \$10 million or \$12 million, it showed up as an expense in the current year. You didn’t get to amortize it over many years and add it to the accumulated surplus as part of the increase in capital assets.

That was very beneficial to this government. In fact, when those changes were made, this government quickly moved to change the *Taxpayer Protection Act* to refer to that number, as opposed to the actual net financial resources number as being the one that reflects — the former Premier, the late Mr. Ostashek, wrote a letter to the editor, saying that government should stick with the old method of considering its financial and fiscal position in terms of taxpayer protection.

Of course, the reporting has to change to the generally accepted standards, but Mr. Ostashek warned that it was very dangerous to go down the road of saying that there’s no problem so long as we have a total asset base including all of the fixed assets that were in the black. Even a former Yukon Party Premier saw a danger in heading down that path.

What do we have now? Now we have a government that has embarked upon massive borrowing through the Crown corporations, authorizing \$67 million through the Yukon Hospital Corporation for the nurses and doctors residence across the

way and for two additional hospitals, and \$100 million to the Yukon Energy Corporation. This too is debt that will show up on the consolidated revenue statements of government, but it doesn’t appear within the main estimates. Nevertheless, since the Yukon Hospital Corporation has no ability to raise large amounts of revenue on its own — it is not a profit centre, Mr. Speaker — this is debt that is ultimately backed by this government. In fact — and we did ask this of the officials — the authorization has to be signed off by the Health minister for the Yukon Hospital Corporation, just as the government also authorizes as part of the \$300 million in net-borrowing capacity that the government now has, since the Government of Yukon has increased that from its former amount of under \$200 million.

This is part of that enlarged amount that the government can authorize to be borrowed. But make no mistake about it: the debt will be paid by future generations of Yukoners. Are some of these projects good projects? Is energy infrastructure important to Yukon? Yes it is. We’re just saying: be honest with Yukoners. Be clear. Be clear in this Assembly that it is a deficit for the current year. Stop standing on one’s feet, as the Finance minister has done over the past week since he tabled these two budgets, claiming that a deficit isn’t a deficit because now he wants to look at net financial resources as the most important number. When that number is getting paid down, then he moves to accumulated surplus including all the schools, buildings, trucks and other equipment.

So again, just for the record, we’d like the Premier, when he closes debate in second reading, to come clean with this House and with Yukoners and — painful though it is for him to say — admit that this surplus/deficit for the year that just ended, 2009-10, is now under the revised vote that we’re here to pass — some \$23,096,000 of deficit — deficit for the 2009-10 fiscal year — Surplus (Deficit) for the Year — in brackets, negative number, deficit.

That’s something that this Premier promised he wouldn’t do and he has done it. Even if he didn’t plan on doing it, that’s just evidence of poor planning by the Minister of Finance to miss the mark by \$42 million. By how many millions will he miss the mark this year? We don’t know that. That will be for next fall’s supplementary budget and it will be for the Health minister or the Highways minister or the Community Services minister to stand up and have to explain, because the Premier can’t admit it. The Premier can’t allow the word “deficit” to come out of his mouth; it’s just too hard for him to form that sound when he speaks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Economic Development envisions an economy driven by a healthy private sector. It is expanding at a pace that maximizes the opportunities for Yukon business and workers. It also envisions both regional and sectoral economic growth that diversifies the economy. I think we’re making good progress on this. The department continues to support its strategic sectors and the culture of entrepreneurship is encouraged and maintained.

I rise today to introduce the supplementary budget for the Department of Economic Development. This budget seeks ap-

proval for an overall increase in departmental operation and maintenance costs in the amount of \$588,000. This amount mainly represents the reprofiling of \$753,000 in funding to third parties for technology-driven projects from capital to operations and maintenance. Much of our budget really has been in reprofiling funds from one place to another.

\$502,000 for Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre's operational support and project cost and \$251,000 in funding for the Technology Innovation Centre — that basically comes out of that \$753,000. There is an offsetting of \$753,000 reduction in the department's capital budget to reflect this transfer.

As well, the Department of Education previously reflected \$150,000 in their budget for operational support for the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre. This has also been reprofiled to the Department of Economic Development's operation and maintenance budget.

There is also a one-time decrease in the department's operation and maintenance budget of \$315,000 as the result of various temporary personnel vacancies in Corporate Services and regional Economic Development branches.

The office furniture, equipment, systems, and space line item in the amount of \$35,000 represents an internal transfer from the economic infrastructure development line item to cover new leasehold improvement costs for the Business and Industry Development branch. For those who go looking for that branch in the coming weeks, they'll find that we've moved. We're now in a new location and, without going into it here, perhaps if you're looking for us, give us a call. We'll tell you where we stashed that branch. With the staff all in one office location, the branch is better positioned to service the needs of Yukon businesses through the consolidation of business support, advisory and investment attraction activities. Also within the Business and Industry Development branch, there is a transfer of \$75,000 from the film and sound incentive program allotment to fund an increase in the number of Yukon business applications to the enterprise trade fund.

I am very pleased to see that Yukon businesses are benefiting from the enterprise trade front which helps to stimulate and support business activity through market penetration and expansion as well as business development. The objectives of the Department of Economic Development include the continued development of a sustainable and competitive Yukon economy that will enrich the quantity of life for all Yukoners, which still gives me cause, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to scratch my head when the previous government — the Liberal government — saw the way to develop the economy —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Quorum count

Deputy Speaker: The Member for Porter Creek South, on a point of order.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't believe we have quorum.

Deputy Speaker: I will ring the bells for four minutes and then do a count.

Bells

Speaker: Order please. I have shut off the bells and I will do a count. There are 12 members present; a quorum is present. We will now continue debate. Minister of Economic Development, you had the floor.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: The Department of Economic Development envisions an economy driven by a healthy private sector that is expanding at a pace that maximizes opportunities for Yukon businesses and workers. It also envisions both regional and sectoral economic growth that diversifies our economy. The department continues to support its strategic sectors and a culture of entrepreneurship is encouraged and maintained.

I rise today to introduce the supplementary budget for the Department of Economic Development. This budget seeks approval for an overall increase in departmental operations and maintenance costs in the amount of \$588,000. This amount mainly represents the reprofiling of \$753,000 in funding to third parties for technology-driven projects from capital to O&M. This includes \$502,000 for the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre operational support and project costs and \$251,000 for funding to the Yukon Technology Innovation Centre. There is an offsetting of a \$753,000 reduction in the department's capital budget to reflect on this transfer.

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The office furniture, equipment and space line item in the amount of \$35,000 represents an internal transfer from the economic infrastructure development line item to cover new leasehold improvement costs for the benefit of Business and Industry Development branch.

I should mention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if anyone is looking for that branch, they did move about a week ago and are in a new location so they might want to give them a call ahead of time. With staff in one office location, the branch is better positioned to serve the needs of Yukon businesses through the consolidation of business support, advisory and investment attraction activities. Also within the Business and Industry Development branch is a transfer of \$75,000 from the film and sound incentive program, their allotment to fund an increase in the number of Yukon business applications to the enterprise trade fund. I am very pleased to see Yukon businesses are benefiting from the enterprise trade fund, which helps to stimulate and support business activity through market penetration and expansion as well as business development.

The objectives of the Department of Economic Development include the continued development of a sustainable and competitive Yukon economy, which will enrich the quality of life for all Yukoners. This, I think, still raises questions, of why the previous Liberal government thought that the demise, and

basically, disbanding of the Department of Economic Development, was a good way to accomplish anything like this. It was this government that rebuilt that and is actively working in terms of our economy and diversification. The department continues to pursue economic initiatives with a shared vision of prosperity, partnerships and innovation. The department is also committed to forging partnerships with First Nations in the economic development of the territory, and we are furthering the mandate and objectives of the Department of Economic Development through our request for a 2010-11 supplementary budget.

Mr. Speaker, globally we have experienced a historic period of economic fluctuation. While impacts were felt in various regions across the country, Yukon really weathered the recent global economic downturn better than most provinces and territories. It didn't really affect us as much by any means. Certainly, we saw a few things, but in general, we came through that in very, very good shape due to the diversity of the economy and the hard work of many, many departments.

The mineral and metal prices recovered through 2009 and continue to recover and prices do bode well — there's no doubt about that — for future mining exploration and development activity in Yukon; however, again, I remind Yukoners that the Liberal Party claimed that the rebound in the Yukon was solely due to mineral prices, yet we did 16 times better than the Canadian average in terms of mining recovery — 16 times — in world prices — and I'm hoping, Mr. Speaker, that they understand what that term means.

Long-term economic recovery, particularly in the United States, is a potential to a recovery in tourist visitation; however, I do note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for those who didn't hear the news this morning, the U.S. dollar and the Canadian dollar reached parity — certainly briefly, and I'm not sure whether the day will end on that, but there are many who expect that the U.S. dollar will exceed — and stay there for awhile — in value to the Canadian dollar. That will likely have an effect, but I think most businesses have done a great deal of mitigation. Manufacturing isn't our biggest activity up here, so I think we will come through this in good shape. We've worked very hard, with the understanding that that might come to pass.

Our vision continues for Yukon's economic growth and prosperity for all Yukoners, and it includes an economy that will capture external dollars and capitalize on our strategic geographic location to the Asian markets. Again, the question of "why Asia?" comes up from time to time. If members of the opposition look at a map with the same understanding or, hopefully, a better understanding than they do of budget documents, they'll understand that this is the part of the world to be concentrating on for us.

As well, a number of funds over the year have remained very good and have grown. The regional economic development fund was established in recognition of the need for effective coordination and planning in economic development efforts by all parties with regional economic interests.

The total approved funding for fiscal year 2009-10 to March 2010 is just over \$528,000, distributed among 26 pro-

jects. Since its inception, the fund has invested approximately \$2.06 million in 123 Yukon projects.

The Film and Sound Commission has been a resounding success for us. A study done some time ago showed that for every dollar that we invest in film and sound initiatives, we get almost \$10 back — \$9.80 or something in that range. So it has been a very, very successful unit over there. They continue to administer five film funding projects and one sound recording program. Their suite of programs, which includes the film location incentive, film training initiative, filmmakers' fund, film development fund, film production fund, and finally — but of course not least — the sound recording programs. They were all implemented in 2004-05. They provide local artists with opportunities to develop their craft and encourage production companies from outside Yukon to film in Yukon. This promotes tourism and creates job opportunities for Yukoners.

One of the commission's successes, of course, has been *Anash and the Legacy of the Sun-Rock*. Seven episodes of this live-action animation television series — quite a unique series actually — was filmed in Whitehorse during the fall of 2009. Yukon government provided \$560,000 in support of the project under the Yukon film production fund. The \$2.8-million project employed approximately 100 Yukoners.

The series was written and directed by Yukon First Nation film-maker, Carole Geddes. For those who haven't seen the series or any of the episodes, what they did was film everything in green screen. The background was completely done in green, with plywood and scrim and all sorts of things, with the actors working as if they were on a set. The set was then done by animation and everything was done on hard drives. It was not done on film; it was done completely digitally. It was really quite an amazing technological innovation by the time they finished.

It is things like this and *Red Coat Justice*, which we've yet to see, *The Big White* and a great number of commercials — award-winning commercials in many respects — as well.

The Yukon sound recording program — \$50,000, has been awarded to 16 Yukon artists to build and sustain Yukon arts and cultural industry, helping artists expand their careers and take their products to new markets. Things like the support of Yukon government and CanNor, the federal government, the development and production of 13 one-minute webisode commercials for filming in Yukon is underway. The project will provide training and employment opportunities for members of the Yukon film industry.

We are providing Yukon film-makers with script-writers, workshops and mentorship support to develop and pitch film and television concepts under the Film Fantastic program. We have funded \$778,480 in funding support to 23 film projects to help develop the Yukon film industry and provide opportunities for Yukoners to build film-making careers.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker — occasionally I have been invited to dinners of production companies that have come up here and I've heard comments like, "We didn't come up here to look for a site. We looked to come up here to work, because the Film and Sound Commission has put this together and shown

us what can be done in the Yukon and what kind of support we have.”

The last group I talked to told me we have so many well-trained people up here that they don't have to come up here and bring all their support people with them. They come here and use our support people who we've invested the training in. It's the same with some of the equipment that is here. They don't have to transport the equipment; we have it on site. That is another real success within the program.

If we look at some of the other aspects in the Yukon Housing Corporation — I can never forget that and not hear the end of it — we have taken a number of different projects in that area, which I mentioned previously about the projects that we have done in terms of expanding since 2002.

The last time that the Liberal government of the day asked for certainty — and I'm so pleased to hear the Leader of the Liberal Party right now repeating that word over and over — perhaps he should think of the last time that they asked for certainty. Since that time, by March 2011 — and that's including stuff that's on the ground now, that's being built. We have 162 more housing units and that's a 35-percent increase. We agree with some of the things that have come out lately in the paper. The study done by the Conference Board of Canada that housing has become a huge issue in Canada — the cost of housing. The study, however — and certainly one person who was commenting on this in the media mentioned — didn't talk at all about the Yukon. It falls apart when, for instance, the speaker on CBC says that we should move to modular housing. It's good to know that people have forgotten that the athletes village is completely modular housing. We took a lot of comments during the day that they were a bunch of trailers. During the last election I actually called one of the reporters who had said this and said, “You know, after we win, I want you to come up here and I want you to show me the trailers.” To her credit, she did. And I think to the credit of Yukon Housing Corporation, she couldn't find a trailer.

It was a pretty incredible project that we finished on that end. Contrary to what the opposition likes to claim, it was on time and on budget, and it was badly needed. And it caused a cascade — people who moved in, of course, moved out of their existing homes, so that other groups could take those. Again, all of the criticism we took from the Official Opposition that no senior would want to live up there — well, that didn't work out too well for them. Actually, we didn't even advertise it. We had people moved in there before we ever had a chance to do that.

So the values and goals and objectives of Economic Development, Yukon Housing Corporation — and I would add Yukon Liquor Corporation and Yukon Lottery Corporation — are to help build and diversify our economy in support of small- and medium-sized businesses, to help in developing and supporting First Nations, communities and all Yukoners. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Lang: As we move through this afternoon, I would like to make a few comments. I would like to thank my colleagues who have done a stellar job over the last seven years in working with the Yukon in advancing it to where it is today.

I think that all of them deserve a bit of a compliment from us in the House. They have done a stellar job and, of course, as we move forward in this term, we certainly see some massive improvements for the Yukon.

Certainly, in the departments that I represent, I would like first of all, to thank the department itself, whether it is Community Services or Highways and Public Works, for the job they do on a daily basis to make the Yukon a better place to live. I certainly enjoy working with the departments, whether it is Highways and Public Works or Community Services. I work with the individuals there, but as a team I think they do a stellar job to improve the life of Yukoners.

In Community Services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you can see, as we move forward in this next budget year, it is a pretty responsible department that touches every community, whether it is a municipality or an unincorporated community, and works with First Nations to make sure that they, as they move forward with their self-government, get the help they need from us as government to make their jobs easier on the ground in their communities. Over the years, we certainly promote the partnerships that we see unfolding today in Yukon.

When we look at the objectives of a department like Community Services, as a department we have to promote sustainable, healthy communities by supporting local government, community organizations and the volunteer sector, encouraging active living through sport and recreation and directly providing community services, planning and zoning, property assessment and taxation, infrastructure and land development.

I will take one of the issues that surfaced last summer. We had the largest fire season in many years. Community Services managed the wildfire part and they did a stellar job for all Yukoners. They worked on the fires and came out at the end of the season with very little damage.

But I remind everybody in the House and all Yukoners that it was the biggest fire season in probably 10 or 15 years and they managed it with a very professional, high-level workforce. As Minister of Community Services, I compliment them for the job they did.

Again, we look at the protection of public safety in the department — through driver and vehicle programs, to provide community educational opportunities, through public library programs and to provide bilingual inquiry services to the public and, of course, to the Yukon government departments. That again is very important to Yukoners, and of course it's handled by the Department of Community Services.

Certainly we have to support the health, safety and protection of the public through programs such as the application of minimum building, electrical and mechanical codes. In other words, we are working with individuals and corporations that are building structures in our communities. Certainly the responsibility that we have is to oversee those buildings to make sure they are being built at an acceptable or underneath an acceptable level of standards. So again, that's very, very important.

Then of course, as we move forward, we have to protect the broad consumer interest through the provisions of education, information and enforcement services — again, another

important thing that we do internally in the government here that is very important for Yukon as it moves forward.

Of course, we have to assist and enable communities and people to protect themselves from the threat of wildland fire. Again, I was mentioning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fire situation we found ourselves in during the last year's fire season — again, one of the largest fire seasons that this territory had experienced in many, many years. That, of course, is very important, because we have municipalities, we have unincorporated communities, First Nation communities and also we have the hinterland and rural residential or rural recreational investments out in our hinterland that have to be protected, and that is a responsibility of us in Community Services.

As we move forward, Mr. Speaker, in what we do as a department, of course we look at structural fire and other emergencies or disasters and provisions of emergency medical services. This department is responsible for working with our municipalities and unincorporated communities and the local fire departments — volunteer fire individuals who work in our communities at a local level to run these services, whether it's the ambulance service or our fire departments.

I appreciate all the work they do in the community because they make the community livable for the other individuals who live in the community.

That's another one of our responsibilities and we work with our municipalities and the unincorporated communities, First Nations and other orders of government to make sure that we can supply the equipment that these individuals need and of course, as you look through our ongoing budgets, you'll see the government acquires two ambulances a year; you'll see a tanker truck, you'll see other equipment that is needed by our communities to make sure that they are protected from within from the threat of wildland fire and also structural fire, and of course it's very important that we have the ambulance service that communities expect and certainly deserve as we move forward.

Air ambulance is another responsibility of our department to make sure that air ambulance is being run. You can see through our budget planning, all of these have been expanded to supply the best service we can and we have put the resources where they're needed in the air-evac department and EMS, as we expand.

We'll be looking at a very modern facility at the top of the Two Mile Hill, which has been triggered in next year's budget. That is a go-forward project and we look forward to having the ambulance station at the top of the hill. We will be keeping the ambulance station that is at the hospital; it will facilitate the surrounding area. We're looking at air ambulance and other aspects. It's necessary to have an ambulance or whatever in that situation because it's a necessary management tool for us to manage the health care or the ambulance facilities that we have today and then growing into the future.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, and as we look through the supplementary budget, you'll see what this department does, what Community Services does, what resources are needed to do the job they do today. As we move forward in the ongoing years, that will grow and the investment on the ground will

grow, as I said. The investment is sound investment into the future of the territory.

As I move forward here and address one of the other departments that I work with here, and answer to here in the House — Highways and Public Works — again, two departments that really touch all Yukoners. I mean, we all have health and social services and we have education. Every department is important, but Highways and Public Works touches a big part of the territory. On a seasonal basis, we maintain roughly 5,000 kilometres of road, an extensive network of bridges, and certainly, culverts and other assets that go along with maintaining this amount of road.

Our road system is one of the largest road systems in Canada — probably the only jurisdiction in Canada where you can go to the Pacific Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. All of that is available to Yukoners on a road grid that goes from northern B.C. to Inuvik, and of course into Alaska, into Skagway and the coast. So it is an extensive responsibility.

Certainly, as we go through the objectives of our government as we move forward, the investment in Highways and Public Works is very, very important. A lot of the work is going to be overseen by Public Works. Yukon Housing Corporation will be looking at adding some expertise for the projects. The Korbo Apartments in Dawson and the Alexander Street proposed replacement will be overseen by Public Works. We will certainly be working with the department, Yukon Housing Corporation — working in partnership with them.

Certainly, we look forward to that, Mr. Speaker. If you were to see the situation — the Korbo Apartments in Dawson City today and what is going to replace them — it's a needed replacement. It's not a reckless investment, as the opposition says many, many times. It is certainly not a thing that does not need replacing. Certainly, this government is aggressively looking at replacing those kinds of investments.

Now, we have other partnerships. We've been working with the Kwanlin Dun, certainly looking at their expanded cultural centre and working with them to make that project a success. Of course, going back to Community Services, we're going in partnership with the Kwanlin Dun as an investment to build a brand new library in the new cultural centre on the waterfront. That's good news — not only for Whitehorse, but a partnership with Kwanlin Dun — but certainly an investment that's needed in the City of Whitehorse and it certainly is a well-used facility when it comes to government expenditures. I look forward to going forward on that. Again, it's another investment on the ground that will be working in partnership with the First Nation government, the Kwanlin Dun investment.

So as we move forward, the Department of Highways and Public Works supports government programs, program delivery through procurement and management services to serve the public by managing and regulating transportation infrastructure, systems and programs. Of course, it serves the public and supports government departments by developing and maintaining building, transportation and technology infrastructure.

Another thing we're looking forward to — and again, I would like to thank my colleagues for the seriousness and the work that was done internally to see what we could do as a

government to make property management a little less cumbersome.

We have put a proposal forward and we can talk about this when we're talking on the department. We are looking at putting resources toward an investment on a yearly basis so that the department will know that they have X amount of dollars to invest in property management to maintain our investments. Again, Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of things that make the department more fluid in its management and more responsible. They will know they have that money on a yearly basis. That doesn't preclude larger investments, Mr. Speaker, so I want to make that very clear.

The monies that will be available for our government, for the department, to manage on a yearly basis on the public works side of the ledger will be X amount of dollars, which will be committed on a yearly basis. Certainly that is another tool.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government put the resources together many years ago in the IT department on how we could encourage the local IT community to stay and prosper in our community. This government put together a package of resources, which we can debate as we move forward in the budget under Highways and Public Works. That money amounts to approximately \$6.1 million or \$6.5 million that we as a government — one of the first things we did so the industry could look at the investment and plan around that investment.

If you were to talk to industry, you would find that it's not reckless spending, that the industry is prospering in the territory and expanding in the territory, and that's exactly what that money was meant to do. It wasn't a reckless investment; it wasn't going for broke; it was an investment.

I meet with the IT industry on a regular basis and work with them to make sure that industry is strong and independent here in the territory. Those resources have, in fact, done exactly that.

As we move forward here this afternoon — and I'm sure, listening to other members here, I would again compliment the Minister of Finance and the hardworking people in Finance who do the daily work in the department.

I certainly look forward to working with Highways and Public Works and Community Services on an ongoing basis, and looking forward to the next year, the next period of time, that we can move forward and see some of these investments that we're doing throughout the territory get completed and maximize the benefits to the Yukon.

Another partnership we have with the Department of Justice is the new prison, or the new correctional facility, that we have at the top of the hill in Takhini. I would like to of course thank the Minister of Justice and the Member for McIntyre-Takhini for the improvements we worked on over the last eight years to come to where we are.

The correctional institute is not only a correctional institute, but it's a treatment centre and it has a flex component to it. I recommend any of the members here in the House, if they get a moment, to go and take a look at that project. That project is again on time and on budget; it's a partnership. Kwanlin Dun

and Dominion Construction were the successful component on overseeing the project and it is amazing anytime I go up there to see the work that has been done.

It's another partnership that Public Works does. It oversees the project and it is a success.

So in closing, again, I'd like to thank the staff in the departments; I'd like to thank my colleagues here in the House who have listened to my requests. Of course, at the end of the day, we realize that this is a big budget; it's a big, positive budget for the territory, and we're looking forward to putting it to work here in the next period of time and seeing the benefits that all Yukoners can acquire from a budget of this size.

So, thank you.

Mr. Inverarity: I'll be brief in my comments this afternoon. I just want to touch on some of the things I've been hearing this afternoon. First of all, I'd like to thank all the departmental officials, of course, for the extra work and the hard work that they've done in preparing the supplementary that we're discussing this afternoon. I know that they must have been under significant pressure, considering some of the issues that have been coming to light over the last week in Question Period — trying to get the deficit down to something that was a little more reasonable and what we have to deal with here.

I guess, really, when we get down to the supplementary, the issue that we've all been talking about — which of course, is on page S-1 — is the number in brackets about three-quarters of the way down the page. It is the minus \$23,096,000 that is a negative number. We can tell it's a negative number with little brackets around it. Of course, to the left there it shows the deficit with the brackets around it.

The real issue that comes around when we talk about deficit budgets — I know the Premier here is in denial about it, but the fact remains that it is a reflection on this government's ability to manage their money. That is what that number represents, whether it is \$1 or \$24 million or \$23 million or whatever, we know that it was probably a lot higher because there are reports that we had. We asked last week about the elevator contractor that was terminated earlier. That obviously is a savings that would have made this number a lot higher.

The real issue is that it is a deficit budget and the government has been on record for eight years saying that they don't have deficit budgets and yet, here we have one. What was that number again? \$23,096,000 in the hole.

I know the departments work hard to try to reduce that number, but they didn't make it. Why? Because of the leadership of this government in managing the departments within the government.

There were a couple of other comments — I mean, to be honest, we're not even sure if that's going to be the final number. We know the Yukon Housing Corporation, for example, still has not produced any financial statements for three years. Those particular numbers have to be included in these and rolled up. While the government got an audit letter in the public accounts for the previous year, it was not forthcoming for this year.

That means that not only will they have to go back to the previous financial year's statements and restate those numbers, but they're going to have to do it again for 2009-10 once we get the financial statements through. So we know these numbers aren't going to be right; it's a matter of trying to find out what they're going to be and, in all likelihood, they're going to be higher than what they are today.

Another comment I want to make, and it really just came out this morning and I'm trying to move on — comments made by the Minister of Highways and Public Works about the corrections centre. I guess two things came out of it: this morning we had briefings on the Department of Highways and Public Works and we also had one on Justice.

When we went into the Department of Highways and Public Works and asked about the correctional facility, we were basically told that they didn't really know much about it; they were running the project, but all the money was in Justice. I find it interesting that the minister would stand up and say "we're on time and on budget" when even his departmental officials didn't know whether they were on time or on budget.

When the Department of Justice came in — and I will state for the record that I did ask the same questions and they did say that they were on time and on budget — so I'm going to take the Department of Justice's estimates. But again, it's one of those issues about one hand not knowing what the other hand is doing. That's what leads to deficit budgets, because when you have two departments, one looking after the money and one looking after the work, how do they communicate?

I will ask the Minister of Justice for one favour. This morning the Highways and Public Works minister stood up today and said, "Go up and look at the corrections centre. Have a look through the building. It's a great place." Well, I asked this morning if we could go up and have a look and tour with the Department of Justice and we were told that, no, we can't. We need to have a major safety course in order to get up there to see the facility and so we were being — probably blocked, I guess. I'd like to be able to take the safety course if it is available.

I would ask the Minister of Justice, if it's possible, if she could perhaps put together a quick one for any members on this side of the House who care to go through the facility and have a look at how the progress is going and how the money is being spent up at the correctional facility. I certainly have had a keen interest in it, as you know, over the past number of years. So I would ask the minister, if she could, to ask her department — I'm not sure if it's really her area — or if she needs to go to the Department of Highways and Public Works to arrange for the safety course in order for us to go and see the new correctional facility, because it keeps bouncing back and forth, depending on who you want to talk to.

I think my points have been made. I think that it's time to move on and go into the new budget. This one speaks for itself — deficit. You can read it any way you want, but it's a negative number. I think, on that, I suggest we move forward and move on to the new year's budget.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the Legislature for the opportunity to say a few words to this supplementary budget that we have been discussing over the last couple of days.

Before I get into my remarks, pertinent to my respective areas, as well as other areas that are pertinent to my own constituency, I just wanted to comment on a couple of repeated comments that we on the government side continue to hear, and that has to do with the state of finances in the Yukon today. That is one area that this government does pride themselves on year after year after year. Again, just for clarity's sake, I just wanted to point out for members opposite — not that it hasn't already been stated for the record — the very fact that, at the end of the day, we have net financial resources. So, as of the end of the fiscal year 2009-10, we will have financial resources in the bank to the tune of \$69 million.

So to make that even more clear, if you were to extinguish all the liabilities belonging to the Government of Yukon today, that means that there would still be \$69 million left in the bank account — in the savings account, so to speak. So, I just wanted to record that or put that on the public record, because it is a really important point. If it weren't for those net financial resources, we would not have the flexibility and we would not have the ability to make those capital investments, both on the social and the economic side of the ledger.

We wouldn't be able to operate in such a manner that we are not only sustaining and maintaining programs of value and of great importance to Yukon families, but we also wouldn't be able to implement new programs. I think that point seems to be lost in the debate over the last couple of days, so I just wanted to emphasize that as a result of having net financial resources in the bank, it is indeed a healthy situation for the Government of Yukon and one that can be attributed to the hard work, the fortitude, the due diligence provided by the Department of Finance and all the respective departments and agencies throughout the Government of Yukon.

I just wanted to also thank the Government of Yukon officials for doing the work to implement these respective budgets. Again, it's unfortunate that members opposite — while I appreciate their thanks, it also appears that they're reprimanding public officials again for effectively cooking the books, so to speak. Mr. Speaker, that is in fact not true. In fact, I commend them for their good work and I can speak from having the opportunity of working in a number of different departments. The professionalism exemplified by public officials is exemplary and I feel very fortunate and very privileged to be able to serve in the Government of Yukon and to be able to work side by side many individuals. I have the utmost respect for their integrity and I would never ever call into question their integrity.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to comment on a number of items comprised within the supplementary budget. Again, we've heard from the Department of Health and Social Services, through the minister, that there are a number of expenditures reflected in the 2009-10 supplementary budget, ranging from H1N1 additional dollars of almost \$2 million, medical travel costs, physical claims, as well as territorial health access funds. All of these expenditures are very, very important.

Again, when it comes to H1N1, I happened to be one of those individuals in the lineups waiting to receive my immunization — my son and I. And, you know, despite the tremendous pressure of lineups and those individuals wanting to be immunized, I thought the lines were moved very expeditiously and care was taken to answer all questions that were asked. Again, I think that the delivery of public education and awareness campaigns delivered by the Department of Health and Social Services — again, those officials are to be commended for their good work. And, as the Minister of Health and Social Services reported, I'm very pleased to report that over half of the Yukon's population has been immunized.

I believe it's because of Yukon's relatively small population that we're able to be flexible and we're able to respond effectively and efficiently to emergencies and to other areas of importance when and if required.

Medical travel — we know how very important that is to Yukon residents. Of course, our family has experienced the need to travel elsewhere, to places such as Vancouver to receive treatment.

Again, we were very pleased not many years ago to enhance the medical travel allotment to kick in after the second day instead of after the fourth day, as it originally was. We were able to increase also the per diems allotted to help absorb some of the costs. We know that the costs are many, but we are very fortunate to have the assistance that we do have at hand here today.

Of course, I just also wanted to add my congratulations to the Copper Ridge continuing care facility, Macaulay Lodge and McDonald Lodge home care professionals for receiving the continuing care accreditation. As the Minister for Health and Social Services has already relayed, it is indicative of the quality care that we as Yukoners have grown to enjoy.

I am very appreciative of the hard work and the efforts made by those respective officials in Copper Ridge Place as an example, for their efforts in ensuring that it's not only an efficient place in its delivery of care, but a wonderful place called home for well over 90 individual Yukon residents.

I have said on many occasions, and I'll say it again, that I'm very proud of the work that they have done, and continue to deliver on our behalf. In speaking with those residents who have come to the facility over the years, they too are very appreciative of the quality care that is being delivered not just to seniors and elders, but adults and children as well, who require respite care.

There are a number of expenditures housed within the supplementary as well, which I commend, including corrections infrastructure and over \$3 million for the Whitehorse Airport terminal building. Again, this is a major undertaking. It was probably around \$20 million in total, when it comes to parking improvements and roughly about \$16 million plus for the improvements to the terminal building itself.

Again, at the end of the day, this, too, will make Yukon more attractive, a more accessible destination of choice when it comes to travel for leisure purposes, or when it comes to calling the Yukon our home.

It will ensure that Yukon continues its status to receive international flights. It will also help to ensure we remain competitive with the international status and that we also remain competitive when it comes to receiving flights from our direct gateway cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and so forth.

There are also monies housed within this supplementary budget when it comes to the Department of Environment — \$1.5 million, I believe it is, for type 2 mine site reclamation and as well as just shy of \$1 million for the Yukon Wildlife Preserve's new animal research facility. Again, I commend the Yukon Wildlife Preserve for being such a unique attraction for visitors and for Yukon residents alike. I know our family really enjoys our visits to the facility. It never ceases to amaze me that since the Government of Yukon assisted the non-profit society with the acquisition of the Wildlife Preserve, and ensured they have long-term stable funding and so forth, it really has become a stellar attraction.

In fact, the executive director was just recently on the radio. I talked to her personally and she stated how visitation had more than doubled, from 5,000 to 10,000 people within one year. That's really a unique trait about that facility, and it shows we're reaching out, not just to the residents here in the Yukon, but also to visitors worldwide. Also the work they do, providing refuge for injured animals in the wild, and certainly the education programs that they provide through the Department of Education — they too have grown in size, and I just commend the board of directors and the staff for the work they have done.

Within the 2009-10 supplementary budget is also \$3 million for the Kwanlin Dun First Nation's cultural centre. I'm so proud and so excited about this particular facility. It will provide an anchor, really, to the Whitehorse waterfront, and you will not find a more important facility to go up along the waterfront than this particular place, the cultural centre. It has long been a vision of the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, and we are so very pleased to be able to partner with them, providing that long-term anchor and source of revenue for the cultural centre, by partnering with them in the building of a new community public library along the waterfront, which will also draw a tremendous amount of traffic to the Whitehorse waterfront.

Again, I commend the Department of Community Services and Kwanlin Dun First Nation for the good work they have been able to do in this unique partnership. It's very similar to the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and the partnership they have undertaken with the Department of Tourism and Culture in the creation of a new visitor information centre — very positive indeed.

When it comes to specific expenditures in the Department of Tourism and Culture, just adding on to that, there are a number of expenditures here, including monies for northern strategy museums training initiatives. In fact, this was an initiative I had the privilege of being able to co-announce with the Chief of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation last November, and it's really for the development of a heritage training certification program.

This is so that we're able to benefit and enable First Nations and also those who are in the cultural and heritage fields

to be able to acquire the necessary skills for employment within our cultural sector, while also ensuring that trainees develop a broad range of skills, which are required through the respective programs administered through First Nation governments and also municipal and territorial programs. Also, we're just ensuring that those governments are also able to access adequate human resource sources to participate in those cultural heritage processes, which affect, for example, First Nation traditional territories and lifestyles.

It is indicative of a collaborative and a cooperative inter-governmental relationship. It entails the Yukon College, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the Government of Yukon, as well as the First Nation heritage group. Again, it's just another example of everyone working together to develop and deliver heritage and cultural training for all Yukoners. The project will indeed promote and develop a Yukon workforce, with cross-cultural knowledge and training in First Nation culture and heritage realms as well. So I very much look forward to hearing progress of the first intake, which I understand will be this fall.

Again, I think it's a very unique example of a partnership being led by the heritage community — in particular, the Yukon First Nations heritage community.

We also have dollars in here for the Guild Hall rehabilitation. It will be interesting to see whether or not the Member for Porter Creek South in fact does vote for the budget. This particular supplementary funding does include dollars for the Guild Hall rehabilitation, which is 50-percent recoverable through the Government of Canada. We know that the Guild Hall was created as a labour of love almost three decades ago, and has since made a huge and vital contribution to community theatre in the City of Whitehorse. As I mentioned at the opening of this announcement not long ago, upgrades to the Guild Hall are actually to the tune of \$648,000. As we all know, it's a 30-year-old, multi-use rehearsal theatre facility, much-loved and much used, I might add, for exhibit space, for productions and for various community gatherings and so forth. So these upgrades couldn't have come at a better time. It will extend the life of this much-loved facility, but it will also make it much more functional, much more green and energy efficient. It will breathe, again, a renewed source of inspiration and pride in this particular facility. I'm very pleased to be able to provide money, which will go toward renovations, which include replacing the washrooms with barrier-free, building code compliant washrooms; replacing the existing roofing; renovating the kitchen and the bar area; replacing the existing propane furnaces with high-efficiency units, and so forth. So, again, it's another great example of a partnership with the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada. It is certainly not an initiative that is indicative of reckless spending.

This budget also contains funding for the continuation of the Destination: Yukon marketing campaign. Again, it's another partnership with the Government of Canada. This supplementary budget comprises \$440,000. In fact, there is an additional \$85,000 from this campaign that will be forwarded on to 2010-11 in which there is \$500,000 marked for the new fiscal year.

Again, this is viewed as a vital component of raising awareness in our key gateway cities of Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver, which has been identified as a priority by industry. Of course, Mr. Speaker, as you know, everything that we do when it comes to tourism and marketing programs — delivering, evaluating, and implementing — is industry led, market driven and research based. This is but one more example of an initiative that we are following through with.

So, Mr. Speaker, I could go on at great length, but I do appreciate that time is of the essence. There are other individuals who would like to say a few words in support of this budget. But again, thank you to the Government of Yukon officials. Thank you to my colleagues for presenting another budget that provides stimulus, but also provides investment in the long term as well. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure and an honour today to rise in our Assembly to debate and discuss the *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* for 2009-10.

This is a normal part of the government's operating structure of adjusting the estimates from the beginning of the year with the actuals as we gone on through the year and, as member also indicated earlier, I expect that there will be another supplementary budget to close out the year.

I would like to start by thanking all the officials in the departments of Education and Energy, Mines and Resources who have the challenge of implementing our budgets and accomplishing the objectives that we set out for them through the budgetary process, but also who have the challenge and opportunity to respond to issues and changing circumstances as they come up throughout the year. Despite the best of intentions and the best of plans and the best of our forecasting at the beginning of the year, obviously there are things that do change throughout the course of a year.

This last year we saw issues and concerns such as H1N1, fires and the situation in Canada as a result of the global financial situation. These were all issues and situations to respond to and I applaud them for responding to them appropriately.

It's often that when we are faced with a new issue, we do respond with allocation of resources. It's resources and money from budgets like this that do things like pay for H1N1 vaccinations or the marketing campaigns around that. And I would like to thank the Department of Health and Social Services for their tremendous efforts in this last year in addressing this very important, national situation.

I know some people are now saying: why did we spend all that much time and energy on something that didn't really turn into much, did it? I argue that it's because we invested so much time and energy into responding proactively that it didn't and that the investments we made to prepare Yukoners, to encourage appropriate behaviours, and to take appropriate precautions was money well spent and that certainly had a lot of savings in the long run, both from a government perspective and a societal perspective.

I'd also like to thank the Department of Finance and their officials in preparing this budget and in monitoring the finances throughout the course of the year. As I mentioned a little bit

earlier, things do change and, in this situation, we were faced with a change in accounting practice that came as a recommendation or direction from the Auditor General.

We'll see in the budget documents that the resources from the Building Canada fund have been changed in how they're being reported. We have had much discussion in this Assembly about going from cash-based accounting to a full accrual accounting, and how we also have heard the discussion of going from a matching perspective to a booking perspective. There are times when we receive funds like this when we are encouraged to book the whole fund upon receipt and other times when, now, we're told to book the funds at the same time as the funds are expended.

Being responsive to the direction of the Auditor General is key to all governments. We look forward to a certain amount of consistency in the future so we can count on one set of directions so we can then establish books and budgets appropriately, and I trust we'll see that level of consistency in future directions.

When I take a look at the budget, I do see that we were very responsive to a number of issues that came forward throughout the year, and that the total expenditures for operation and maintenance — those are many of the significant cash outlays — in this budget amount to \$12,954,000.

We've already heard from a number of different ministers in their different areas of responsibility of how those funds were expended. It should be noted that the vast majority of this \$12.9 million was expended in the Department of Health and Social Services. Their allocation of \$11.542 million does amount to the lion's share of this increased O&M expenditure.

I certainly appreciated the discussion from the Minister of Health and Social Services earlier when he detailed those expenditures, and indeed identified that they were responsible situations that needed to be responded to.

The other departments, there have been some slight changes both up and both down. I am sure we'll get into considerably more detail in Committee of the Whole when we go through the departments department-by-department. But the big changes throughout this supplementary budget were due to the change in accounting practices and also an increased responsible allocation for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Through the departments of Education and Energy, Mines and Resources there were a couple of changes, some of them involving additional resources coming from the Government of Canada, some of them about a change in practice of booking it as a capital expenditure versus booking it as an O&M expenditure. We'll go into much more detail on that in Committee of the Whole.

It should also be noted, too, Mr. Speaker, that during this last year the federal government has introduced several new programs that the Government of Yukon has been very responsive to. Given the world economic situation, the situation here in Canada, the Government of Canada has responded with Action Canada initiatives that allocate additional resources to help stimulate the economy and to address many much-needed areas in our society.

Government of Yukon, when faced with many of these opportunities, did of course dip into its savings in order to access some of these programs. It's very responsive and responsible to tap into some of these programs from the federal government and ensure that we can meet many of our needs in our community at a lower cost to the Government of Yukon. For example, I'm thinking of things like the knowledge infrastructure fund that provided resources to Yukon to be used for the construction of campuses in Pelly and Dawson. This was new money that came from the federal government, and it came with a responsibility on behalf of the Government of Yukon to match the contribution. Through the good planning of having successive surplus budgets for a number of years now, we certainly had resources available. We certainly had cash in the bank. We had the cash available so that we could take advantage of many of these programs. I'm hearing from opposition members that they don't share the same opinion about things like that.

I would just respectfully request of the opposition that they provide some credible criticisms and to indeed identify the expenditures that they wouldn't have incurred or the investments that they wouldn't have made. The condemnation that appears to be unanimous from some sectors really rings awfully hollow when, immediately after they condemn us for an expenditure, they identify other areas where they want to see additional expenditures.

This disingenuous politicization of some of these issues is very, very frustrating when we are seeing resources being allocated responsibly and seeing needs in the community being addressed in a very timely manner. And then the criticism comes forward. But it's often then followed by the criticism of: "You haven't done this for this intersection of the highway," or "You haven't done this to create a new commission," or "You haven't done this."

Well, let's hear some other creditable criticisms and hear how they would do things a little bit differently. Yes, I guess there could have been an argument here for having a disagreement with the Auditor General and choosing to book the resources differently. That would have had a change in the financial position. Is that an argument that the members opposite are making? I'm not sure. We have heard from both of the members that are here in the opposition gallery now, but we certainly haven't heard from all of the opposition throughout the course of debate. I do look forward to hearing from more of the attending members, once all the members get here.

Mr. Speaker, I support the government's financial plan. Important issues have been responded to in a responsive and responsible manner. This government has certainly built significant resources over the last number of years from having successive surpluses, and one could certainly make a case that if there was a time to dip in to resources, this would have been a good time to have done so.

I know the opposition members were certainly calling upon the government to increase expenditures earlier in our previous sittings in order to respond to many of the needs, and I believe that we have done so in a responsible manner.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to discussing the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Education — both departments play a strong role in the lives of Yukoners — in further debate in Committee of the Whole.

It has been discussed on a number of occasions that the Department of Education has a responsibility to prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. Also along those lines, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has a responsibility to prepare opportunities for Yukoners. That being said, Mr. Speaker, I know there are a number of other members from the opposition benches who I am sure are eager to join into debate today and I will turn the floor over to them to allow them to put forward some more credible criticisms and to further stake out their ground and identify the choices that they would have made had they been in a position to do so. Thank you very much.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I will be brief today by outlining the highlights of the 2009-10 *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* budget request. As this House will recall, we have been working on our human rights legislation to ensure we have adequate protection of human rights within Yukon. In this supplementary budget there is a one-time increase which is required to fund the *Human Rights Act* modernization project. Funding of \$66,000 will be allocated to 2009-10 to fund project costs associated with research, analysis, consultation and evaluation. A one-time supplementary increase of \$45,000 is requested for the Human Rights Board of Adjudication for 2009-10 to fund increased workloads of complaints filed, complex and costly hearings scheduled and the development of policies and procedures for hearing preparation.

A one-time increase of \$58,000 for 2009-10 is required to cover the annual operating costs for the Yukon Human Rights Commission. This increase is required to address funding challenges due to staff turnover, uncompetitive salary rates and increased caseload.

Our courts and their support are a very important function of the Department of Justice and from time to time we need to adjust budgets to support pressures within the court structure. In this supplementary budget there is a one-time increase of \$57,000, which is required to fund the judges' supplementary pension plan to cover the 2009-10 benefit-cost adjustment. In addition, there is a one-time increase of \$118,000 to assist the court operations in funding a 30-day, court-ordered, psychiatric assessment which began early in the 2010 calendar year.

Finally, there is a one-time increase of \$330,000 that is required to fund daily operational costs incurred by the Court Services branch. This funding has been allocated to areas that have experienced historical funding pressures. Under the heading of Legal Services, there are a number of items for this budget.

Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal court worker program is an important program designed to help persons of aboriginal descent to navigate the court process.

I am pleased to be able to report to this House that in this supplementary budget the aboriginal courtworker program will be receiving an additional \$20,000 this fiscal year as a contri-

but ion for the costs of a project entitled, "Training for Yukon Aboriginal Courtworkers: Still Building Self-Care and Relationship Mentoring". These one-time costs are 100-percent recoverable from Canada. In addition, the aboriginal courtworker program will be receiving an additional \$15,000 this fiscal year as a contribution for the cost of a project entitled, "Yukon Aboriginal Courtworker Handbook". These one-time costs are 100-percent recoverable from Canada. The access to justice agreement and the legal aid and aboriginal courtworker programs will be receiving \$100,000 in additional funding for program delivery. This one-time increase is once again 100-percent recoverable from Canada. Finally, there is a one-time transfer of \$25,000 that is requested to transfer funds from the Legal Services personnel budget to the Human Resources contract service budget to fund moving expenses for the director of Legal Services.

As members of this House know, we are embarking on a historic expansion of our electrical grid. The expansion, coupled with the normal work of our Yukon Utilities Board, has caused that board to experience a higher volume of work than normal. In order to facilitate this extra work, we have allocated an additional \$45,000 as a one-time increase to fund additional costs of the Yukon Utilities Board in this supplementary budget. In Community Corrections, parole supervision duties, previously provided in-house by Community Corrections, is currently being provided by Corrections Canada. As a result, the recovery from Corrections Canada will be reduced along with the Community Corrections personnel budget by \$40,000. This is a one-time reduction for 2009-10. A one-time increase of \$30,000 is required for the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to fund and administer medical treatment for hepatitis C at the facility.

A total of \$50,000 is allocated to the correctional services program direct transfer payment allotment to fund the northern strategy project needs and service gaps study. This is a one-time increase for 2009-10.

Under the heading of Policing and Investigation Services, there is a reduction of \$165,000 that is requested for the RCMP territorial policing agreement to reduce one-time funding due to the adjustment to projected clerk reclassification payouts. In addition, money is approved for the avionics upgrade of \$263,000. A death investigation of \$34,000 is no longer required by the RCMP this fiscal year. Justice is requesting that these funds be reallocated to the 2010-11 fiscal year.

The total reduction for the current year is \$297,000. That represents the highlights of the *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* budget for 2009-10. I will be pleased to provide more detailed comments as required during Committee of the Whole.

I would like to thank the officials in Justice and Finance for doing their good work on this supplementary budget, contrary to the members opposite who questioned their professional integrity in representing or misconstruing figures that are in this supplementary budget. That is totally absurd.

I was born on top of a mountain, but not in Tennessee, not with coon tails, but with groundhog tails — and you can't fool me with stories like that. I trust in their integrity.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I would like to start out by recognizing all the staff within the Environment department for the countless hours they put into meeting the objectives of their responsibilities within the challenges of protecting the environment. It is important to note that there are many challenges when it concerns the environment, because many stakeholders are involved and they all stake out their values and are willing to protect their positions, regardless of how others are affected.

The Yukon is a massive piece of land and, therefore, the differences between the stakeholders will be many.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to talk about one of the objectives that the department mentioned and that is the undertaking resource management activities that meet the Government of Yukon's obligations and respect the rights of aboriginal people and relationships established through land claims and self-government agreements.

This is an important undertaking because the majority of the First Nations in the Yukon have a land-claim and self-government agreement that must be respected by the government of the day, regardless of which party is in government. I will speak to this chapter — chapter 11 — because of its importance.

Mr. Speaker, chapter 11, Land Use Planning, in the *Umbrella Final Agreement* pretty well dictates a process that needs to be respected. 11.1.0 speaks to the Objectives. Those objectives are as follows: 11.1.1.1: “to encourage the development of a common Yukon land use planning process outside community boundaries; 11.1.1.2 — to minimize actual or potential land use conflicts both within Settlement Land and Non-Settlement Land and between Settlement Land and Non-Settlement Land; 11.1.1.3 — to recognize and promote the cultural values of Yukon Indian People; 11.1.1.4 — to utilize the knowledge and experience of Yukon Indian People in order to achieve effective land use planning; 11.1.1.5 — to recognize Yukon First Nations' responsibilities pursuant to Settlement Agreements for the use and management of Settlement Lands; and 11.1.1.6 — to ensure that social, cultural, economic and environmental policies are applied to the management, protection and use of land, water and resources in any integrated coordinated manner so as to ensure Sustainable Development.”

Mr. Speaker, I bring these to highlight this part of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* because there has been a lot of discussion in the public at large about land use planning in certain regions within the Yukon Territory. I think it is vitally important for all citizens who take up an interest in land use development anywhere in the Yukon to first of all realize they have an obligation to consult and to deal with any affected First Nation that might be in the area.

So, anyone who is going to be developing land, whether it is a mine or community development of any sort, really needs to talk to the affected First Nations.

I am now going to go to 11.6.0 in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, which states, “Approval Process for Land Use Plans”. 11.6.1 states, “A Regional Land Use Planning Commission shall forward its recommended regional land use plan to Government and each affected Yukon First Nation.”

Mr. Speaker, there was some discussion around this particular area with regard to, say, the land use planning commission and the Peel watershed. Well, it states very clearly here in the *Umbrella Final Agreement* what the process is and how it is going to govern what happens within that area.

The land use planning commission accord has its guidelines laid out in this *Umbrella Final Agreement*. When I go to 11.6.2, it says, “Government, after consultation with any affected Yukon First Nation and any affected Yukon community, shall approve, reject or propose modifications to that part of the recommended regional land use plan applying on non-settlement land.” That's a very important section of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. The words “approve, reject or propose modifications” is very important. It's important for everyone to understand that.

This land use planning process is only one example of how complex environmental issues can be, keeping in mind, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources also has a voice in this issue when it comes to land use planning, mainly because a lot of the mineral potential and undeveloped land masses within the Yukon are sought after by the miners and that is what this is all about, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes we as human beings confuse what we want with really what we need.

So, I know that, when we come to talk about land masses, there are several stakeholders that have interest in land mass and that goes from the wilderness tourism, to the game guiding outfitters concessions, to mining, to many different initiatives, I guess, that interest different people and that is a fact of life, Mr. Speaker. You know, people do have different interests.

I would also like to talk now just a little bit about some of the achievements within the Environment department.

For example, the department is investing more than \$500,000 annually into recycling and waste-reduction efforts in all Yukon communities. One only has to try to visualize how much waste one family can produce over a 365-day period. I know, speaking for myself, it's not uncommon for my family to have to dispose of maybe four or five garbage bags of waste every week. You multiply that by 30,000 people in the territory — or 34,000 or whatever — and it becomes a really big issue for the government of the day and the communities to have to deal with the waste.

When we look at the amount of effort one has to put in to deal with all the waste, recycling becomes somewhat of a much-higher interest.

For example, I didn't know until recently that empty milk jugs are what are used to make fleece. I've seen a lot of fleece jackets. They're actually very comfortable and warm. Who would have ever thought those empty milk jugs could make something like that? It's important that society within every community in the world starts to look at what can be recycled and what can't.

I know the environment program also provides special financial assistance — more than \$320,000 over two years to Raven Recycling, for example. That's a very worthy place to put some money when the price of all the different things they recycle is low and there's no money to be made. Sometimes the government has to go in for a short period of time until those

prices start picking up again. Otherwise we'll be swamped. The community could all of a sudden become very swamped with all kinds of recyclables that won't go anywhere.

Again, the department and the government stepping up to the plate and ensuring that things keep on flowing smoothly sometimes is a must.

We also provided \$1.8 million over three years to the Yukon Wildlife Preserve to help the organization expand its programs and seek other funding opportunities. This is, again, another initiative that was taken on by the Yukon Party government some years back and I believe it was somewhere around 2003 or in that era. It was to the point where the game preserve could have disappeared. To date, this game preserve is getting to be somewhat of a very identifiable project that is within the Yukon Territory. Some of the animals that are there are very precious because they are local animals that are within the Yukon Territory.

They do bring many, many visitors to the Yukon who go and observe what is being done there. The recent announcement from the federal government of contributing a couple million dollars toward this game preserve is proof in itself of the value. To be able to have a place where injured animals can be taken care of — for example, ones that may have been hit by a vehicle and had a broken leg or something of that nature could be taken to this facility after this new building is constructed to look after these animals. They'll also be able to do some more pioneer work in being able to do studies on the animals and the different biodiversity kind of issues that exist in the Yukon Territory.

Another important initiative that was undertaken by the department was the continued effort to deal with winter ticks. This management program that began in 2008 — they were found in the Takhini elk herd. The management of these ticks is somewhat of a real marvel in itself, because one has to learn about the ticks to be able to control them and deal with them. I won't go into all the details on that but, to date, what I've heard about it and the information I got from the department on it is that it's quite an extensive kind of process to be able to manage those ticks and to make every effort to prevent them spreading into the natural wildlife population in the Yukon, such as moose.

Mr. Speaker, I know that within this particular program there are so many different areas that one could cover. I would like to probably just talk a little bit about some of the traditional knowledge that sort of relates to the animal kingdom, for example. One of the things that I do know about traditional knowledge is that most of it is based on what is known as the "Creator's law." One of the fundamental Creator's laws among First Nation people in our belief system is that everyone belongs. That includes all of the two- and four-legged animals that walk on Mother Earth. It includes all of the ones that fly in the sky, all of the ones that swim in the water and all of those that live or crawl under the ground.

All of those must be respected because they all contribute to the very existence of each other on Mother Earth. When we talk about, for example, the two- and four-legged animals that walk on Mother Earth, that is a very small sentence with a hu-

munous meaning to it if one were to take the time to seek understanding of what that means.

For example, a traditional belief we have is that man was the weakest of all animals at one time. If man were to go out in the wilderness, they would not have much chance to survive without any kind of weapon of any sort. They would have a tough time to survive against all the other animals that are out there. However, through scientific technology and other things that made such things as the firearm, the gun, man then became the stronger of the animal kingdom, mainly because of the high-powered rifles, the handguns. So they became the ones who were in control.

So, they became the ones that were in control of the animal kingdom. Man alone, with this technology, has the ability to wipe out and destroy all other animals in the universe. That being said, just one small example of how First Nation culture starts — and I could probably talk on this for many hours. However, seeing that my time is up, I'll just quit there and close by saying that it's man's responsibility to look after the environment.

Mr. Nordick: It gives me great pleasure to speak to and support Bill No.18, *Third Appropriation Act, 2009-10*. But, more important to me is the ability to represent the constituents of my riding, the Klondike. I wish all my riding a productive and successful tourism, exploration and mining season that is approaching very quickly.

In education, this government is implementing New Horizons, flowing from the education reform project. This process is designed to build community capacity and develop a collaborative local response to educational issues and holistic, lifelong learning.

Another education initiative is the early years transition program, targeting pre-kindergarten to grade 3 students to help reduce performance gaps in both First Nations and other Yukon children. We also are implementing a curriculum and special programming training initiative to provide training for counselors, learning assistants and education assistants in dealing with the social and emotional well-being of vulnerable students.

One of our government's important training initiatives is the community training fund. Funding of \$1.5 million is distributed annually, based on proposals to partners with non-governmental organizations, First Nations, economic sectors, Yukon College and community-based organizations providing employment training.

The Department of Health and Social Services plays a key role in contributing to a better quality of life for all Yukoners. The Department of Health and Social Services has undertaken a number of new initiatives in partnership with Whitehorse General Hospital. Community nursing is in the process of replacing existing manual processing of X-rays with a digital X-ray processing in all rural health centre facilities. The Whitehorse General Hospital is coordinating this project in conjunction with improvements to their digital imaging program.

What this means for Yukoners is that basic X-ray views can be processed in all rural communities and forwarded elec-

tronically to radiologists in Edmonton for interpretation and returned within a very short period of time.

Another joint venture with the Whitehorse General Hospital is the centralized lab services for communicable disease control.

The Department of Health and Social Services is implementing a number of different initiatives under the territorial health access fund. One of those successful initiatives is 811, the Yukon HealthLine. This toll-free health service was launched in 2008 to provide access to health care providers, symptom relief and information on a 24/7 basis anywhere in the Yukon. From mid-June 2008 until the end of January 2009, a total of 5,218 calls were answered by nurses at HealthLink BC. This reduced unnecessary visits to the emergency rooms and nursing stations across this territory.

Other territorial health access fund initiatives included the development of a nutritional framework and strategy, the Drop the Pop awareness campaign, and an injury prevention initiative under rural community dental health initiative.

Our government provided a \$612,000 increase in 2009-10 for the Yukon seniors income supplement. The increase and indexing of the \$200 per month supplement will result in an ongoing annual increase and provide the benefit of an additional 320 Yukon seniors living on low income.

Mr. Speaker, we allocated \$2.8 million to cover the increase, including the recent raises in the food benefit that increases the food allowance by 15 percent for singles, 10 percent for couples and five percent for three-person families.

Mr. Speaker, the FireSmart program is important to my riding. In the Yukon, FireSmart activities are directed at reducing the threat of wildland fires in communities by minimizing flammable material in high-risk areas. In 2008, the FireSmart program created 28 projects and 39,000 hours of employment for Yukoners. We support this program.

Wildland fire management invested in replacement operational equipment, including pumps, hoses, chainsaws, sprinklers, radios and protective clothing to assist firefighters in safely protecting people and infrastructure in communities from wildland fires.

The 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games represented a great opportunity for the Yukon. The games represented a tremendous opportunity to showcase Yukon as wonderful place to live and work. Just as the 2007 Canada Winter Games acted as a catalyst for promoting tourism and business investment in the territory, so too did the 2010 Winter Olympics, and so will the 2012 Arctic Winter Games being hosted in Whitehorse.

Mr. Speaker, protecting and preserving our environment and wildlife is very important to me and this government. The climate change action plan builds upon goals of climate change strategy and identifies 33 priority actions to be implemented. The goals of the climate change strategy are to enhance knowledge and the understanding of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, we need to understand, adapt, and mitigate the effects of climate change. In the area of adaptation, for example, work is being undertaken to test different road surfaces in order to determine strategies for reduction of permafrost

degradation on highways. One example is the Front Street project in Dawson City, where we used a clear petroleum product to help mitigate the effects of permafrost.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon Housing Corporation offers a range of programs and funding options all designated to enhance home energy efficiencies, increasing affordability over the long term and reducing negative environmental impacts.

Mining and tourism remain the mainstay of Yukon's economy and my riding. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is playing its part in promoting mining and exploration development in the territory. One only has to look to an article I just read — or a page I just read of the *Whitehorse Star* — from April 1. It's a full-page ad, where it states that Yukon prospector of the year, Shawn Ryan, teamed up with Aldrin Resource Corp. That is because this government increased the Yukon mining incentive program by \$1.1 million for a total of \$1.8 million in 2009-10. We put in place tools that are necessary for industry to invest in the Yukon.

The Yukon mining incentive program is designated to promote and enhance mineral prospecting and exploration activities in the Yukon. The program's function is to provide a portion of risk capital required to locate, explore and develop mineral projects to an advanced exploration stage. We acted to modernize and increase the competitiveness of the legislative framework for hard rock mining in the Yukon by making changes to sections of the claims administration in the *Quartz Mining Act*. The changes included permitting a new claim post size, streamlining the time to record mineral claims, reducing the required number of copies of applications, making claim tags available prior to actual staking in the field and, also, allowing for bigger claim groupings for applications of assessment work within a year.

The resource access road program, managed by the Department of Highways and Public Works, provided \$500,000 for upgrading and improving resource roads. Our government has invested in overseas tourism marketing in order to increase awareness of Yukon as a destination of choice and promote a unique tourism experience. Once again, the Yukon, at the 2010 Olympic Games, was one of the largest marketing initiatives of the decade. We were able to capitalize on this by bringing reporters and international media here to the Yukon. The list goes on and on. In support of Canada Games, our government invested \$75,000 to participate in the torch relay that visited Old Crow, Dawson City and Whitehorse.

Over all, our government will continue to invest millions to improve the safety and integrity of Yukon's highways and bridges.

A key aspect to promoting communities is our community development fund, which continues to assist community groups to undertake projects that help build Yukon's social and economic capacity, as well as improving community health and well-being by creating jobs and improving infrastructure. There is a wide range of projects that were funded by the community development fund.

Out of the wide range of projects in my riding, there were over 29 recently funded projects. Mr. Speaker, I commend this supplementary budget to all members of this House. I believe

that this budget will continue to stimulate the Yukon private sector economy with investments in economic, social and public infrastructure.

In closing, I just want to give a brief outline of how this budget and this government supports my riding and rural Yukon. We improved Front Street in Dawson City. I know the members opposite would call that reckless spending; I call it supporting communities.

Mr. Speaker, we are currently investing in a waste-water treatment plant in Dawson City and a district biomass heating system. Members opposite call that reckless spending; I call that investing in rural Yukon.

We are building an addition to Yukon College. Members opposite — reckless spending. Mr. Speaker, that's investing in people and educational facilities in Yukon rural communities. We invested in tourism infrastructure — the visitor centre at Tombstone. To members opposite, that would be reckless spending also. The Korbo Apartments replacement is building replacement social housing for people who need it in the communities. To members opposite — reckless spending. I consider that helping Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, another big issue that the members opposite called reckless spending: a hospital in Dawson City. The hospital in Dawson City is reckless spending? Mr. Speaker, we are investing in health care for our rural Yukon. I think the members opposite would call the second phase of McDonald Lodge reckless spending also. How would they justify that to my community? We are investing in my community in rural Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder what they would call a new jet boat that we provided for the search and rescue organization volunteer group in Dawson City. Would that be reckless spending? I think not, Mr. Speaker. I could go on and on of what we consider investing in the Yukon, investing in people, in communities, yet the opposition calls it reckless spending. I guess I should just say that I rest my case. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Once again, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all members of the House for their comments. The government side has been very diligent in putting forward the facts and the figures of what all this means to Yukon. We have to address a few matters when it comes to the Official Opposition.

I think it's important that we recognize that the continued inferences that budgets are created by government forcing Finance officials to put numbers in a budget document they want to see there is, in fact, incorrect. Surely the members recognize that the professional people in the Department of Finance will follow the *Financial Administration Act*, will follow policy, public sector accounting guidelines, and it is really an affront to their professionalism and it's unfortunate that these very hard-working people have been subjected to such comments.

The members opposite make a claim of a deficit. Let me begin by expressing to the members opposite that the definition of deficit is when your liabilities exceed your assets. Now

we're going to have to go through all this for the members opposite because, once again, the budget document reflects in total the fiscal position of the Yukon Territory.

If the members opposite agree with the definition of "deficit" — unless they want to create their own definition — then logically we can proceed with the debate and inform the members opposite that the fiscal position of the Yukon today and going forward is this: if we took the budget, or the supplementary, and the fiscal year that ended March 31, 2010 — if we were to extinguish at that time all of the government liabilities that existed at that time, the government would still be in a net financial resource position of some \$69 million.

Going forward, the budget documents clearly show, as the estimates presented, that the government's net financial resource position continues.

So the members have a fundamental problem with their overall definition, but it goes deeper than that. The fact of the matter is that the last actual deficit in the Yukon took place at the year-end 2003, the last Liberal budget the territory was subjected to.

That deficit was turned around immediately when the Yukon Party government took office. Since then, the ongoing fiscal management and surplus creation has resulted in this — and this goes back to the definition of "deficit," when your liabilities exceed your assets. The fact of the matter is that the government has taken in \$155,162,000 more than it has expended over the same period. That has resulted in our ability to address the needs of Yukon, to invest in infrastructure, to invest in people, to invest in communities, to invest in health care, to actually vaccinate Yukoners to deal with H1N1, and the list goes on.

That's why we're doing what we're doing, because we have the fiscal capacity to build Yukon's future.

The argument the members make is a difficult one for them to maintain because, on the one hand, they accuse the government of reckless spending, yet when they look at the investments throughout the budget — throughout all our budgets; there are eight of them now — the members will have a hard time dealing with where all the investments took place, what it resulted in for today's Yukon, the quality of life, the increase in infrastructure, the increase in our economy, the increase in housing, the enhancements in education and health care and so on. The members have great difficulty in maintaining their position of reckless spending.

Furthermore, the members should be at least able to present to Yukoners how they would totally change all those budgets, change all those investments and where they would invest the money. That's simply not happening. On the other hand, the members opposite will suggest that we should spend millions more in other areas as they make the argument that we are broke.

So it's very difficult to have a constructive debate with the Official Opposition, no matter how we try. But the government side will not give up. The ministers will, through Committee, debate with the members opposite in a manner that presents the facts to the Official Opposition. One could only hope at some

point there is recognition by the members opposite on what's really transpiring in today's Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the supplementary budget, it's another important element to be articulated. The fact of the matter is that the budgets that we have tabled are very transparent and we've taken a very cautious approach in budgeting. All along, we've taken a cautious approach in budgeting. We've been transparent and accountable and we have taken the cautious approach. That's why we have the fiscal means and capacity we do today. The members now have a problem with that, even though the Official Opposition has been fully briefed, understands the change of accounting for Building Canada, understands that the cautious approach is one in which a change in estimated lapses took place, understands that these resulted in a marked change in the overall budget figures. That is not an expenditure of money; it is an accounting issue, Mr. Speaker, and a timing issue.

I know the members take issue on many occasions with transparency, yet when matters are presented to the Official Opposition in a very transparent way, they then misinterpret what they've been presented and go off on a tangent that is very difficult for them to explain to the Yukon public because most people will understand that definition of deficit — that being when your liabilities are in excess of your assets. Most people actually understand that and we're going to try to get the Official Opposition to understand that, too, as we continue to debate the budget because we want a credible Official Opposition. Yukoners deserve a credible Official Opposition, one that presents a reasonable alternative — but not being consistent with the definition of things like deficit, that is a very difficult thing to accomplish. That's a very difficult thing to accomplish in terms of that reasonable alternative.

Now, the supplementary before us also included some increased medical travel — not just the H1N1 investment of some \$1.8 million. I think the opposition — the Official Opposition especially; we haven't heard from any others — has to explain to Yukoners why they have claimed this to be reckless spending.

First off, vaccinating Yukoners in what was at least envisioned to be a possible global pandemic is hardly reckless spending. The government side sees it as needed investment in dealing with such a matter. Secondly, the increased travel cost for health care — are the members suggesting that we should have said to Yukoners who needed to travel out to receive medical care, "No. You can't go, because that would be reckless spending." That's what the Official Opposition is saying.

It's very, very concerning, because I think there has to be a reckoning here where the members opposite, especially the Official Opposition, understand what the Yukon is all about. You know, some of the most pointed comments that we hear off-microphone also give rise to some issues about opposition and what it means to be an elected representative in this Assembly.

I would take the members back to this issue of decorum and our conduct and I don't think I have to say much more on that matter. The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is the supplementary has been completely misinterpreted by the Official Opposition

and we're going to have to deal with that during Committee discussions.

Furthermore, the supplementary actually sets up the mains for the fiscal year we have entered, which is the fiscal year of 2010-11. Furthermore, the public accounts, when tabled this fall, will present the actual figures as audited by the Auditor General. There's still quite a bit of work to do.

Now, the supplementary also includes investments in the airport terminal in Whitehorse. It includes investments in correction infrastructure, Dawson City sewage treatment and district heating — and these are investments that, during the course of the fiscal year, were required. It's not reckless spending. It's meeting the needs of Yukon and its communities and elsewhere.

And frankly, Mr. Speaker, that's a choice the government will readily make each and every year, ensuring that we are investing in the appropriate places and building Yukon's future.

The other point is that the supplementary and our fiscal position as presented has allowed us to create, once again, the largest budget ever in the history of the Yukon — \$1,075,000,000. I know the members will try to make the point that that's a going-for-broke budget; however, they'll have to explain the fiscal position of the Yukon because it extends out for a number of years, showing, on an ongoing basis, a net financial position. And that net financial position is important because we're paying our way and we're building the future.

Of course, the most important factor in budgeting is the future — ensuring that the decisions you make today are not going to compromise the future, and that's exactly what the budgets, as presented, show — not only the last seven but, including this, the eighth budget of this Yukon Party government.

So, Mr. Speaker, we continue on and recognize that in Committee we can debate department by department. Maybe the Official Opposition can explain at that time where those areas of reckless spending are and we can address that with them; that's what Committee of the Whole is all about.

But I think it's important to recognize that the Yukon Territory is quite a different place than it was when that last deficit was actually in existence. Much has transpired over the seven years since the Yukon Party government has taken office. The changes have been for the positive. Our economy has changed. There is no question about it — we are growing. Private sector investment increased. We're talking hundreds of millions of dollars if you factor in the mining sector and all-inclusive. It's a significant step in the right direction when the private sector is taking on more and more of a role in building the Yukon's economy.

Our population is at record levels. That's important, too, because that's increasing the number of taxpayers while we — the government of the day — have not increased taxes. In fact, we've taken steps in certain areas to actually reduce taxes and ensure Yukon is as competitive as possible nationally and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the infrastructure deficit, which is something that was left unattended for a long, long time. The question that comes to mind immediately is for how

many years has our main Whitehorse-Aishihik-Faro grid been a grid that was disconnected? The investment we're making is actually over the long term going to dramatically improve access to affordable and reliable energy for Yukon consumers, for the ratepayer. This is a deficit in infrastructure that existed for years. It is this Yukon Party government with its fiscal management, building up our fiscal surpluses and reserves, that has enabled us to go forward with addressing that infrastructure deficit in energy.

It includes our work in partnering with the federal government. Millions of dollars are being invested. Mr. Speaker, that is important because we have the fiscal capacity now to address those deficits in infrastructure, unlike the past when the government was actually in deficit.

We also continue on with investing in health care facilities. I think the members opposite have to explain what they would do. This is a lack of beds, a lack of access to acute-care beds here in the Yukon. That has to be addressed. They can explain — the members opposite can explain — to Yukoners why people in Dawson City and Watson Lake should be sent elsewhere when, in fact, in a community like Watson Lake, for almost 30 years, there was an existing hospital facility. It was called, from the day of its opening, the Watson Lake Cottage Hospital. Again, we're addressing infrastructure deficit.

But the members opposite should explain to Yukoners how they would address that particular challenge. We are doing so in a manner that's working with our corporation to ensure that we retain fiscal resources to actually deliver the health care required. Besides, we are also doing it on balance, to ensure that the taxpayer of today is not footing the bill for facilities that will be accessed by Yukoners long into the future. That's the point of amortizing the costs of these types of facilities through the fullness of their useful life. It's called doing business.

Furthermore, the other incorrect statement that has been made time and time again is the issue of debt, and we've gone through that. But the fact of the matter is that for those who suggest such things as if it's the first time is false, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is, when we came into office, the territory was in debt, and we've been paying that debt down. And, by the way, that debt was because of investment in failed enterprises.

Our investments are in hospitals and hydro infrastructure — quite a difference — and will be used long into the future. They will not be closed sawmills or closed oil companies. These will be facilities and infrastructure that Yukoners will benefit from long into the future.

So, Mr. Speaker, the debate is actually an affront to the Yukon public. It's counterproductive and, quite frankly, it's fruitless. But we will continue on, doing our job. The ministers for each department will make their representations on behalf of their departments and the investments their departments are asking for — the budgetary items their departments are asking for — and we would hope that the members opposite will engage in a good, sound, constructive debate for the benefit of the Yukon public, because that's who we serve and it's something

that sometimes the opposition benches tend to forget, but the government side has not and we will continue on.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I commend the supplementary budget to the House. It is a significant way to wrap up a fiscal year and it continues to invest in Yukon, in Yukon communities, in Yukon people and in Yukon's future.

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: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Disagree.

Mr. Elias: Disagree.

Mr. Fairclough: Disagree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:25 p.m.