

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, September 22, 2010 – 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Vern Toews

Mr. McRobb: I am honoured to rise today on behalf of all members in tribute to a long-time Yukoner, Vern Toews, who passed away suddenly one week ago today, on September 15, upon driving to Destruction Bay.

Vern was born in Wembley, Alberta, in 1937. He was the second of six children. At an early age Vern became interested in electricity and electronics, which developed into a career as a journeyman electrician. When injured on a job site in Grand Prairie, he was sent to the hospital where he met his future wife Elizabeth, also known as Betty.

Betty and Vern married in 1961 and their family started with the arrival of Susan, closely followed by Frances, and then Michelle. In 1966, Betty was unfortunately diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

Vern was a mechanical genius and used his talents to build a compression chamber that helped relieve Betty's pain. It worked so well, other MS sufferers from all over western Canada travelled to Whitehorse to use the chamber.

In 1972, Vern accepted the position of chief electrical inspector with the Yukon government and served until his early retirement in 1995.

Vern was elected to Whitehorse City Council in 1980 and served until 1985. He also represented the Yukon on the National Capital Commission, serving on the board of directors from 1981 until 1988, and on its executive committee.

Community was very important to Vern. He joined the Knights of Columbus, the Lions Club, volunteered with the Silver Sled Dog Race and was a member of the Community Development Committee in Haines Junction, to name a few.

Vern could always be counted on to lend a hand when something needed to be done, and continued working until the very day of his passing. Vern was easy to talk to. He listened. He empathized, and he would always help however and whenever possible.

One of Vern's greatest disappointments in life came in 1994, when he was no longer able to care for Betty and she moved into a care facility. But they remained married as Vern married for life and believed in the principle "till death do us part".

Vern was buried yesterday at the Haines Junction Cemetery before a large crowd of family and friends on a glorious sunny day. A reception followed at the old community hall

with several speakers lead by former Yukon Senator Ione Christensen, whose son Paul is married to Vern's daughter Michelle. The hall was full of people who paid their respects and who will dearly miss this special person.

Many of us knew Vern personally. One of his many impressive qualities was his deep understanding and love for politics. I always looked forward to seeing Vern and listening to his perspective on the issues of the day.

Our sincere condolences go out to his family, some of whom are in attendance today. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and in closing, I invite all members to join me in welcoming to the gallery today his daughters: Susan Toews — who, by the way, once served as a page in this Assembly — and Michelle Christensen-Toews, and his siblings Laura Hagen and Phyllis Kocupchuk and husband John Kocupchuk.

Applause

In recognition of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing September as Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. This is a time to pay tribute to the women who have battled and won against this disease, and to grieve for those who lost the battle.

C'est le moment de rendre hommage aux femmes qui ont lutté contre cette maladie et qui ont réussi à vaincre le cancer... et d'exprimer notre tristesse à l'égard de celles qui ont perdu la bataille.

In 2010, it is estimated that 2,600 new cases of ovarian cancer will be diagnosed in Canada, and 1,750 women will die from the disease.

The lifetime probability of a woman developing ovarian cancer in Canada is 1 in 71. The lifetime probability of a woman dying from ovarian cancer in Canada is 1 in 87. While there is no single cause of ovarian cancer, personal or family history of cancer may place a woman at risk. When ovarian cancer is detected and treated early, the chances of successful treatment are better. Recognizing symptoms and getting regular checkups are the best ways to detect ovarian cancer early. Healthy living is a way that we can all join the fight against cancer. While healthy living can't prevent all cancers, it can help.

Nous pouvons tous adopter un mode de vie sain pour lutter contre le cancer. Même si ne préviendra pas toutes les formes de cancer, un mode de vie sain ne peut qu'être bénéfique.

Up to half of all cancers can be prevented through making lifestyle choices such as not smoking, eating a healthy diet and staying active on a regular basis, among others. During the month of September, I encourage all Yukon women to learn more about what we can do to reduce the risk of developing cancer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In recognition of Mid-Autumn Festival

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: As everyone knows, there's a full moon every month, yet when the full moon lights up the sky tonight, not only astronomers but also everyone, in particular the Chinese, will be marvelling at its beauty.

On the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival, this celestial body carries more than scientific implications. The Mid-Autumn Festival is perhaps the most celebrated Chinese festival, and a festival celebrated around the world.

To understand the importance of the Mid-Autumn Festival, you just have to cast a quick glance at any street or take a ride down any road in Asia, which is full of people and traffic. Tonight is about sharing the full moon, moon cakes and our feelings with our loved ones. The festival may be known more for its association with moon cakes — a seasonal delicacy equivalent to our fruit cakes, for those who aren't familiar — and the social functions, but it is its rich and magnificent symbolism that has won it a special place in the world's cultural tapestry.

The truth is that utilitarianism has driven us further away from the romantic qualities of our ancestors that they bestowed upon the 15th day of the eighth lunar month.

The actual origins of the festival, and even moon cakes, are not really romantic at all. The festival had its origins in the ancient rituals of moon worship. Our ancestors, however, turned the solemn rituals into elegant entertainment, and the Moon Festival in many ways is similar to our western holiday of Thanksgiving.

Appreciating the full moon on this special night has thus become an occasion to celebrate with family members, relatives and all other loved ones. Moon cakes are an auspicious symbol of that celebration.

Year after year, generation after generation, the moon on this special night has inspired poets and writers and helped them to create immortal literature. Every moon festival sees people recite indelible lines from long ago.

"May all be blessed with longevity, though far apart we share the beauty of the moon together." These lines by the Song Dynasty poet Su Shi remain a Moon Festival must. So is the famous saying of Tang Dynasty poet Zhang Jiuling: "From the remotest corners of the world we share the moment when the bright moon rises above the sea."

With or without moon cakes, the festival is about sharing — and not just the elegance of the full moon, but also the good wishes. Just like the ancient poets and writers said, true love transcends the separation created by time and space.

Congratulations to everyone if they're lucky enough to be with family and loved ones. If not, let the full moon take that sense of togetherness to the depths of their hearts. Tonight, under the bright full moon, let us think of all to be well, especially to the victims of disasters around the world. We're together and we have plenty to share.

Speaker: Any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.
Returns or documents for tabling.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. McRobb: I think it's only fitting for the benefit of all members to table a funeral pamphlet for the late Vern Toews.

Speaker: Any further documents for tabling?
Reports of committees.
Are there any petitions?
Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 86: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Lang: I move that Bill No. 86, entitled *Act to Amend the Business Corporations Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 86, entitled *Act to Amend the Business Corporations Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 86 agreed to

Bill No. 87: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Lang: I move that Bill No. 87, entitled *Securities Transfer Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 87, entitled *Securities Transfer Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 87 agreed to

Bill No. 88: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Lang: I move that Bill No. 88, entitled *Act to Amend the Partnership and Business Names Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 88, entitled *Act to Amend the Partnership and Business Names Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 88 agreed to

Bill No. 89: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Lang: I move that Bill No. 89, entitled *Act to Amend the Societies Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 89, entitled *Act to Amend the Societies Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 89 agreed to

Bill No. 90: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Lang: I move that Bill No. 90, entitled *Act to Amend the Cooperative Associations Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 90, entitled *Act to Amend the Cooperative Associations Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 90 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills for introduction? Hearing none, are there notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Nordick: I rise today to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to increase First Nation education funding for on-reserve education to levels comparable with provincial and territorial expenditures.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to provide stable, predictable, long-term funding for non-governmental organizations as they collectively and individually provide a broad range of important programs and services to the Yukon public.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to implement the recommendations of the *Working Without Boundaries Final Report* in order to:

- (1) improve the delivery of front-line services to children and families at risk in the departments of Education, Health and Social Services, and Justice; and,
- (2) to ensure that the social inclusion strategy is acted upon by all departments in the Yukon government.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate to immediately act upon the documented need for additional second-stage housing for abused women in Whitehorse by:

- (1) consulting with her colleagues, the Minister of Health and Social Services and the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, on the need for second-stage housing;
- (2) determining the best possible response to the accommodation needed;
- (3) submitting and supporting a recommendation to her Cabinet colleagues on the construction of second-stage housing;
- (4) advertising for a request for proposals for the recommended housing; and
- (5) beginning this process at the earliest possible moment.

I give notice of the following motion — especially in light of the fact that yesterday was the International Day of Peace.

Speaker: Just read the motion, please.

Mr. Cardiff: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

THAT it is the opinion of this House that the Government of Canada should address the many troubling and alarming investments of Canadians' retirement dollars the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board has made into war, environmental abuses and human rights violations around the world by:

- (1) appointing a labour and civil society representative to the CPPIB;

- (2) requiring the CPPIB to adhere to its socially responsible investment policy for proxy voting;

- (3) reviewing the composition of the CPPIB to address and resolve conflicts of interest of current board members;

- (4) introducing legal and ethical screening legislation so that CPPIB investments are in compliance with international and domestic laws, as well as existing treaties; and

- (5) ending the use of the CPP as a tool for privatizing public services in Canada and internationally.

Mr. Cathers: I rise today to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Leader of the Yukon Liberal Party and the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin to publicly explain why they voted against debating Motion No. 1036, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike — an action which was puzzling considering the following facts:

- (1) All Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly over the past 16 years have consistently opposed the long-gun registry;

- (2) the Yukon Legislative Assembly unanimously passed two motions opposing the long-gun registry, including a motion the Member for Copperbelt voted in favour of on November 30, 2005;

- (3) unanimous passage of Motion No. 1036 would have provided support to the Yukon's Member of Parliament, Hon. Larry Bagnell, and helped him continue to represent his constituents by supporting elimination of the long-gun registry;

- (4) it would have been very difficult for federal Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff to justify punishing Mr. Bagnell for doing something the Yukon Legislative Assembly had unanimously urged him to do the day before the vote on private member's Bill C-391;

- (5) Mr. Bagnell has repeatedly indicated he would welcome any option that allowed him to avoid voting in favour of keeping the long-gun registry; and

- (6) the Leader of the Yukon Liberal Party and the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin have both repeatedly promised Yukoners they would support eliminating the long-gun registry.

Speaker: Further notices of motion?

Hearing none, is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Fiscal management

Mr. Mitchell: Yukoners know what to expect from this government: deficits, debt and denial. The Premier promised sound financial management. Last spring, after the books showed a deficit, he still said that prudence has been a hallmark of the Yukon Party government. In fact, this Yukon Party government's hallmarks have been reckless spending and refusing to be accountable to Yukoners.

There was a deficit last year; there is a deficit this year. This is almost \$200 million in new debt, and there is a government determined to spend its way into the next election. Can

the Premier tell us why he can't deliver on his promise to keep Yukoners in the black?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: This is a shocking request from the Leader of the Official Opposition, actually suggesting that the Yukon's fiscal position is in debt and we are in denial. Mr. Speaker, does the Leader of the Official Opposition not spend any time referring to budget documents that are compiled by Finance officials, deputy ministers, financial directors throughout the government? All year-ends are audited by the Auditor General. If the Leader of the Official Opposition actually referred to the budget documents, then the member would have to stand, correct his statements and explain to Yukoners that we actually have a savings account.

By the way, the Yukon is one of only two jurisdictions in Canada that, today, has a savings account. That is very prudent fiscal management.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is apparently living in a separate reality. This Yukon Party government has, once again, spent itself into a current year deficit. Last year the government promised Yukoners a \$20-million surplus, but when the books came out last spring, it turned into a \$23-million deficit. The Premier denied his own figures. He said, "The Yukon government is not only in surplus at year-end, March 31, 2010, but we are projecting surpluses all the way out to the year 2014."

Now the figures are in for last year. Not only is there a deficit, but it's bigger than \$23 million. It's over \$25 million. How does the Premier explain the ever-worsening deficit?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: How does the Leader of the Official Opposition, who touts himself and his party as an alternative to the Yukon Party government — which has really accomplished a great deal in the territory over the last eight years plus. When you consider what is really happening in today's Yukon, including doubling the fiscal capacity of the Yukon Territory, coupled with increased investments across the territory, infrastructure, social programs, while at the same time maintaining a savings account, how does the member actually justify the statements he's making?

Mr. Speaker, by the way, the expenditures in question include retroactive expenditures for last fiscal year — and they are, by the way, for health care for Yukoners, physicians' visits, out-of-territory health claims and for wages for public sector employees.

Now if the member has a problem with those expenditures, the member should do the right thing — stand up and tell Yukoners what he would cut from the budget and the expenditures and investments throughout the territory.

Mr. Mitchell: Last year the Premier promised Yukoners a surplus, but instead he delivered a \$25-million deficit. It's credit-card financing. Instead of admitting it, he said, "The fiscal management that we have provided the territory has brought this territory into surplus and has taken this territory out of deficit into that very important and positive fiscal capacity we have today." It's hard to understand how a deficit on the books equals a surplus in the Premier's mind. This year, the Premier promised Yukoners another surplus, but the supplementary estimates tabled yesterday show, yet again, another

deficit. Yukoners can't afford this spending trajectory. Why can't the Premier manage Yukoners' money?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: So, doubling the fiscal capacity of the Yukon the member suggests is improper fiscal management — to suggest that an accumulated surplus of \$500 million plus is improper fiscal management, to present to Yukoners a savings account of millions of more dollars, coupled with all the investments made in the territory today and over the last many years that this government has been in office, is improper management. Let me tell the House and Yukoners how past Liberal governments used to deal with deficits and surpluses. They capped leave liability. That was against public sector accounting guidelines. This Yukon Party government did not cap leave liability; we increased the fiscal capacity of Yukon; we have honoured all our responsibilities under public sector accounting guidelines. We have invested heavily in Yukon's today and future benefit, and we maintain a very healthy savings account — one of only two jurisdictions in the country.

If the member calls that improper fiscal management, the member can explain that to Yukoners. We call it prudent fiscal management.

Question re: Fiscal management

Mr. Mitchell: We have more questions for the Premier on his free-spending ways. Government spending is out of control. It has been for the last two years, as the Premier spends down the savings account to almost nothing. In March of 2008, only two short years ago, the savings account stood at \$165 million. Since that time, the Premier has been spending more than is coming in. That savings account, the net financial resources, is now down to only \$33 million. This does not even take into account the debt the Premier is running up in the Development Corporation and the Hospital Corporation.

In the spring, the Premier said last year's budget was a surplus. New figures released yesterday by the government say it's a deficit — a \$25-million deficit. Will the Premier confirm for the record that last year's budget was, in fact, a deficit budget?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: What we can confirm is the member opposite is void of explaining to Yukoners because the member obviously takes great issue with the fiscal position of the Yukon — is void of explaining to Yukoners what the Liberals would cut. Would the Liberals cut the massive investments in creating economic prosperity and jobs for Yukoners today and long into the future?

This government was elected to create an economy. This government has done that. It's one of the best economies the Yukon has experienced. This territory now has a growing population. This territory has a vastly strengthened social safety net. This territory is one of the best financially managed territories in the country. It is evidenced by the fact that every other jurisdiction except Alberta and Yukon has a net debt position, instead of a savings account.

The member should tell Yukoners what he would cut from the expenditures they are receiving today to fit with whatever his view is of financial management.

Mr. Mitchell: It's interesting to see the Premier refuse to answer a simple question — is last year's budget a surplus

budget or a deficit budget? The Premier talks about evidence; he tabled the evidence yesterday. It says right here, “Deficit for the year, \$25,675,000.” This is from a government that bragged about being good fiscal managers; this from a government that said it would never run deficits. It all comes down to trust, Mr. Speaker. Whom do Yukoners trust to manage the books?

This year’s budget is also a deficit budget. That’s now two years in a row, as the Premier spends down the savings account, heading into the next election.

Will the Premier confirm for the record that the budget for the current year is also a deficit budget?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: We can confirm that the budget for this year is meeting all obligations of the government and, at the same time, maintaining a healthy savings account. In listening to the member, it brings to mind the question: can the member even balance or consolidate a bank account? You would not calculate only half of your expenditures in that bank account; you would go through all expenditures, all incoming, calculate your tangible capital assets and come to your true actual fiscal position.

Yes, we have spent down the savings account, meeting our obligations. Once again, those obligations include employee wages, health care for Yukoners — if the member has a problem with that, explain to Yukoners why he would cut those expenditures.

Mr. Mitchell: We see that the Premier remains in denial. The government has proven it can’t be trusted to handle the public’s money. Let’s go over some facts. This year’s budget is also a deficit budget: \$2.4 million. Last year’s budget was a deficit budget: \$25 million. That’s two years in a row of deficit budgets.

The savings account is down from \$165 million in 2008 to just \$33 million today, and a portion of that is in those great asset-backed investments that the Premier is so fond of.

The Premier is going for broke, spending every penny he can get his hands on. He has also directed Crown corporations to borrow another \$167 million. It’s not responsible, Mr. Speaker; it’s not sustainable, and it’s a dead burden that will haunt taxpayers in the Yukon for years to come.

Will the Premier confirm that Yukoners now have two deficit budgets in a row?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: You know, this is interesting, coming from a gentleman who was in the real estate business and actually convinced Yukoners to enter into mortgages. I’m sure

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: Hon. Premier, let’s not personalize this debate. You have the floor. Carry on.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In that reference, I want to point out to the member opposite — is the member suggesting that investments in this territory — creating the economic prosperity, jobs for Yukon — are improper investments? Is the member suggesting that these investments that are creating an investment climate better than ever before — hundreds of millions of dollars now being invested by the private sector — are improper investments? Is the

member suggesting that investment in infrastructure — hospitals, hydro, highways, bridges and other public facilities — including his opposition to the addition to the Whitehorse Erik Nielsen International Airport — is improper investment? Is the member suggesting that the investment this government has made — creating more parks and habitat protection areas in the Yukon than ever before — is an improper investment? Is the member suggesting that the investment by this Yukon Party government in the social side of the ledger in this territory is an improper investment? If the member doesn’t like the fiscal position of the Yukon, explain to Yukoners where the member would cut.

Question re: Youth shelter

Mr. Cardiff: Yesterday, while touring the Whitehorse Centre riding and representing the interests of those constituents, I noticed something very interesting. It appears the temporary emergency youth shelter, administered by the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, has moved from the Sarah Steele detox centre to a new location. Can the Minister of Health and Social Services confirm this and can he explain the reason for the dramatic change?

Hon. Mr. Hart: We are dealing with a situation at Sarah Steele because of the crowding that’s involved there, and we are handling the situation to ensure that the youths being handled are being taken care of through the Skookum Jim process.

Mr. Cardiff: Yesterday the minister gave us his philosophy of social inclusion, and you can read it in the Blues. He said that he was working with stakeholders and they must review any new concepts or buildings and provide a priority list before any action can be taken by his department. I would assume that the clients of a service are stakeholders. I would also assume that the relatives of the clients of a service are stakeholders. I would assume that the organizations that provide services to at-risk youth are stakeholders. I would also assume that the citizens affected by the location of a service in their neighbourhood are stakeholders.

I would hope the government’s decision to move the emergency youth shelter from the Sarah Steele Building to its new location on Jeckell Street involved discussions with all these stakeholders.

Can the minister explain why this change was not publicized — announced — and why it did not involve the stakeholders or the public at large?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I stated earlier, we are dealing with a crowding situation at Sarah Steele. We are working with all the groups in hand. This is a situation we feel we can handle on a temporary basis to ensure that we can alleviate and cover all the issues related to the youth in question.

Mr. Cardiff: I think it’s probably a good thing to move the youth shelter from the detox centre. We’ve been critical of that before and I would actually congratulate the minister on doing that. I don’t think it’s appropriate that the young people were housed in close proximity to addicted adults. I’m not questioning the move itself; I’m questioning how it was done.

It was done without consulting any of the key stakeholders involved, contrary to the minister's own very clear statements yesterday about social inclusion and including stakeholders.

Will the minister provide me with a copy of the operating plan for the new emergency youth shelter, including the intake procedure, the programming, the staffing and the budget for the services being provided there, as well as a summary of the consultations that took place before this change was made? Will he arrange to provide me with a tour of this new facility, please?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I stated earlier, we're dealing with a situation; we're handling it in the best possible way we can with the services we have and the stakeholders we're dealing with, to ensure that all individuals are being handled properly.

I thank the member opposite for his comments.

Question re: Lake Laberge zoning

Mr. Cathers: I have some questions for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about the status of land planning and zoning files, recognizing the amendment to the Ibex Valley zoning regulation was approved and that the draft regulation for Deep Creek went for public consultation this summer. I thank the minister and department staff for that.

As the minister knows, some of my constituents in the Deep Creek area would very much like to see their draft regulation for zoning approved. Will he please tell me when he anticipates that the draft Deep Creek zoning regulation will be approved and implemented?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I'm glad that the Member for Lake Laberge recognizes the work that Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has done in the areas of land planning. We are working to address the needs of Yukoners in a responsive manner. There are a number of land use planning areas that are being addressed now — not only in the member opposite's riding of Laberge, but also through many other areas in the territory. I appreciate he has recognized that progress has been made, and we'll be continuing to work with residents in the Deep Creek area and other areas to develop appropriate land use practices and policies in all neighbourhoods throughout the territory.

Mr. Cathers: That wasn't much in the way of an answer, unfortunately. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources received a petition signed by 29 residents of Deep Creek, asking for their draft zoning regulations to be approved. Both he and I have received e-mails and phone calls from other residents who share that desire. If the minister is not able to provide a timeline, what information can he provide to me and to my constituents about when the draft Deep Creek zoning regulation will be moved forward?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I don't have a specific date that I could tell the member opposite when everything will be concluded. I will tell him that work is being done on this matter, as is being done in land planning issues in Sunnysdale, in Dawson, in Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake and other areas throughout the territory.

I appreciate that he has recognized that there has been progress made on the issues in his riding. The riding of Laberge certainly has not been ignored by this government. This government is continuing to address many of the constituents' needs throughout Laberge and indeed all ridings in the area.

We will continue to work on his issues and other issues for all Yukoners.

Mr. Cathers: I'll move on to another land planning file in the hope that we'll get a little more specifics from the minister. Another land planning initiative my constituents want to know about is the process to develop a Fox Lake local area plan. That public planning process was originally scheduled for last fall, but has been delayed with no indication of when the first public meeting will be held.

Will the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources please tell me when my constituents can expect the development of a Fox Lake local area plan to begin and when the first meeting will be held?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I agree; there are other areas in the territory that require additional land or community planning. I've mentioned a couple of them.

As well as the issue in the Independent member's ridings, there are other land planning issues throughout the territory — Sunnysdale, for example; Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, and others. We will all be continuing to work on them. When I have some more specific dates about Fox Lake, I will provide it by way of a letter to the member opposite.

Question re: Cabinet community tour

Mr. McRobb: The Deputy Premier has often praised the merits of the fall community tour. Her words are recorded in *Hansard* and I quote: "I can tell you that a highlight of my years in this government is having the opportunity to go out into the communities..."

Let's see, we have another one of her quotes here. "I really place high value on these community tours." Yet this year the Deputy Premier agreed to cancel the community tour and it begs the question why? So can the Deputy Premier explain why she agreed to cancel this year's community tour?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I think the short answer is quite obvious: because we're all sitting here in the Assembly.

But as I stated yesterday — and this is for the Member for Kluane's benefit — we have ensured that we will accommodate all communities that wish to meet with government. We have corresponded with mayors and councils, with unincorporated communities and with First Nation governments in regard to, if they wish, to set up and schedule a meeting with the Premier and Cabinet. We will certainly accommodate that request.

To date we have travelled to Carmacks and sat down with the mayor and council in Carmacks; we have met right here in the City of Whitehorse as recently as Monday of this week with the mayor and council of Whitehorse. By the way, we all know that the Deputy Premier has constantly been out in the public, discussing with Yukoners their issues and bringing them forward to government, as all members of this side of the House do. That's why we have a realistic opinion and view of Yukon today and its future, unlike the Liberals, who have no realistic opinion or view and no plan for Yukon's future — just empty criticism.

Mr. McRobb: We've heard the Premier's deny-and-attack replies before. We were hoping for something more substantive from the Deputy Premier. Obviously we need to press harder to get to the bottom of this.

The harsh reality is the Yukon Party government knows it has lost the trust of the people. This government knows it has postponed democracy by avoiding calling a by-election to fill an empty seat in this House. Moreover, it has avoided calling a general election for a longer period than any previous territorial government regime.

This is a government that is hiding from the people. It has gone into bunker mode. Did the Deputy Premier agree to cancel this year's community tour because Yukoners would say they want an election now?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Maybe the Member for Kluane hasn't paid attention to the *Yukon Act*, but the mandates for government in today's Yukon are five years. It would behoove the member opposite to recognize that, when people commit to the Yukon electorate that they are willing to serve for that period of time, our obligation is to do exactly that.

Let's speak about hiding. Yesterday this House had a tremendous opportunity to send a very clear message to our MP so that our MP stood by his commitments to Yukoners and lived up to his commitments to vote against the long-gun registry. The Liberals in this House avoided that discussion, avoided sending that clear message to our MP. They hid here in the House and refused to stand by their commitments.

They did not even allow the Member for Old Crow to stand up and represent his constituents in regard to the very position that the member has taken in this House with respect to the long-gun registry. That's hiding. This government, in all its efforts, is out in the public building Yukon's future.

Mr. McRobb: This government is obviously in bunker mode, and we fully expect it won't go down without its guns ablazing. Perhaps another reason why the Deputy Premier decided to cancel this year's community tour was the fact that the government is broke. Budget information revealed yesterday shows the piggy bank is empty. Was this government up front with the people and did it say anything about that? Not a chance. If it's not good news, this government clams up. Yukoners want to express their concerns about deficit spending and growing debt, but this year, it's by invitation only. That's not being open and accountable. Why didn't the Deputy Premier want to hear how Yukoners feel about this government's spending pattern?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The Member for Kluane is getting quite an angst about this issue. Let me remind the Member for Kluane that the Yukon Territory is far from broke. Does the member not understand that in this country, we're one of only two jurisdictions that have a savings account?

Does the member not recognize that this Yukon Party government has doubled the fiscal capacity of the Yukon? Does the member not understand that, contrary to the Liberals' position of a devastated economy, last year — in 2009 — the Yukon was one of the only jurisdictions in North America that actually had real economic growth? Does the member not recognize that the Yukon today is fourth in the world when it comes to attracting mining investment? Does the member not recognize that we have one of the most vibrant economies in Canada right now, and we are being touted as one of the places that will outstrip the national economic growth for the coming year?

Mr. Speaker, that is not being broke; that is being very, very prudent in fiscal management. That is building an economy. What is really broke is the Liberals' view and plan and vision for the Yukon. It is busted.

Question re: Cabinet community tour

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier has been very clear about the value of the annual community tours. She is on record and I quote: "There is nothing like going out into the communities and seeing first-hand." But that was then, Mr. Speaker. Now the Deputy Premier doesn't want Yukoners to tell her how they feel about this government's deficit spending and growing debt. The Deputy Premier knew that a bad-news budget was coming. Perhaps that's why the community tour was cancelled.

Did the Deputy Premier sanction the decision to cancel the community tour this year, or did she read about it in the paper like the rest of Yukoners did?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: What the members on this side of the House have sanctioned is the tremendous progress the Yukon is making. By the way, as we tour the territory — as we always do, formal fall tours or otherwise — we are experiencing all that progress and the encouragement we are receiving from Yukoners. In fact, a lot of appreciation is being expressed regarding the efforts of the members of this side of the House. When we do those tours and we are out there discussing these matters with Yukoners, seldom do we see the opposition. Seldom do we see the opposition. When we invite the opposition to briefings, like Education's, they don't even show up, Mr. Speaker.

They talk about wanting to discuss issues important to Yukoners — well, let's hear from them about those important issues. Let's hear from the Liberals what they would do about the Yukon economy today and into the future. Let's hear from the Liberals on what they would do about our social safety net. Let's hear from the Liberals about what they would do when it comes to protecting Yukon's pristine environment. Let's hear from the Liberals how they would continue to establish the investment climate we have in this territory resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars of private sector investment in Yukon. We never hear from them. We certainly hear from Yukoners.

Mr. Fairclough: They're definitely hiding from Yukoners, as they're not going on community tours. Now, this is what the Deputy Premier had to say: "I really place high value on these community tours." But that was then, and this is now. These days, the government is unpopular, and the annual community tour is no longer important. Back then, she said, and I quote: "I think the community tours are an amazing initiative." "An amazing initiative". That's what she said — but that was back then. Clearly, a community tour this year would have been a lot of bad news for the Yukon Party. The government spending is unsustainable and unstoppable. The savings are gone and the debt is growing. When did the Deputy Premier change her mind about this "amazing initiative"? When did she give up on the importance of the annual community tour? Is she allowed to answer?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The Deputy Premier and the members on this side of the House haven't given up at all. In fact, we're one of the longest serving governments in the Yukon, with a tremendous amount of success and accomplishment. We're very proud of that. To a large degree, that is because of how we engage with Yukoners. The reason we have an economy today is we listen to Yukoners. The reason we have a stronger social safety net is we listen to Yukoners. The reason we have much better environmental management — we listen to Yukoners. Mr. Speaker, all throughout the government's processes — all the decisions we make — include Yukoners' input. That's what consultation is about. That's what the constant contact by the members of this side of the House with the Yukon public is all about.

We don't hear those things from the Liberals. We hear nothing. We don't hear a plan. We don't hear what they would do. They criticize, but no reference to what it is they would do to address the interests of Yukoners — the issues Yukoners face, the challenges we face — nothing, Mr. Speaker. That's hiding. Let's hear from the Liberals on what they would do.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, we asked the Yukon Party to quit hiding, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to remind the Deputy Premier of something else she said, and I quote: "I certainly will speak any time about the community tours held. I am happy to elaborate at great detail about what we have heard and seen in our travels."

Well, how about right now, Mr. Speaker? Can we hear from the Deputy Premier? What has the Deputy Premier heard recently? Did she hear angry Yukoners say they want an election? Did she hear Yukoners say that they don't want the government to spend us into the poorhouse? She would have heard that too. Does the Deputy Premier really think that Yukoners wanted the community tours cancelled? Is she allowed to answer that question?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Here's what we heard from Yukoners: the Yukon now has economic prosperity; it has a healthy economy; it has jobs; Yukon children are moving back to the territory, getting gainful employment.

Here's another thing we've heard from Yukoners: we have one of the better investment climates than ever before in this territory, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars of private sector investment, building more jobs and creating a healthier economy.

Here's what else we've heard from Yukoners: our investment in infrastructure is to the benefit of Yukoners today and long into the future. That is a vision and a plan that goes far beyond a period 5 variance that the Liberals are fixated on.

Here's what else we heard from Yukoners: we have more parks, wildlife habitat protection and land use planning than ever before, Mr. Speaker. That's what we hear from Yukoners. Also we've heard from Yukoners that there has never been more investment — ever — on the social side of the ledger taking care of Yukoners in need. That's what we've heard from Yukoners; let's hear what the Liberals have heard from Yukoners.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 1022

Clerk: Motion No. 1022, standing in the name of Mr. Mitchell.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to listen to what Yukoners have stated is one of their top issues and practise good governance.

Mr. Mitchell: Welcome back, everyone. I would like to say thank you to all of my constituents for their continued support. The riding of Copperbelt is the most populous riding in Yukon, and it is a very diverse riding that includes urban subdivisions like Copper Ridge, Granger and Hillcrest, rural residential subdivisions like Canyon Crescent and Pineridge and Whitehorse Copper and Mount Sima, as well as ranches on the Fish Lake Road, hotels, museums, a school — a truly diverse riding.

Question Period today reflected Yukoners' concerns about the need to practise good governance. Good governance is a multitude of things. It means a number of different things to different people on how they measure the delivery of good governance, but ultimately, good governance comes down to being honest, open and accountable for decisions made and followed in governing. Honest, open and accountable — not just words. There is a real meaning that must accompany the words. Let's look to the dictionary. "Honest" — *Collins English Dictionary* gives a number of definitions: (1) "Not given to lying, cheating, stealing, et cetera; trustworthy." Well, we don't accuse other members of lying, cheating or stealing so we won't go there, Mr. Speaker. As for "trustworthy", well, we will leave that for Yukoners to determine which we think they have, from what we have been hearing.

"Not false or misleading; genuine." Again, Mr. Speaker, we don't accuse members of making false statements. Regarding "misleading", we can't accuse members of being intentionally misleading in this House. The public, however, will pass judgement on how they perceive a government that tables a budget in the spring of the year that projects a surplus, only to table supplementary budgets in the fall that show a deficit. If the government truly believes it will run a surplus, but has to announce a deficit, then it is poor planning at best. Yukoners expect better from this two-term government.

"Just or fair; honest wages". Mr. Speaker, we don't believe it is just or fair to Yukoners to spend down their money and pile debt on to them and on to future Yukoners — debt that does not even include where the O&M for capital projects underway today will ever come from.

Let's consider "open", Mr. Speaker. The first definition in the dictionary is "not closed or barred; the door is open." Well, it's hard to say the door is open when it is slammed shut so tightly.

"Open" would be holding the Cabinet community tours, as so fervently promised, so all Yukoners can have the opportunity to meet with ministers and share their views. "Open" is not cancelling tours and then sending letters to municipal leaders and First Nation chiefs saying, "If you want to meet, let us know." "Open" is not avoiding public scrutiny by avoiding meeting the public.

Another definition in the dictionary of "open" is "ready to entertain new ideas; not biased or prejudice; an open mind." Pretty hard to entertain new ideas when you cancel the community tour so you don't have to hear them. It's pretty hard to entertain new ideas when a Premier calls a senior official in the Department of Environment and says, "Take those ideas out of your submission." It's pretty hard to entertain new ideas when neither the Environment minister nor the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources attends the public consultation meeting held by the Peel Watershed Planning Commission in the capital city. That's not entertaining new ideas; that's avoiding them.

"Accountable" — the dictionary says, "1. responsible to someone or for some action; answerable. 2. able to be explained." Let's look back at the events of the summer of 2009 regarding the Premier's secret negotiations with a private company to consider the sell-off or disposition of assets of the public's Yukon Energy Corporation.

Where was the accountability there? Who was responsible for their actions then? Who was answerable?

The Premier called a news conference and then walked out and left it to officials to answer and explain. Is this accountability? Yukoners don't think so, Mr. Speaker.

Was it able to be explained? It doesn't appear so. Trust — the public needs to trust the government. It is probably the most important bond between voters and politicians. That trust is broken between the Yukon Party government and Yukoners. Why? One word: ATCO.

The Premier was caught trying to privatize our public utility to a private sector company from Alberta. Then he tried to deny it. We know he was leading the negotiations. His name is all over the negotiation documents. It's in the letter of invitation or acknowledgement that he sent to the head of the company. He's quoted trying to dictate how long the term of the president of a new company formed from a merger would be.

Since the ATCO scandal, good governance has risen to the top of voters' concerns and it's easy to see why. It's all about trust, and that trust is now broken.

All in it together — throughout the scandal of this privatization attempt and throughout the rising debt and off-book borrowing, the decision to leave the seat for Whitehorse Centre vacant during this sitting — the list goes on. And all the government MLAs have backed the Premier. Not once have they challenged him or stood up to him.

We have seen they're all in it together, although we only hear one voice speaking in response to questions. We saw it here today. Last fall we had a confidence vote. All the Yukon

Party members backed the Premier. They endorsed his plan to sell the Yukon Energy Corporation. They endorsed his free-spending ways. Yukoners will remember this when they go to the polls. Members opposite had a choice to make and they endorsed the Premier 100 percent.

Let's look at the Peel. The Premier tried to suppress the information that the Department of Environment was submitting to the Peel commission. The Environment minister of the day stood by and let it happen — if she even knew it was happening. Again, is this open and accountable? Again, where's the trust? Is trying to influence the work of an arm's-length commission good governance? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is obvious.

Ministers are obligated to work on the issues in their portfolio. The Minister of Environment has abdicated that responsibility in the Peel. He refuses to answer questions in this House. He doesn't attend public meetings about the Peel. Is this good governance? Yukoners are telling us, no, it's not. The Premier earlier today kept talking about how we were in such a good economic state — how we had hundreds of millions of dollars at one point. It's frightening to see a Premier, while talking about a current year deficit, quote the wrong line out of a budget document, but he talks about the accumulated surplus of over \$500 million without telling Yukoners that that refers to the building in which we are standing or sitting today, to the schools across our territory, to the hospitals that exist and the health centres that exist and the extended care facilities. All of that is what comprises that \$500 million, and none of that is revenue or assets that are available to the government if they need to spend to cover the necessary operating and expenditure amounts that this government is required to spend to fulfill its commitments. Now, we do know that \$67 million more has been borrowed through the Yukon Hospital Corporation, to build two new hospitals and the residence for nurses and visiting specialists. Is this good governance?

No feasibility studies were done before the decision was made to spend the money. It was a political decision, and it has been left to the Hospital Corporation to try to explain their reasons behind it after the fact.

Transferring the authority for the new hospitals to the Hospital Corporation to avoid having to answer for the spending decisions in this Chamber is not good governance.

Let's look at the borrowings through the Yukon Development Corporation — \$100 million in borrowing to make up Yukon's portion of Mayo B and the extension of the power lines with the interconnect. The government finances are so out of whack that the governing party — the government — has nothing to contribute to Mayo B. They had to borrow the entire amount. The interest rate of five percent a year means an additional \$150 million in borrowing costs over the 30-year life of the bond. That's a legacy of debt for future Yukoners.

This is a government that promised to be open and accountable, yet when the going gets tough, the Cabinet pulls the plug on the community tour. Is that good governance? Is refusing to meet with everyday Yukoners good governance? The Premier stood on his feet here just a short time ago to say, "It's okay. We sent letters to community leaders. We told the may-

ors and councils and the chiefs that we'd meet with them if they so chose."

What about ordinary Yukoners? What about the citizens in those communities? What about First Nation residents who don't happen to be a chief or a council member? Where's their invitation? Where's their opportunity? Do they have to write to the Premier or phone and ask for an opportunity to meet? Is that good governance? "What about our unincorporated communities?" asks the Member for Kluane, who represents several. This Yukon Party government now sees no value in hearing from ordinary, everyday Yukoners.

These are items that Yukoners have brought to our attention. We are here to hold the government accountable for all its actions. That's our job as opposition members. We're here to further stress the concerns of all Yukoners, and specifically one of their top issues with this Yukon Party government is not practising good governance. The Premier asks, "Well, what would the Liberals do? What would the Official Opposition do?" Well, I can tell you that if we were government we would be open and accountable to all Yukoners.

I'll tell you how our Liberal team would do it. If there were a land use planning process and arm's-length commission, we would actually allow that commission to complete its job without any political interference. We would then look at the recommendations brought forward by the commission, instead of the Yukon Party way of sending directives right to the officials telling them what they can and can't say; what they can and cannot submit to the commission.

If there were a private electrical company soliciting proposals for Yukon asset acquisition, we would let the officials do their due diligence and not interfere with our own political agenda. We would actually let the public know that such an offer had been made, and you don't have to look far. That's actually what the Premier of the Northwest Territories did when he received a similar offer, a similar solicitation. He went out and said to the people of the Northwest Territories, "Here is an offer that has come our way. What do you think?" What a novel idea, Mr. Speaker, asking the people what they think.

We would regularly examine the investments in the investment portfolio of the Yukon to ensure compliance with the *Financial Administration Act*, instead of the Yukon Party way where it's just allowed to happen and then explained away at the end of the day.

We would follow the statutes of the Yukon, as these statutes and acts have been put in place for good reasons, instead of the Yukon Party way. If there were found to be a need to change or amend or add or delete certain statutes, we would actually have consultation on changes proposed to our statutes and rules and laws, instead of the Yukon Party way.

If a budget were being presented showing a surplus and we were standing behind that budget, then we would do everything possible to ensure we came as close as possible to that surplus. We would not irresponsibly promise a surplus and then deliver a deficit, which is what we've seen the past two years under the Yukon Party.

We wouldn't promise a \$20-million surplus like we saw in 2009-10 and then deliver a \$25-million deficit. What confi-

dence can people have that they're receiving good governance when the government misses the mark so widely?

This year we challenged the government in the spring when they tabled the main estimates. We said that the \$2.9-million surplus the government claims they are going to have at year-end is unrealistic. It didn't at the time include any allowance for the settlement with the Yukon Teachers Association or with the Yukon Employees Union. It didn't allow at the time for the fact that there was likely going to be monies paid for the fact that the government was a year behind in settling with the Yukon Teachers Association. According to what we heard here in debate in this House, it didn't include monies for repairs of the Thomson Centre, according to the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation, who said, "That's not us who's paying for that. The government will pay for it." Yet we were told in briefings the money wasn't in the budget.

When we challenged the budget, the government said it was shocking. They said we were challenging the officials. No, we were challenging the Minister of Finance. What have we found now? A little over halfway through the year, the \$2.9-million projected surplus has evaporated, and we now find ourselves with some \$2.4 million in deficit.

That's the Yukon Party way. It wouldn't be the Liberal way.

We wouldn't hide bad economic or contract news and wait to release this news once we had a good-news story to go with it. That may be the Yukon Party way, but it would not be the Liberal way. News will be presented as it occurs. When it occurs, we'll face it, be it good or bad news.

We would stand up and be open and accountable for government action and inaction, instead of the Yukon Party government way. We would follow the *Cooperation in Governance Act*, and we would recognize the importance of the Yukon Forum as a means to provide a place for open and honest discussion on concerns and opportunities with our First Nations to move forward with cooperative action, instead of the Yukon Party way. We would actually talk with First Nations about including the word "consultation" in the *Cooperation in Governance Act*. Something that the government keeps stumbling on — consultation with First Nations — isn't even in the act.

We brought forward an amendment to that act several years ago, but the government didn't allow it to proceed. It didn't even allow full debate for that to get into Committee so that we could find out why the word "consultation" wouldn't be in an act that is meant to define good governance and cooperation between Yukon self-governing First Nations and the Government of Yukon. We wouldn't make a decision to borrow \$167 million to facilitate projects like the Yukon Development Corporation's Mayo B hydro site or to fund the Yukon Hospital Corporation building — three new buildings — without being open and accountable for the decision.

We would be willing to explain how it is we plan to pay for this, why the project should go ahead now and when they will clearly saddle future generations of Yukoners with debt for years to come, instead of simply announcing them and then saying, "Don't worry. It will all be okay."

We would actually have projections for what the O&M at the new hospital facilities would be before we announced that we were going to build these hospitals. We wouldn't stand here like the Premier did a couple of years ago and say — in answer to a question on how much they would cost — “It doesn't matter what they cost. Whatever they cost, we're going to build them.”

That's not good governance, Mr. Speaker. It may be effective political rhetoric, but it's not good governance. We would ensure that even if Crown corporations are doing the borrowing — and therefore the dollar amounts don't show up immediately on the government's main estimates, but only in the consolidated revenue statements — we would still be open and accountable to talking about the borrowing, and we would be clear about the ultimate effect it would have on Yukon taxpayers, instead of the Yukon Party way.

Mr. Speaker, we would not have changed the *Taxpayer Protection Act*, the act that prevents the government from running into debt, to allow the government to spend more money without being in violation of the act, unlike the Yukon Party way.

We wouldn't carry on secret negotiations to sell off Yukon's energy future to private interests, and we wouldn't block a public inquiry into these negotiations, as did the Yukon Party. We wouldn't introduce new legislation or acts without any form of consultation on these proposed changes, the Yukon Party government way. The examples come right down to today. Even on a daily basis, when we're still just a couple of hours away from sitting in this Assembly, the government won't even reveal on the day they're going to table legislation to House leaders what acts are going to be tabled that day. What possible harm can there be in letting all members of the House know, two hours in advance of the Assembly's sitting, what legislation will be introduced on that day? Why the secretive approach to governance? That's not good governance. We regularly get calls from members of the public who tell us that they have heard or understand that there's going to be new legislation on a particular topic, because they had spoken with a government MLA who told them that, or they had spoken with a Cabinet minister. We have to say, “You may be right, but we don't yet know because the government hasn't told members of the Assembly. They may have told you, but they haven't told us.” That's not good governance; that's not being open and accountable.

We wouldn't issue \$100-million worth of bonds through a Crown corporation without telling the full story to Yukoners that they will be paying \$150 million in interest payments over the 30-year life of the bond — the Yukon Party government way. What did the government announce? They said, “Look, the bond issue was subscribed so quickly, that must mean we're doing the right thing.” Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was paying a higher rate of interest than many other bonds that were available at the time, so yes, it was subscribed to quickly. None of that addresses what the impact will be over the next 30 years when Yukoners are responsible for paying back that interest, and that debt servicing competing with other priorities that many future governments may have.

We would not mortgage the future of Yukoners and limit the ability of future governments to provide services to Yukoners way beyond our term in office without being clear to Yukoners what the impacts would be, unlike the Yukon Party way. We would be open and up front with Yukoners — the people we all serve — and not just share information on a need-to-know basis — the Yukon Party way.

What did we see this afternoon? We heard the questioning from the Member for Mount Lorne regarding a relocation of the temporary facilities for sheltering youth at risk. No public announcements, no “Here's why we're doing it.” The information has to be pried out. What did the minister say in response today? He said that they're dealing with the fact of greater numbers, yet the government has, for years, avoided the issue of addressing the need for a permanent youth shelter, while coming up with temporary solution after temporary solution.

That's not good governance. It's not good governance to, on the one hand, talk about all the social programming and works the government says they have done, as the Premier did today when he was reading off his lists in response to questioning, and be entering into the ninth year of this government's mandates — into year 5 of its second term — while still holding conferences to try and address the issue of social inclusion. We're still at the stage of trying to identify the problem when the problem has been with us for eight years, Mr. Speaker. We do welcome the fact that we're finally moving forward, thanks to the urging of many, many non-profit organizations and many Yukoners telling government that this is a priority, but eight years is a long time to wait to start taking the steps. It's a long time to wait to finally hold the first social inclusion conference last spring, and the second one — well, who knows when, Mr. Speaker? It was scheduled for this fall, but it has now been postponed until January.

We will be transparent, and we will tell Yukoners the truth because they deserve to know it. We believe that people should have access to most information and that the only information that should be privileged is information that is of a personal nature and confidential and is not meant to be shared with others, or information that is competitive due to a bidding process, or the fact that it includes information about the private sector.

We believe that most information belongs in the hands of the people for whom the information is generated, and that's the Yukon public.

We would allow residents to pick their own representative at the earliest opportunity if a seat were ever to become vacant, and not spend time figuring out what's best politically for the government, unlike the Yukon Party way. We wouldn't refuse to call a by-election. We would do whatever was possible to try and fill a vacant seat before the next sitting of the Assembly, instead of the Yukon Party way, which is to delay, defer and continue to consider while debate goes on in this Assembly while would-be aspirants from multiple political parties have to observe the proceedings from the visitors gallery instead of standing on the floor of this Assembly to represent constituents.

We would ensure that projects entered into have had the feasibility studies completed before embarking on the projects and that these feasibility studies would actually show the pro-

jects to be justified in moving ahead, instead of the Yukon Party way.

We have never seen the feasibility studies that first identified the need for the level of hospital that is being built in two Yukon communities. When we've asked questions about it, what we've seen is the Premier and ministers standing up on the floor of this Assembly and saying, "Oh, the Liberals don't care about the communities. They wouldn't address their health care needs." You know, Mr. Speaker, all we have ever asked for is a justification of what level of facility is the appropriate health care facility in each community.

There is a model, a good governance model of health care delivery used across Canada and the United States, and that is to concentrate resources in the greater population centres, and you scale resources in other centres that are appropriate to them. You don't build the same hospital in Oliver, B.C. as you do in Penticton, and you don't build the same hospital in Penticton as you do in Vancouver, because there are efficiencies of scale in doing it differently.

Perhaps if a feasibility study had been done, Mr. Speaker, there might have been \$15-million centres built in Watson Lake and Dawson instead of \$25 million, with more than enough money available to have built an MRI facility and staffed it and paid for the MRI operation and maintenance in Yukon, so that Watson Lake and Dawson residents, along with residents of Haines Junction, Teslin, Faro and Old Crow, wouldn't have to travel to Vancouver or Edmonton or Calgary to have that service provided. It is pitting Whitehorse against the communities, as if building the centre or a larger hospital in Whitehorse is only to serve the residents of Whitehorse, as has been suggested by members opposite. That's not good governance. That's not what health care workers are telling us. What health care workers are telling us is that buildings don't provide service. People do. Health care workers do, and they're asking where is the staffing going to come from for the new hospitals when they're struggling to staff the existing hospital in Watson Lake and the existing health care facility in Dawson? That's what health care workers are asking.

We would be meeting directly with Yukoners on community tours to ensure that we're still headed in the right direction, if we were government — not cancelling tours to call the House to sit early in order to avoid these very helpful public meetings.

We would work to foster trust between the government and the people we represent. We would hold that trust as one of the most important things for us, instead of the Yukon Party way.

There's much more that I could say here today about good governance. I know other members want an opportunity to speak on this most important subject, so I will conclude shortly. We don't believe we've been seeing good governance, because Yukoners are telling us they don't believe they have been.

We hope the Yukon Party government will consider these issues of good governance seriously and carefully. It would be just like this government to amend this motion, to amend it to mean something different from what it was meant to mean, but within our rules of order. For example, in the past we've seen

this government amend motions like this to say, "should continue to practise good governance," and they may well do that. And they will get away with it, if they so choose, based on their voting majority. It will be in order, but it will only be one more example of bad governance.

It's not good governance to avoid the difficult questions by playing word games in this Assembly. We've seen it before; we saw it when we tried to discuss the Peel, for example; we continue to arrive here daily, hoping for better, but we will accept what we receive. Yukoners are also listening. Yukoners are telling us and they're telling anyone who will listen that they're looking for good governance. They're looking for open, accountable, transparent government. They're looking for government that, when they make a mistake, simply say, "We erred", rather than trying to blame it on others, rather than trying to say the Official Opposition or the Third Party don't understand; rather than leaving officials in a room to explain it. They're looking for accountability and good governance.

We do look forward to the ultimate debate. We look forward to an opportunity to provide that good governance, and we look forward to hearing what all members in this House think is good governance.

With that, I look forward to hearing what other members have to say.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Some interesting comments are coming from the other side. I do feel the need to comment on some of the comments made by the Leader of the Liberal Party. First and foremost, I would have to centre on his comment that the Liberals would come as close as we could to that budget. It begs the question again that, as things arise during the course of the year, what would he cut? Would he cut health care? Would he cancel the construction of the hospital in Dawson? Would he cut back on the social housing end of it?

This government has built 162 new social housing units — a 35-percent increase from what we had, compared to the short-lived Liberal government and, to be fair, the previous NDP government as well, which built no social housing units whatsoever.

Would he cut back on the social housing? Would he cut back on affordable housing programs? Would he cut back on the fact that we have put large sums of money into renovations, retrofits, et cetera?

Where would he cut back on that? There are so many things that could be cut. Again, some of the information that has been coming into the House is terribly misleading. Members of the Liberal Party have referred to our savings account and then, within the next reply, refused to accept that there is a savings account. Is there or isn't there? The fact of the matter is, of course, there is a savings account — and a good, substantial one.

We are one of two jurisdictions in Canada — Alberta and Yukon — that have no net debt, yet the opposition continually throws the word "debt" around. We have no net debt, period.

On a per capita basis, in fact, we're better than Alberta, which I have great fun letting Alberta ministers know and rub-

bing that in a little bit. On a per capita basis, we are doing better than Alberta. There is no debt whatsoever.

How did the economy do during the financial meltdown, or whatever you want to call it, over the last couple of years? In Canada, there was a decrease in the GDP, gross domestic product. In all of Canada, only two jurisdictions had a positive GDP, a positive increase: Yukon and Prince Edward Island. Again, if you look at those numbers, we were, I think, two or two and a half times higher than Prince Edward Island. All other jurisdictions had a negative GDP.

We have the hottest economy in Canada by measurement of GDP; we have no net debt; we have a savings account; we inherited a government from the Liberal Party, which was running, basically, bank loans, lines of credit, in order to pay government employees. There was no savings account. There was a trajectory at that point in time that put us in trouble. We knew that. What was our response? Best economy in Canada, relative insulation from the global meltdown and financial problems, the creation of a saving account — a substantial saving account, I might add — and doubling the fiscal capacity of the Yukon. We doubled the size of the budget, to put it bluntly — better than double, as a matter of fact. So, how can the Liberals conclude then that this is poor fiscal management? It completely baffles, I think, most people who really have to think and look at this.

I have quite an enjoyable time as I travel around the territory and travel around Whitehorse and visit businesses and do business and ask, “How are people doing? What do you think?” and the average, overwhelming majority are right off their feet. They’re busy. They’re having a hard time finding enough staff. They’re finding, I admit, housing problems. We’ve not only recovered from the U-Haul economy and the Greyhound economy of the previous Liberal government, but increased the population by some 15 percent. It has caused other challenges. We will respond to that.

It is difficult to understand how that can be construed by those who would like to run the government. Where would they cut? Why do they consider such an incredible financial success to be a bad thing? I just have to wonder where this comes from.

The other thing, too, is the Leader of the Liberal Party referred to consultation and was critical in regard to the governance act — that the House was unable to debate that act. There are a lot of different reasons and without going into that, I do have to draw an analogy with what happened yesterday, where it was agreed in House leaders’ meeting, to my knowledge, that we would seek unanimous consent to debate the gun registry motion — the number of which escapes me at the moment. That would give our Member of Parliament, perhaps, some ammunition to take to his federal Liberal leader to say, “This really isn’t what my constituents want. I am on record many times saying that I would not support the gun registry.” Now the federal leader is whipping the party into a whipped vote. In other words he has no choice in the matter. He will have to go against the wishes of the majority of Yukoners. It was frustrating, and so I understand the member opposite’s frustration in stopping debate on that. It was stopped by, again, MLAs, the

Leader of the Liberal Party, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin — whom I feel very sorry for for having to sit there and say, “No, I want to support the gun registry.” I don’t think that’s what his constituents are really saying. He knows better than I, of course, and he will have to answer to his constituents in the next election for that choice. Were there reasonable ways that that could have benefited everyone? But, no, we’re not allowed to debate that either.

Again, I suspect that more is involved in that. I can only speculate on some of that and what the theory is, but it is disappointing that the territorial Liberal Party is effectively being run from Ottawa and from Toronto. That’s disheartening, and I think it’s really something that Yukoners are going to have to sit back and make a value judgement on.

The other thing within that discussion is consultation, and the Leader of the Liberal Party is wondering why there was no consultation in some areas and why things were structured the way they were. Well, maybe if he actually spent some time and read the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, he would realize that consultation is defined within that — that that is very well set up and we follow that, as we are required to do — as we’ve agreed to do. The final agreement basically tells us how to do business in that area, and we will live up to that *Umbrella Final Agreement* at all times. We’re not going to change it on the fly. It would appear that the Liberal Party might do that. We’re not prepared to get into that discussion. What exactly is wrong with the arguments? I’d like to settle on a few points, and I apologize if I wander a little bit. I was trying to make notes during the discussion and during Question Period. A number of things came up, and I tend to scribble all over the page, so my apologies if I do wander a little bit.

But if we look at some of the things that we’ve done in terms of priorities and accomplishments since the beginning of the first mandate of the Yukon Party government, we always strive to achieve a better quality of life — that’s a buzzword, but it is true — by increasing educational opportunities — a big part of it — and fostering healthy and safe communities through addressing drug and alcohol abuse and promoting sports, arts and culture, and recreation. It’s interesting that the Yukon Territory spends almost 10 times the national average on culture, sport and recreation.

First Nations cultural centres — a \$40-million complex for a jurisdiction of some 36,000 people — not many jurisdictions would have that. We have a number of live and very active theatre groups. We’re looking at renovating the Guild Hall. I was up there a couple of days ago. And so on and so forth — the renovations of the Old Fire Hall — so many different things that we have done and so many things that we have done downtown, which of course the Liberal Party doesn’t want to admit. They want to promote that they want representation from Whitehorse Centre, but they don’t point out the fact that most of the things that have happened in Whitehorse Centre they have in fact opposed.

But some of the things we have done — for instance, starting out in the not-so-early education, but the middle education, with the student and parent guide called *You need more than a job to start work*. It provides students with a wide range of in-

formation they need to know in entering the workforce, and that was put out under the auspices of Community Services in May of 2010 — in May of this year.

Sport and recreation groups were awarded \$935,000 in grants for the 2010-11 year under YRAC — again, Community Services, Sport and Recreation, and that was done in June of 2010. Would the Liberal Party cancel those, or would they respond to demonstrated need? But no, they would come as close as they could to that budget. If things change during the year? No, we're not going to do that. We'll make cuts. But what cuts, Mr. Speaker?

\$423,000 in Yukon's Sport for Life program, and the elite athlete funding for 2010-11 was also announced by Community Services, Sport and Recreation, in June 2010. We all take pride in our elite athletes. We support them. We brag about them. We're happy to assist where we can with that. Would the Liberal Party cut that?

Maybe that's something they would cut, because probably, in their mind, nobody would notice. The Ross River volunteer fire department just took delivery of a \$309,000 state-of-the-art pumper truck through Community Services. They needed it. It's a nice thing to say that they needed one. If your house is on fire, you had better believe you need one and you need it fast and you had better have one there that works and is well maintained with a good trained volunteer or permanent fire department. Maybe that's what they would cut.

Twenty-eight Yukon projects benefited from \$819,300 in FireSmart grants across the Yukon — Community Services, through their wildfire thing, in August of 2010. FireSmart is a program that some would confuse with fuel abatement in a much wider or larger range or area, and that's not really what the whole thing is all about. What it's about is fuel source and reducing the fire potential around dwellings, around communities and this sort of thing. We have gone a few years where there hasn't really been a challenge with fires putting pressure on communities. I suppose the Liberals could cut that.

Emergency Medical Services signed a memorandum of understanding with volunteers to address honoraria and training — Community Services again, this was last August. You never can tell — so the number of volunteers goes down; they can always kind of hope that's not going to be a pressure. It might be something the Liberals could look at cutting.

In this year, a hot and dry start to the 2010 fire season triggered a number of fires that challenged wildland fire management personnel. Crews were successful in protecting Yukoners from serious injury or loss of homes, infrastructure, to wildfire. They did an incredible job. They need to be trained; they need to be available; they need to have the proper equipment. Maybe one year we don't have a fire challenge, so I suppose the Liberals could also avoid that and sort of cancel that. That might be something else.

Community Services worked in collaboration to prepare for and manage a potential wildfire threat to Junction 37, as well as the communities of Watson Lake and Upper Liard. The boat launch was officially opened in Carcross by a number of dignitaries — the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the local advisory council. If the Liberal government was coming up on

what they committed to in the beginning of the year and there was a demonstrated need, I guess many could understand that they would say, "No, we're not going to do that. We'll cut that part of it," but they won't say what they're going to cut.

I learned one thing, in 2002, in being appointed to Cabinet. We were given a magazine article that was written by a former Cabinet minister in the form of a letter to a friend of his who had just been appointed to Cabinet. The biggest message that came out of that letter was, when you're in opposition, you can say anything you want. All you do is criticize, complain. You can say anything you want, because you're not responsible for it. But as soon as you're sitting on this side of the bench, you are responsible for everything you say. Public protection has to be there; the money for a demonstrated need has to be there.

Work is proceeding with design for an integrated emergency response facility in Whitehorse to enhance Emergency Measures' response time, again through Protective Services. It has been highly debated; it has long since been needed. Having been a former resident in Toronto in what is often referred to as the hospital district, I heard sirens the first day, and I never heard them after that, but it sure felt nice to have that ambulance and that hospital within sight of desk and know that, if there were a problem, the response time would be rapid. That's a debate and something that has to be decided by the people directly involved with that and who have their priorities set.

We supported the participation of a 112-member Team Yukon in the 2010 Canada 55+ Games. The team consisted of participants from eight Yukon communities and travelled to Brantford, Ontario, in August to participate in 13 events. Well, you know, they could always cancel that, I suppose.

The Marsh Lake community water treatment plant was opened in 2010. It's a Building Canada project. Now, the territorial government can approach many of these programs and projects in a variety of different ways. We can write a cheque for it. That comes back to the old saying that there are cheques left in the cheque book, so there must be something in the account. Or, we can use leverage. We can partner. The best example that I can think of — and I know that the Leader of the Liberal Party is familiar with it — is working with the Rotary Foundation so that the local club can work a project and put it through a number of different levels that will contribute to it. In one case, for instance, an \$11,000 contribution became a \$30,000 contribution for a water project in the Philippines. It's leveraging; it's partnering; it's working in partnerships. The federal government doesn't just come in and write a cheque.

We work long and hard at a political level. We work long and hard at a bureaucratic level — our staff — to leverage every penny that we can from the federal government and so a project like the Marsh Lake community water treatment plant was opened. Well, the Liberals could have cancelled that I suppose. It's something that they probably wouldn't miss if they made it look right — just to make sure that that budget came right in — and not react to a demonstrated need.

The EMS mobile deployment initiative to reduce response times in Whitehorse — we placed a mobile unit out of the Protective Services building at the top of Two Mile Hill. That's currently operating during the day and in November will pro-

vide 24/7. As the city grows and grows in different areas, this is something that we have to look at. It's a demonstrated need.

We've implemented phase 1 of the electronic permitting and reporting software system. The new system creates a central database, which can be accessed and utilized remotely to enable building and plumbing inspectors to create permits and inspection reports on-site. That was done in 2009 — great time-saver.

We were the first territory to regulate psychiatric nurses under the *Health Professions Act* in August 2009. The new registered psychiatric nurses regulation supports Yukon government's priority to ensure Yukoners receive the best possible health care, guaranteeing that psychiatric nurses are accredited professionals, with the same professional practice standards as other Canadian jurisdictions — a huge step in the right direction. And we've passed amendments to the *Registered Nurses Profession Act*. That was passed in December 2009 to regulate nurse practitioners.

Now, for those listening who aren't familiar with that term, a nurse practitioner is the step up — between nurse and physician. They are very highly qualified individuals. It became necessary, and it's only right that we recognize that and allow these people to work.

Amendments to the *Medical Profession Act* were passed in December 2009 and will come into force when new regulations are approved. Substantive changes include requirements related to the supervision and assessment of international medical graduates, restructuring of the current registers, sharing of information with other regulating authorities, revalidation and emergency licensing of physicians from outside of the Yukon. What that means is that in the case of emergency, a physician from, for instance, Manitoba, could be licensed on very short notice to help us react to that emergency — reacting to a demonstrated need. That took up a lot of staff time to draft the amendments to the act and to work on the regulations.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I suppose if the Leader of the Liberal Party wanted to, as he says, "Come as close as we can to that budget," well, that's something else that they could toss out at the end of the day and not react to that.

We're committed to eliminating labour mobility barriers and major work is underway to ensure compliance with the chapter 7 amendments — the *Agreement on Internal Trade*. A number of acts and regulations dealing with professional licensing have been identified that contain provisions that must be changed to meet the June 2010 deadline. I understand we'll come close to that. We're making good progress on that, in cooperation with other provinces and territories.

The Emergency Measures Organization supported flood-event threats in Upper Liard and Carmacks in 2009. I had some involvement in that and watched the Emergency Measures Organization — the EMO — reacting in ways that made us all very proud of how they did it. They need to have the training, they need to have the personnel, and they need to have the money. Nobody is going to predict that we're going to flood; nobody is going to predict that there might be a fire; and there's nobody is going to predict that there might be a demonstrated

need. We didn't know that those things were going to happen before a budget was formed.

But, you know, I can understand that the Leader of the Liberal Party will come "as close as we could to that budget" — to quote him a few moments ago. Maybe that's something that he'd cancel and just — well, you know, water goes up, and it's eventually going to go down.

We've assisted in damage assessments that led to disaster assistance when residents of Rock Creek and Henderson Corner suffered sudden and extensive ice jam flood damage, and a subsequent claim for federal money was filed to reimburse the cost in 2009. Now, I was up at Henderson Corner and Rock Creek just after that happened. I have seen videos of that ice jam taken from the roof of one of the houses while it was occurring — just amazing — and certainly a demonstrated need that was necessary to react to. Now, I don't remember seeing that on the schedule when the budget was developed. It was a demonstrated need, but the Liberals would come as close as they could to the budget, so that might not have had much support.

We provide search and rescue assistance that, in one case, as an example, led to the successful rescue of a two-year-old boy near Ross River. We've coordinated the Yukon government's response to the H1N1 pandemic event, in conjunction with Health and Social Services. These are all examples of things — nobody scheduled that pandemic. Well, no, we'll put it in the next budget year so we can budget for it. You had to respond to a demonstrated need, and that has been a hallmark of this government since the very first moment.

It still puzzles a lot of Yukoners, though, the fact that we have a savings account. I have a savings account; I think most of us have a savings account, to a degree, and that savings account will go up and down. Nobody predicts that there's going to be a disaster; nobody predicts the house will suddenly need repair or the roof will suddenly leak, or whatever, so that will tend to go up and down on a normal basis.

The Leader of the Liberal Party has said, "No, we don't accept that at all; we will never accept a drop in that savings account." How does the savings account drop? It's called a deficit within a year's budget. There are times when you have to spend out a little bit more than you make; over the years, it settles out. Over the last eight years, it has not only settled out, it has put us in an incredibly good financial position: no net debt and a good savings account. We were able to respond, for instance, to the global downturn in the economy and all of the problems we had there. We leveraged federal stimulus. I'm sure the Liberals will say that was federal stimulus money. We leveraged a great deal of money in that and accomplished a lot in terms of that with a very minimal overall effect on our net financial picture.

Some of the things we put in — I'll just give a few examples here. In Carcross, there were projects involving flooring replacement, interior retrofit and exterior retrofit — federal funding of \$162,895. We put in an additional \$2,895.

In Carmacks for similar things — fuel tank replacements, roofing repairs, siding, trim, air barrier upgrades: \$101,187.

The territory got that by putting in \$17,507. It's called leveraging.

In Faro, the seniors housing building, which is getting pretty close to completion and people moving in — \$2 million in federal funding, but we got that because of the \$200,000 investment from territorial funds. We managed to leverage that \$200,000 ten times.

Haines Junction, for things like roof and insulation and attic repairs and furnace replacements — \$189,215. The territory, on top of that, kicked in \$13,125. The seniors housing building in Teslin, \$2.25 million, with \$250,000 on top of that put in by the territory government, for a total of \$2.5 million.

Just to look at some of the others here, the one in Watson Lake, \$4,050,000, but we put \$450,000 on top of that, and federal funding is what we leveraged to get there. I can go on and on in other projects we've done in my own portfolio — again, 162 additional units. That's a 35-percent increase over what we had when we started in 2002. We've added that on to the previous two governments. What did they build? Zero. I guess they call that "good governance". They didn't build a single one.

We facilitated delivery of three business continuity training programs — municipal government, YTG and Yukon self-governing First Nations personnel. We also facilitated delivery of two specialized training courses to ground search and rescue volunteers in Whitehorse, as well as two basic search and rescue courses in Teslin and Faro.

We facilitated delivery of an incident command system course in basic emergency management training to Yukon government staff, and that's ongoing. That's not something that was done before and dropped. It's continuing to go.

The inaugural so-called "state-of-readiness report" on Yukon government's current emergency preparedness status in 2009 — preparing, planning — we can't basically say that we know every emergency that's going to come up, but we can certainly plan and respond to the demonstrated needs. What the Liberal leader has said — "No, we're going to come as close as we can to that budget," and when something like that comes up, well, I guess that's something that they would cut. We've implemented — as I said before — a pandemic preparedness plan that includes public health information, government and community service continuity, delivery of essentials, such as food, fuel and medical supplies. Some of that involves work with the disaster resilience plans of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, or PNWER. The Yukon government's emergency response system is also being integrated and modernized to provide coordinated first response for fire, ambulance and other emergencies. The integrated emergency response model was used in spring of 2009 in Upper Liard to successfully manage flood preparations and sandbagging. Again, nobody planned that flood.

I think it caught a lot of people a little bit off guard. It certainly wasn't on the schedule when we prepared the budget. But, you know, I guess if you're going to come as close as you can to that budget and not respond to demonstrated need, well, I guess maybe that's something that could have been cut.

If we continue to look through some of the things — I'm trying to centre on things that are directly around quality of life. We officially opened in September 2009 a new fire hall for the community of Golden Horn. Fire halls are much more than simply a fire hall; they act as a community magnet — a meeting place. It's something that really is necessary in so many of these communities.

EMS is also working with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to work cooperatively to provide basic emergency medical responder training to members of the First Nation government and the Old Crow community, so that they're better equipped to deal with emergency situations — an unusual situation, Mr. Speaker, because of the remoteness of the community. They have to be perhaps a little more self-sufficient than other communities. We're aware of that, and we're working with the First Nation up there, and we're very proud of what they're managing to accomplish up there.

The fire marshal's office works with unincorporated communities to provide 17 volunteer fire departments in rural Yukon with equipment, facilities and training, and that's an ongoing commitment. I don't think many people, particularly — well, I think many people in general — don't really stop and think that there are 17 volunteer fire departments in rural Yukon and all of them need equipment. They need vehicles; they need facilities; they need training.

The fire marshal's office also works with the incorporated communities to provide proper firefighter training, when required, and to perform all fire and life safety inspections. The inspections can sometimes be irritating or frustrating, but they are necessary, and we need to be ready at all times, in every respect of that word. And if there is a problem — if there is something that is demonstrated that has to be reacted to, something that's unexpected — well, that's what the supplementary budget is all about, Mr. Speaker. That's really what we're talking about and trying to debate in the House in the coming 26 days.

The new extraction gear for motor vehicle accidents — \$33,000, plus the training to go with it — were delivered to the Burwash Landing volunteer fire department in 2009, and other rural communities on Yukon highways provided with the gear and training to perform highway rescues include Haines Junction, Carmacks, Mayo, Dawson City, Carcross, Marsh Lake, Teslin, Watson Lake, Ross River and Faro.

So, again, we're trying to look at major transportation corridors and deal with not only the communities, the people — the Yukoners within that community — and also the traveling public. Now, one comment that the Leader of the Official Opposition — the Leader of the Liberal Party — said a few moments ago was that we have to look at past — you know, population densities and, for instance, a hospital that you would build in one community in British Columbia, you might not build the same hospital in another community. What he doesn't point out, of course, is that those communities tend to be fairly close together. When you're on your way to Dawson, get halfway and have a motor vehicle accident or two-thirds of the way and have a motor vehicle accident — I'd kind of like to know that there's a good medical facility in Dawson. I don't care how

many people live there. One of the major factors — one of the major determinants in that matrix is the distance on the road and motor vehicle safety. But what I hear the Liberals saying is — well, they don't think we should build a hospital. They think we should build something smaller, something that would serve the necessity of the immediate population and, well, if there's a motor vehicle accident, I guess — or any other accident — I guess that's not a demonstrated need.

"If they are going to come as close as we could to that budget" — to quote the Leader of the Official Opposition — well, I guess that's something else that could be cut and they could downscale. Maybe that \$15-million facility would serve many of the purposes. And the other purposes that it could serve? Well, too bad. I mean, that's what I'm hearing and that kind of frightens me. It frightens me so very much.

The *Employment Standards Act* was amended in spring 2009 to provide job protection to reservists while they are in active duty and training in the Canadian military. Now is that change going to affect a huge number of people? Possibly not, but the people it affects are affected very deeply. It's a commitment, I think, that we all have to make in terms of supporting our armed forces and supporting the men and women in uniform who respond to what they have to respond to — to that demonstrated need. That was something that made every bit of sense. If memory serves, that was supported by the entire House, and I'm very happy with that.

We upgraded the Yukon Housing office in Teslin with the technology to deliver a full range of motor vehicle services in Teslin. Again, it's something that was really necessary there. To look at that and comment on that in terms of motor vehicles — I mean, everybody knows that you don't need to have a lot of training or any special expertise to look at a Yukon driver's licence and know we have problems. This is not a reasonable document. We didn't necessarily need to have someone collecting stories. I think all of us have enough stories of problems with that driver's licence. They were humorous and, perhaps, provided the individual with a means of venting a little bit, and that's fine. I can understand that. But it was necessary to develop a driver's licence that, again, served that demonstrated need. It needed to be secure; it needed to be done reasonably inexpensively; it needed to be done in a certain way that we could raise the status to a passport-equivalent in the future. That couldn't be done overnight. It had to be done very cautiously; it had to be done on a timetable that was really being run by the U.S. Homeland Security, not us or anyone in Canada, for that matter. Now that we have a good solution, so to speak, coming from Homeland Security of what they would expect and what we need to do, fine. Now we're down to a point where we can react and develop that document.

I do have to comment on that a little bit, in that the new drivers' licences will be a secure document. Simply saying, "I have a driver's licence, why can't I turn that driver's licence in for a new one" — think about it. You're taking what we have always admitted — and the Member for Porter Creek South has always pointed out — it is a horribly insecure document. How can you turn that in for a secure document and then use it for identification — passport-equivalent or just simple identifica-

tion to get on a plane — and say that's a secure driver's licence? You can't.

So when those are issued, people will find that simply turning in their old driver's licence is not going to work. It's not going to work at all. You have to have a passport, birth certificate, whatever comes out of the Motor Vehicles branch that will satisfy that secure document status. There will be people upset about that; there's a cost involved in that. It's going to take time to educate the people and to make that transition.

It took time; it cost money, but as the Leader of the Liberal Party says, we want to come as close as we can to that budget. I guess you could just produce something that kind of looks nice, that isn't consistent with any other system, have it made in Lower Slobovia and shipped in so it doesn't do anything in terms of Yukon jobs, and there's no way of upgrading it to anything else.

We wanted and needed to do it right, to do it properly and for the benefit of Yukoners for years to come. We didn't want coming close to the budget being our only criteria, but the Liberal Party seems to think that that's the only criteria.

We've done upgrades to continue the community library in Carcross — that's another one. Kwanlin Dun First Nation broke ground for its cultural centre on the Whitehorse waterfront. The Whitehorse Public Library will occupy leased space in the complex after its scheduled completion in 2012, and the new space will enable the library to meet the library needs of Yukoners for many years to come. It also opens up space down the line that will be utilized for other purposes, and that will be determined later.

Again, it just makes sense and it allows us to leverage money, to get more money from the federal government, to utilize the money coming from Kwanlin Dun and, as a partnership, build what I have no doubt will be just an incredible cultural centre. What a marvelous addition to the Yukon. It could be smaller, I suppose, if the Liberal Party were in power and had to come as close as they could to that budget. "We'll cut back; we won't put as much into it and hope people make do with what they have."

The electronic resource for educational and informational needs is always free of charge to Yukoners through the public libraries, and there is access to those resources through a number of different websites. We used to joke — or at least I used to joke when I first came to the Yukon — that, you know, the Internet — we went from a high-speed information highway to a goat path. That has changed. That has changed dramatically. When I first came up here, I had to maintain a research user ID in order to get into what was then called use-net. I don't need that now. In fact, I'm always amazed at people who come up here and look at our access to the Internet — and I had one fellow a couple weeks ago — he lives in downtown Edmonton and he can't get high speed Internet where he happens to be in his little corner of Edmonton. He got it in Keno up here — a community of about 10 people.

It has its foibles. We're a long walk from that fiber optics cable, and yes, we are frustrated that contractors in B.C. and Alberta seem to have an amazing ability to locate it — it's like witching. They can sort of witch and find out where that cable

is and then, you know, “There it is,” and dig into it. We are searching very actively for redundancy. We’re looking at a variety of different ways of making it so that if that cable is cut, it would go in different directions and you would see no discernible degradation of use. Right now, there are emergency ways that Northwestel has very nicely put into place, but it doesn’t solve the whole problem. It only solves a very small part of the problem. So whether that goes over the pass, down into Skagway and then down the coast in undersea cables, or whether it goes up through Beaver Creek and over through Fort Greely and ties into the Alaskan component there — we’re looking at a wide variety of different ways.

But I think Yukoners are spoiled, in the sense that better than 99 percent of homes in the Yukon have access to high-speed Internet. Not everyone takes advantage of it, but they have access to it. I remember talking to a group of ministers at a federal meeting and they said compare that — better than 99 percent — compare that to Ontario, which only has 61 percent. The Ontario minister got a little upset and he stopped me and he said, “No, no, no. We have 64 percent now.” If we had 64 percent up here, we’d have a lineup down the street here protesting. There’s 99 percent capability in the Yukon and that is, I think, a demonstrated need. It’s worth supporting. It’s worth looking and trying to find a redundancy — a way to deal with that.

But, again, we’ve become too dependent on that, be it on a personal level where you’re missing e-mail, or you can’t get to your Facebook page, or Twitter is down or has been hacked, as was the case recently. You look at the business end of it and from my perspective — from Economic Development — you look at the problem that — I can remember not that long ago — you went into a car dealership and there were just huge books of part numbers and everything else. Now, of course, that book doesn’t exist. That was long since tossed, and now you simply go on-line, look it up and find out where the part is, and it’s done.

When that Internet goes down, you don’t have that capability. When you go to buy something — and so many people now don’t carry cash. They carry an Interac card or a charge card. When that line goes down, they’ve got a problem. These are reasons why we have to look at this as a demonstrated need. Opportunities may come up. Who knows? There are all sorts of things that we can build a reasonable amount in the budget so that we can continue that search for the redundancy. If an opportunity comes up — well, you know, they “want to come as close as they can to that budget line. No, we’ll put that off until next year.” Maybe that’s something they would cut. They won’t say what they’d have to cut and they don’t have to say. All they have to do is be critical. All they have to do is somehow try to get people to believe that going from no bank account to a very healthy bank account — from having to run a line of credit in order to pay workers’ salaries; from going from a very marginal economy to — from a GDP point of view — the best economy in Canada — one of two jurisdictions that had a positive GDP. No net debt — although the opposition loves to throw that word around: debt. No net debt. I’ll say it again — no net debt — one of two jurisdictions in Canada that

have no net debt — Yukon and Alberta. On a per capita basis, we’re better than Alberta. I really have fun digging that into the Alberta ministers, who don’t argue the point, because we are. But somehow, the Liberal Party concludes that this is a fiscal problem.

We’ve gone from budgets in the \$400-million range up to over a billion. We’ve doubled the fiscal capacity of the territory. But the Leader of the Liberal Party says this is irresponsible and bad management. I don’t know. I think he’s right: Yukoners will judge when the time comes.

The Safety and Training branch just opened. They didn’t exist before in the form that they do now. They opened in 2009, because there was a demonstrated need for that. We began the first year of shared funding with Canada for eight Yukon projects approved under the Recreation Infrastructure Fund Canada, or RINC. You have got to love these acronyms after awhile.

We had a very active participation in the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics with three initiatives that involved 14 athletes and coaches demonstrating Arctic sports and Dene games in a variety of locations. We supported seven youth ambassadors who volunteered with the VANOC host society, and we supported six sport technical officials who were selected to officiate at the games. We had a very, very active participation in that. It’s reaping benefits to us now. I think people who thought that maybe Yukon was part of Alaska before are now looking at coming up here in the future. Amazingly, this year in so many areas, despite all the closures and everything else, tourism was actually up. This is after the Liberal Party, the members opposite, railed at length last spring about how terrible tourism was. Well, that didn’t really work out too well for them, did it, Mr. Speaker? It’s actually up.

We looked at fires requiring major attention, including Carmacks 4 near Little Salmon Lake, which burned 40,000 hectares. The Whitehorse 11 fire was 65 kilometres from Whitehorse, and the Teslin 1 fire was getting dangerously close to the community of Teslin. There were also a high number of lightning-strike fires near Watson Lake, Dawson City; fire crews were successful in protecting homes and infrastructure. There were no serious injuries and only one cabin lost.

I almost get the impression that the Liberal Party would have a crystal ball — or expect to have a crystal ball to make that determination so that the budget could be set and then they would do everything they could to come as close as they could to that budget. Maybe that’s what they’re going to cut, should they be in charge of the purse strings.

We invested \$150,000 to replace equipment such as pumps, hoses, chainsaws, sprinkler kits, radios and protective clothing, to assist firefighters in safely protecting people in communities and infrastructure from the wildland fires. These people have to be there; they have to be paid reasonably; they have to be protected; they have to have the right equipment — on and on, in terms of what they need.

The Liberals won’t say what they’d cut. “We don’t want to have a deficit. We’re not going to go into that savings account. We would never touch that savings account.” So what are they going to cut? What are they going to do?

Sitting on that side of the House, it's very easy to complain and do these things, but the reality is, if they were in power, what would they cut? They won't say. They're hiding, as they want to phrase it. I will use their phraseology. They're hiding, and they simply want to say things which are basically a way of looking at it that simply ignores many of the facts. It's the facts that I think the Yukon people have to get out.

\$411,000 to support Yukon's participation in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games: youth ambassadors, officials and athletes and coaches, traditional Inuit and Dene games — we had a huge presence down there. We're so very, very proud and thankful that Air North jumped into the game and had a plane-load that took Yukoners down to see the celebrations and the parties and just the atmosphere. I would be remiss in not pointing out, and I think a lot of Yukoners aren't really aware of the fact that, since the plane went down and was going to sit there and wait for them to come back, we filled it with journalists and brought them back to the Yukon during the day to look at the Yukon. Here we are; here's what we can do; here's our tourism; here's our economy; here are our businesses. Then they took them back that night to pick up the Yukoners and bring them back home. It worked very well and we are seeing benefits now and will see benefits from that for years. I suppose that's something else. They could have left the plane sitting there and not utilized it for that. Air North did their part in spades. They were fantastic with it, but to have businesses with that kind of support and insight into the Yukon and what's here —

We've completed Yukon-wide consultations and prioritized projects under the Yukon infrastructure plan to help guide development of infrastructure over the coming years, using funding under the Building Canada plan — again, money that we have leveraged. We have put in one amount of territorial money that will allow more to come in our favour.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I'm just reading some notes here.

We're working with municipal governments and community partners to address the human health and environmental safety issues involved in water handling, including the training and certifying of operators, improving physical infrastructure, and pilot test and treatment processes to improve water quality. Now, this brings up some interesting points here, having been involved with the Department of Environment and involved in some of this. Was there a sudden contamination of arsenic in some of the local water supplies? No, there wasn't. We live in an area that has very high arsenic, anyway. That's the nature of the Yukon.

What happened, of course, was that the federal guidelines became a bit stricter. Well, as the guidelines become stricter, we therefore have to react. We have to make our changes according to those guidelines. So, was there a risk to anyone? No, no more than there was in the first place. But we have to react to those new guidelines. It's a demonstrated need. Again, that is, I suppose, something that a Liberal government could ignore and simply not react to — got to hit that target — can't react to anything that's going to be changed from what they thought they were going to do a year previous.

In 2008, we began providing \$417,000 through the Yukon's Sport for Life program to help sport and recreation organizations deliver programs, as well as to support coach and athlete travel and training. That includes salaries, funding for elite athletes and some of the things that I've mentioned before.

If we come back to my own portfolio, the community development fund continues to fund projects and events that provide long-term, sustainable, economic or social benefit to Yukon communities. In 2009-10, we funded 102 projects and awarded \$3.2 million. Now, previous governments tossed that program. In fact, the previous, short-lived Liberal government — the shortest lived majority government in the history of the Commonwealth of Nations, I might add — had a vision. They had a very good vision of economic development. They cancelled and dispersed the Department of Economic Development — right out the door — scatter everybody through the government and have no central body to look at economic development. What was the result of that? A marvelous U-Haul economy, as our Minister of Justice put it, with the teary-eyed faces looking out the back windows as the U-Hauls and the trailers went down the highway and a 10-percent drop in population and high unemployment.

What was the first thing that we did — or one of the first things that we did? We reinstated the Department of Economic Development, and we reinstated the community development fund, and we started supporting and looking at a vision of where we were going to go with this. We developed a strategy — where should we be looking for investment? Look at a map, look at a globe. What are we close to? What products do we have to sell — to market? What customers might we have in order to develop that? It became pretty obvious that, really, we are five sailing days closer than Vancouver to Asia — be that Seoul, Korea or Beijing, China, Tokyo, or any of the other Asian nations. We looked at that, and the strategy was set that this is where we should be looking for partnership.

We have an amazing jurisdiction. We have more moose than people, almost eight caribou per person, and a grizzly bear for every family of five. But to put that into perspective, we also have 5.8 percent of the land mass of the second largest country in the world. We might do better than that if Russia keeps having its problems. But since then, and since that strategy, people opposite — the Liberals — have been very critical of that strategy.

What has it done for us? What has it brought in? A little over a billion dollars — that's "billion" with a "b". Mines opening — the Yukon Zinc's Wolverine mine should be shipping ore in a matter of a couple weeks. The Chihong project into Selwyn is going through now. There are a number of projects that have developed. Jinduicheng Molybdenum and Northwest Non-Ferrous is doing about \$13 million in due diligence, another \$87 million to buy the property and probably another \$300 million plus by the time they start shipping ore. That'll be about a \$400-million project. It will employ about 200 to 300 people in the Watson Lake area. The spinoff will come through Whitehorse and many other communities. Everything from drivers, to groceries, to you name it will come out of that. That's a mine that will be going for quite some time. It's

in reasonable conjunction with the First Nations who will benefit greatly from it, as well. When you look at the community development fund — I got a little sidetracked in there — we provided significant funding to the Help and Hope Women's Shelter in Watson Lake to build second-stage housing where women and children can live for up to one year after leaving a violent domestic relationship. Construction is complete. The official opening was last July. It's just an amazing facility. We are in the process of looking at something like that in Whitehorse and how it can be developed. It's not something that is being ignored by this government, because it is a demonstrated need.

The community development fund provided substantial funding for the Carcross-Tagish First Nation for a totem carving project, where citizens, under the direction of a master carver, were given the opportunity to learn cultural skills to develop further employment and economic opportunities. That goes back to January of 2010.

The Kwanlin Dun First Nation received CDF funding to hire a project manager and a trainee project manager to work on the preparatory phase of the Whitehorse waterfront cultural centre. The work there includes hiring staff, establishing key partnerships and developing programs and exhibits.

I think everyone has to imagine that, with our self-governing First Nations, there is a capacity issue. The Yukon government and a population of 36,000 people — we have huge capacity issues. What is really necessary is to train people within their own government, within their own community to work and to do what they have to. To that end, there is the sixplex up in Ingram subdivision that is now pretty close to being complete. We were up there a couple of weeks ago, and I think two of them were essentially complete and the others were pulling up on that rapidly. That is some of the nicest and best construction I've ever seen. The contracting group out of Kwanlin Dun I would recommend for any construction project in the north. They have put together really quite an incredible group.

If we look at some of the other departments, the Executive Council Office, the Youth Directorate — which is guided by a steering committee with representatives from a variety of key government departments — developed a public education and social marketing campaign under the auspices of the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* to inform youth, aged 10 to 14, on the harms associated with substance abuse. The campaign — not supported by the Official Opposition, I might point out — was launched in May 2008 and focused specifically on alcohol and was designed to inform youth and the adults in their lives — a big part of that — about the dangers and increased risk of addiction from drinking at an early age. It was evaluated by the Bureau of Statistics in 2009.

Evaluation showed that the Stop Pushing campaign prompted some thoughtful discussion. Messages and themes were generally understood. The evaluation process also served as a forum for discussing issues around youth and alcohol and identified ways to improve future campaigns.

We've doubled the annual contribution to \$220,000 for each of the following three youth organizations: the Boys and

Girls Club of Whitehorse, the Youth of Today Society and Bringing Youth Towards Equality or BYTE. The Youth of Today Society is the Blue Feather. This commitment will help these organizations with planning and improvements, as well as provide staff with more stability. The Liberals, of course, Mr. Speaker, would claim that we don't support them. In fact, there is very good support.

There is support for community-based youth activities through a \$200,000 annual contribution to the winter youth activities program and \$40,000 for summer programming to complement funding provided by youth leadership summer programming. That's through the Department of Justice. It also provides \$25,000 annually to Comité Espoir Jeunesse — I leave the correction of that to our two members in the House who love to go into French. That doesn't include me.

We also contribute \$102,000 to the youth investment fund each year. This fund supports projects for youth, including youth camps, physical programs and cultural events for youth susceptible to at-risk behaviours or who are considered to be at-risk.

We've also signed on as a contributing partner to — this is old news — the Vancouver Olympics and the amount of benefit from that to tourism, culture, sport, youth, First Nations, economic development, and I could go on and on about that.

If we turn our sights to the Department of Education, it completed a comprehensive review of French second language programs in January of 2010, and the implementation phase will be developed with stakeholder input in the 2010-11 school year. We continue to support French language programming in Yukon schools, with programs such as French first language, French immersion, core French, intensive core French and extensive French.

We piloted a parent-child prekindergarten early learning program at Selkirk Elementary School in the spring of 2010. We supported the Family Literacy Centre with \$264,463 — we'll get exact there — in northern strategy trust funding. This initiative helps prepare Yukoners for Yukon jobs or, as the Minister of Education likes to say, preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities — I think I promised him I'd get that phrase in — and leads to a significant impact on sustainable development on focusing on literacy for the future of our children and our territory.

As an aside to that, through the community development fund, we were very pleased to work with the Rotary Clubs within Whitehorse — particularly the Rendezvous Rotary Club. I'll give them credit — Claire, Jerome and others who were involved in that project and led it — to what is referred to as the Dolly Parton Foundation — Dollywood.

Dolly Parton is a rather amazing lady. Besides being a good singer and entertainer, she started a program in her home state of Tennessee that would work with local governments and organizations and provide free books, basically from zero to age five. Each child registered receives in the mail, once a month, a book, age appropriate — not books that are picked out at junk sales or books that are left over that nobody bought, but books that are developed in conjunction with Penguin Books and produced for the Dolly Parton Foundation distribution. So

when that child enters grade 1, that child has a library. They have age-appropriate books that they can hopefully pass on to younger siblings, or people who move in or whatever.

We look at literacy and take literacy very seriously. This is a demonstrated need, we thought, and we were very happy to partner with Rotary and with the Rotary Foundation and with the Literacy Coalition and others to promote this. I'm very pleased to report that, in the communities outside of Whitehorse, we now have 100-percent registration, so I'm told by the group now. Right now, when I looked at the Dollywood website, the program is all over the place in the United States, Canada and England, and only two jurisdictions have reached that 100-percent participation: the State of Tennessee and the Yukon Territory. But, you know, I suppose that's something the Liberals could look at cutting so they can make their budget.

We committed \$2.7 million in 2010-11, in addition to the \$19,000 spent in 2009-10, for the replacement of F.H. Collins Secondary School. I had the great pleasure and fun of having coffee about a week ago with one of the architects who's up designing that. He was absolutely shocked at what we have here in the Yukon. I'm strongly suspicious he actually would consider moving up here, because he was out on bikes on the trails and everything else, and just all of the things — I don't think he quite understood that we had all of this up here. It's not the middle of nowhere — you can see it from here, but it's not the middle of nowhere.

We've partnered with Yukon College and the University of Northern British Columbia to design a three-year master of education program to prepare leaders to meet the future needs of education within the Yukon. We passed legislation — I'm sure you will remember, Mr. Speaker — that allows Yukon College to become more of a degree-granting institution.

Some of the members opposite and some of the media have said we need a university in the north. We have one and, under the leadership of Dr. Weninger at Yukon College, Yukon College is developing very nicely. To think you're going to wave a magic wand and it's going to be an economic driver and all these things will happen — that people will come in and it's going to bring an economy with it — is a bit of a pipe dream, unfortunately. Will it develop that way? Yes, it probably will, but it has to be done in a slow, methodical, reasonable way.

We've developed an outreach program for students needing an alternative pathway to school as a result of the secondary program review.

Again, it was in 2009 when the Education department amended the *Yukon College Act* to empower the college to grant degrees.

We've partnered with Yukon College to offer an education assistant program to provide educational opportunities that will help provide consistent knowledge and consistent skills among school staff. We've invested \$2 million under the knowledge infrastructure program in partnership with Industry Canada for construction of facilities at the Dawson City and Pelly Crossing campuses of Yukon College. More than 400 apprentices registered in Yukon — that's a historic high, Mr. Speaker — in

2009-10. Incredible — 400 apprentices. I suspect that we're going to go a lot higher than that.

Given the economy, try to find a tradesman right now in town in a timely manner. As I say, I always ask businesses, when I stop by, how they're doing. The biggest complaint I've had is that the economy is too hot and they can't keep up with the work. That's a complaint that I'll take. That's a criticism that I'll take. I'm not about to put the brakes on the economy in order to slow work down and slow jobs down.

Two new books for early readers featuring Yukon First Nations culture and written by Yukon teachers were distributed to Yukon schools. Two readers were developed by a subcommittee at the Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee, which was established by the Yukon government's First Nations Programs and Partnerships Unit. The Department of Education now had a total of 16 leaders, and we continue to index the Yukon grant for post-secondary students. It's always fun to talk to people who are thinking of moving up, or in the process of moving up, who didn't realize what the Yukon grant was and the opportunities that that gives the students — the ability to go to universities all over the west and elsewhere, as in-state or in-province students — quite amazing.

We invested \$300,000 to develop an oil burner technician program and housing maintainer program to prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities — got to get that in again — in those fields and respond directly to community needs for these skills. The funding started in 2008 and continues through this year, and that's through the Department of Education.

Depending on what is necessary, there was a demonstrated need to invest in textile manufacturing and sewing machine operators, so that project was instituted at Yukon College. In 2008-09, we put in \$10,178 and the next year, 2009-10, we put in \$45,393.

We prepared a resource manual, *Making a Difference: Working with students who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*. That goes back to 2006. If we take a look at environment and what has been done there — the vast majority of which the Liberals have never supported and they won't say what they're going to cut, but they're going to hit that budget figure one way or t'other. We continue to invest more than \$500,000 annually in recycling and waste-reduction efforts in all Yukon communities, including improvements to community depots and ongoing support for the popular Recycling Club for kids and a school recycling program. It was quite amazing — I was involved with the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. We hosted it at the cadet camp, which is quite an amazing facility. Kids came from all over Alaska and the Yukon. When we pulled up with a big recycling trailer that they loaned to us from Raven, the Alaskans were horrified. They couldn't understand why we were doing this recycling and why, when they finished a pop and threw it in the garbage, that we'd cut them off and show them where the recycle can was. By the end of the weekend, it was the Alaskans that were jumping in and stopping people from throwing things in the garbage. So, it's part of the education, and anything we can do to try to educate people to recycle is a good thing. I think that's a demonstrated need. I would argue that that's a demonstrated need, but I suppose it's something

that the Liberals could cut out if they wanted to hit that target, but they won't tell us what they're going to cut, of course.

We've completed two of the 33 actions called for in the *Climate Change Action Plan* and began work on 19 others, including a number of research projects involving wildlife and water resources. We held a family-focused environment fair that brought hundreds of Yukoners face to face with staff from government and NGOs, fostering environmental awareness and education. That was during the summer of 2010.

We've participated in the climate leaders summit in December of 2009 and, through federal climate change adaptation programs, the government has invested \$1.3 million over four years — 2008 to 2011 — in four projects, developing climate change scenarios, assessing the vulnerability of Yukon forests and ecosystems, assessing the vulnerability of infrastructure due to melting permafrost, and developing an information tool for water managers to monitor changes. In 2010-11, \$585,000 will go into those projects.

We implemented the tobacco tax change to assist in the reduction of tobacco use. I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that one of the commitments that we made in 2002 in our platform was no increase in taxes or fees. Now, we did that. I suppose it could be pointed out to us that we didn't live up to our commitment, because we did increase the tobacco tax. Everyone voted for it, and it's a good thing — talk about demonstrated need — that was absolutely necessary, and we do appreciate the support from the members opposite.

We've also consulted Yukoners on ways to strengthen Canada's retirement income system. That's part of a larger initiative by federal, provincial and territorial finance ministers who met in 2010. The Yukon *Income Tax Act* was amended to allow an increase in the amount of pension income deduction and an increase in the age credit, matching federal initiatives, et cetera.

Within the Department of Finance, again, other than the tobacco tax, I don't believe we have had any increases in fees or taxes. In fact, we've lowered taxes. We haven't increased anything, but while we did that, we also built up a good savings account that has allowed us to have flexibility with demonstrated need. It allowed us to have the best gross domestic product in Canada — highest GDP — best economy. It's allowed us to be one of two jurisdictions with no debt whatsoever. On a per capita basis, we're better than Alberta, which is the other jurisdiction. The only other positive GDP increase in Canada was Prince Edward Island. We were 200 or 250 percent better than Prince Edward Island. Again, we did that with no increase in taxes and no increase in fees. It has been tempting at times to look at some of these things where I think most people would understand that there would be an increase in taxes or fees, but we made that commitment and we certainly intend to keep that commitment.

The Health and Social Services department has promoted healthy eating and active living to more than 700 students who participated in the 2010 Polar Games. The Eat Right, Play Hard initiative encourages students to make healthier food choices during and after the games by providing each participant with information on healthy food options and healthy eating. These

are things that good governments do. This is something that we should be doing, but maybe it's a good way that the Liberals could hit that target and make darn sure they don't exceed that budget.

The Drop the Pop campaign encouraged Yukon schools to design and implement their own healthy drinking and eating initiatives during the month of February 2010. Twenty-six schools received funding for these projects. The right thing to do is to educate our youth. It might have a budgetary impact, but I would argue that that was a demonstrated need. But, you know, the Liberals could cut that, too, I suppose.

Another 2010 healthy eating initiative was a grade 5 cookbook project, as part of the Canada Gets Active initiative. All Yukon grade 5 students received a cookbook and were encouraged to cook healthily. That was done in 2010. It's a good age to start them out and get them used to the fact that eating healthily is a very good thing and a very worthwhile thing to get into.

We've hosted a two-day Aging Well Expo that attracted more than 150 seniors in March 2010. The expo, along with a series of community meetings, is part of the development of an aging well strategy. We launched a project focused on building the strategy to increase social inclusion and reduce poverty in the fall of 2009, working with other government departments and NGOs. We hosted a two-day symposium in April 2010 to help inform the development of the strategy.

The Yukon HealthLine, or 811, continues to run and, during the H1N1 outbreak — or challenge, I should say — not so much an outbreak for us — provided information to Yukon residents. Monthly uptake continues to exceed original expectations and TTY service began in early 2010. I've used that service. I've used it, and I was absolutely amazed at the rapid response and good advice that came from that. So I highly recommend that 811 Yukon HealthLine.

We completed the transfer of the Watson Lake hospital to Yukon Hospital Corporation in April 2010. I still wonder — when the Liberals complain that we shouldn't build a hospital in Watson Lake, the hospital has been there since the late 1970s. It is a hospital. The problem is that it wasn't being well utilized. In many ways, it desperately needed renovation and, when we actually got into the walls, it needed more than renovation. It will provide a health centre that Watson Lake residents will be very proud of and will cover the Alaska Highway for accidents, motor vehicle problems, et cetera. It's a facility that when I'm driving that highway, I want it there. But, you know, others in this House seem to feel differently.

Introducing the Weight Wise program in the Yukon, in conjunction with Alberta Health Services, to assist bariatric patients — Yukon health professionals train to offer the program locally and avoid having to send patients to Alberta. Having been fortunate or unfortunate to experience the medevac system and the health care system a little bit too personally last January — very good service in Vancouver — excellent service, excellent people — and then transferred up here for a week in Whitehorse General Hospital — an incredible place, incredible staff, incredible facilities. Even the food was better. It was just absolutely amazing, and my hat's off to our Minister

of Health and Social Services for working and continuing to develop — both the current and the previous minister. What we have there — I don't think most Yukoners understand or appreciate what an incredible health care system is in this territory.

Are there some problems? Yes, certainly. I spent 20 years at Toronto General and, trust me, I know what problems are, but when you compare what we have to other facilities, we are as good as anything in the world — I would put us against it.

We began the final phase of the telehealth implementation in the summer of 2010 to introduce telehealth in First Nation communities. Funding was secured through the northern trust fund to implement the final phase of the telehealth program. Telehealth improves access to services, improves health and wellness, as well as builds on intergovernmental and interdepartmental partnerships.

We proclaimed the new *Child and Family Services Act*, replacing the old 1982 *Children's Act*, in April 2010. I know this is one area where you can ask any 10 people and get 12 different opinions but, overall, I think it's a good act. It was very well thought out and very well developed by Health and Social Services officials, and my hat's off to what they managed to put together on that.

We've coordinated a number of activities in conjunction with Nutrition Month, including the Plant a Row, Grow a Row campaign supporting the Whitehorse Food Bank and the food miles mapping contest for grades 6 and 7 students — a good project to educate children early and give them an idea of alternatives and social challenges and everything else. These are things that good government does and we intend to continue to do.

They require a bit of money. They're in the budget; and it's only because we have been able to double the fiscal capacity of the Yukon government. We've doubled the budget in our terms in office. It's only because those funds are available that we can do these programs. Again, the Liberals won't say what they would cut — what they would drop — because they have to hit that target, they have to hit that number one way or t'other.

We've received funding from the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation to develop educational activities targeted to young women to increase knowledge of breast health and risk factors for breast cancer. Part of that, which never really comes out — I think most Canadians aren't aware of it. It's always amazing how most Canadians aren't aware of this — that, while breast cancer is a very topical and huge problem to women, it affects men as well.

Around five percent of breast cancer cases occur in men, not women. So, we have to look at that wide range and educate people accordingly. We successfully concluded processes with Public Health Agency of Canada to have a public health officer located in Whitehorse. The position is now staffed with the Yukon's first epidemiologist. If you're not conversant in Latin, I suppose, an epidemiologist is a specialist who looks at epidemics, who looks at disease transmission — how is disease transmitted from one person or another, one place to another — or to go back in my background, one animal to another, or one

animal to a person — because we certainly have to look at zoonotic diseases — a very, very valuable person to have up here. We're not as isolated as we'd like to think. Every time that plane comes in, you've got people coming off that were in the Philippines two days ago or in China the day before, or in Germany the day before. We have a huge possibility of transmission of disease. So, an epidemiologist is a very big feather in our cap. We introduced a program called Period of Purple Crying to all community health nurses as an education and awareness tool to prevent shaken baby syndrome — a very big problem.

Cancer care navigator program funding continued in partnership with the Yukon Hospital Corporation to assist Yukon residents diagnosed with cancer to navigate through the health care system. This was what we call a "boutique program" that was funded by the federal government who then suddenly pulled funding. The Yukon government didn't. The Yukon government said, "No, it's a demonstrated need. We're going to continue. It wasn't necessarily in the budget." But maybe that's something that the Liberals would — in order to come as close as they could to that magic number — maybe look at as something they might cancel — I don't know. They won't tell us, of course.

Funding for First Nations healing camps, in partnership with Kwanlin Dun and something that is very near and dear to our Minister of Environment's very being is a healing camp and that land-based treatment facility. I've been there. I haven't seen any Opposition up there, but I've been there. We went up and got a good tour of it. We had lunch up there and met some of the people. I tend to agree with him. I think that this is where the future is and this is what is going to happen in the future in terms of dealing with these medical problems. They are medical problems.

We hosted Canada's northwest fetal alcohol syndrome symposium in the fall of 2010 — or are funding it or working with it — with several community groups and First Nations to ensure the broadest possible audience and a pertinent discussion. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder is a huge problem in the north, not just the Yukon — be it in the other territories or be it in the northern parts and in the south too. It's not simply a northern problem, but it is certainly more pronounced now in my experience. We have to deal with that, and if we don't deal with it on one level, then we're going to deal with it in the Justice department level, and I'd rather deal with it in terms of better housing, better services, et cetera.

We struck a task force on acutely intoxicated individuals to examine what could be done to address the needs of a small, but very needy group of people. Two well-respected Yukon residents have been named to that task force, and they are now, in 2010, doing their good work.

We've vaccinated approximately 18,400 Yukoners against H1N1 influenza. That's more than triple the average number of flu vaccines given each year — triple. Again, I don't remember seeing anything about that pandemic vaccine purchase or anything else in the budget when it was originally put together. It was a demonstrated need. Maybe the Liberals could have cut that as well.

The flu assessment clinic opened to lighten Whitehorse General Hospital emergency department's load. It ran for several weeks and diverted about 400 individuals with flu symptoms. The old saying is that if you want to get sick, go to a hospital, because that is where all the sick people are. Unfortunately, in many respects that can be true. So this was a good thing. It was good thinking on the part of our Minister of Health and Social Services to do that diversion.

Rates for foster parents caring for children as part of Yukon's child welfare system are now indexed to the consumer price index. In 2009, foster parents received an increase of 17 percent on the amount they received. So, again, it is a demonstrated need. Times change, things come up, things surface, discussions surface and it's a good thing to look at those things.

Work continues with the health and social services department at McGill University and the Public Health Agency of Canada in a study to determine the prevalence and types of HPV that infect Yukon women, in an attempt to ascertain if life factors increase the chance of getting the infection. We do have a bit of a microcosm here, and I think it is worthwhile to look at that microcosm and see if some of the diseases that are more prevalent or rarer in the Yukon — if there is something locally that has an influence on that. We have an immunization program — the HPV — for girls in grade 6. The program began in 2009 and a catch-up program will offer the vaccine to girls in grades 6, 7 and 8. In subsequent years, the vaccine will be offered to grade 6 students only. This was an amazing discovery — the influence of human papillomavirus on certain types of cancer. It is something to give serious thought to. It's a personal decision. We are very well aware of that, but it's something to really give some serious thought to.

The remaining 12 beds at Copper Ridge Place were opened and the 96-bed facility is now full. It was nice to get that done in 2009. It was coming for awhile, and it certainly was time to do it. The government will lease part of the Thomson Centre from the Yukon Hospital Corporation for the provision of residential long-term care. Work has begun on reopening 29 long-term beds and we expect that in the winter of 2011 — within the 2009-10 range. It's coming along. We're trying to see where we are with that.

We did introduce an LPN training program at Yukon College. I'm very pleased to report that all — I repeat: "all" — graduates of that program were offered jobs within our care facilities. I believe we are over subscribed already for that program.

The telehomecare project to improve delivery of services in the Yukon was introduced in 2009. Departmental home care staff now use a mobile data system they can bring into the client's home directly and access up-to-date electronic home care records. It's amazing what's being done with technology these days but, as the technology changes, so we must as well and those are demonstrated needs that we have to respond to.

We launched the Don't Be Sick public health campaign to encourage hygiene for the prevention of infection during the flu season in fall 2009. The campaign was aimed at adults and built on a successful Critters campaign of the previous year, aimed at children. Love the names of some of these programs.

The campaign supported the H1N1 flu education and awareness initiatives.

We launched a tobacco education campaign about QuitPath counselling programs for smokers and a lot of the smoking restrictions and stopping smoking in bars and restaurants and everything was the direct result of very good work with the New Democratic Party and we desperately thank them for that. They had good ideas and they were right in joining us — or we joining them, depending on how you look at it — to respond to that demonstrated need and I think we're a healthier place to live since then.

For all of the naysayers, I think business has actually gone up in most of the institutions because people will now go there and they don't get smoked out of the back door.

A toll-free smoker's help line was launched to provide free, confidential telephone-based smoking cessation services to Yukon smokers who want to quit smoking. This program supports the QuitPack program developed in health promotion.

When it comes to smoking, I have to admit that I was a heavy smoker for a lot of years and, in just one day, I finished a pack and never bought another one. But it gives you an example, I think — or it gives me an example — of how addictive smoking can become. When I worked at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine, and worked in the experimental surgical unit, I can remember coming out of a surgery and having the thoracic or the chest surgeon hiding behind a big sterilizing unit. I couldn't imagine why I was seeing these feet behind the sterilizing unit and nothing else. When I stuck my head around, here's the guy puffing on a cigarette. "Don't tell anybody. Don't tell anybody." He's a chest surgeon, for God's sake. He's taking out cancerous lungs and then he goes out and has a cigarette. It's an incredibly addictive thing and nothing to be ashamed of. But it's something to work on to break.

We began providing free nicotine replacement therapy to individuals registered in one of the QuitPath programs in 2009 — a demonstrated need.

Continuing Care branch received national accreditation for exemplary care provided to its residents and patients back in 2009. We invested \$245,000 annually in a mammography program to protect the health of Yukon women. That's an ongoing commitment that this government makes.

We've extended Skookum Jim Friendship Centre's youth outreach shelter and support program in 2009 and launched a new dental program aimed at families with young children to promote good oral health and prevent baby bottle caries, or cavities — a big problem, actually, in more than the Yukon. It's a big problem everywhere.

We've continued to increase public awareness of the early signs of mental illness in young adults during Mental Illness Awareness Week with a one-woman play called *Dirty Laundry* — and one that I didn't see, I guess, but that was back in 2009. A child psychologist is now in place at the Child Development Centre — also 2009.

Health is continuing to provide funding to several First Nations for the funding of social worker positions. That's ongoing. An implementation of initiatives under the health and human resource strategy — more students are funded under bur-

sary programs — and that, again, is ongoing. So, these are all demonstrated needs. They're all things that a good government does. These are all new things that have started since 2002.

It's just amazing that anyone can stand up and make the claim that this isn't good government — and while we did it, it doubled the capacity, the financial capacity, of the budget while creating a good, healthy savings account and did it while we had the best economy in Canada, one of two positive GDPs; one of two jurisdictions in all of Canada that had no debt whatsoever. As much as the Liberal leader likes to throw the word "debt" around, there is none. It would be nice to finally come to admit that and maybe read that part of the budget. It would be a really big help.

Criticism is a good thing. No problem with that. Reasonable, constructive criticism; when it's not reasonable, it's not constructive, no alternatives are offered, no information on how it could be done differently is put on the table, then I have to wonder why. I leave that to Yukoners to judge.

When we look at the Department of Justice — we go back there for a couple of minutes — an eight-person RCMP street crime reduction team pilot project was established in April 2007 with a budget of \$485,000 per year for three years from 2007 to 2010.

That's building on the success of the project crime reduction that will now be permanently embedded in the operations of M Division as part of an integrated crime reduction strategy. The Department of Justice will provide new funding to support an integrated crime reduction coordinator who will lead the program and work closely with the watches to ensure focused patrols of crime hotspots, close monitoring of public offenders and intelligence-led policing.

It is interesting to point out, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party didn't support that. I guess that wasn't part of what they thought was necessary. Maybe that's something they could cancel to try to desperately come into that magic figure and be so budget-driven rather than driven by the needs of Yukoners and demonstrated needs of Yukoners.

A comprehensive policing review will begin a process to foster understanding and create positive work relationships between the RCMP and its citizens. That began in 2010. It will work toward ensuring all Yukon citizens receive high-quality police services by renewing relationships between the RCMP and the Yukon government.

Construction of the new treatment-oriented correctional centre continues. As far as I last heard, it is on time and on budget. It'll include flexible programming, separate remand facilities and a healing environment, reflecting Yukon First Nation culture and values. Yes, I can confirm that the project is on time and on budget, and due for completion at the end of 2011.

The new *Corrections Act* and draft regulations were tabled in the spring of 2009. The act reflects the important role that First Nations have in steering corrections and is responsive to the needs of First Nation clients. Work is underway to implement the *Corrections Act*. It was between 2008 and 2010.

We continue to fund the Journey Far carver program and have heard comments in the media that we don't support this.

Well, we did such a poor job of not supporting it, we put in \$345,000 for each of the next three fiscal years — 2009 to 2012. This program provides instruction for up to 15 participants in advanced carving skills and marketing, which will help carvers pave their way toward successful self-employment and personal wellness. That's on top of what the federal government has put in. But for the opposition to claim that we don't support that and ignore the fact that \$345,000 per year for the next three years goes into that, just makes no sense.

The SCAN phone number is available for all communities and is included in the Northwestel phone book. From its inception in 2006, SCAN, which stands for "safer communities and neighbourhoods," has investigated 298 properties in response to 371 complaints from the public. This led to 37 evictions of tenants engaged in illegal activity and 47 warnings, while 34 tenants voluntarily ceased their activities. That's an ongoing program.

If memory serves, I think the Liberals voted against that one too, but that was another one that was done in conjunction with the New Democratic Party, and we're grateful for their support and input into that.

As part of the commitments under the substance abuse action plan, Yukon released a substance abuse directory, and it's designed to educate people, including service providers, about the services available throughout the Yukon that include help and support for those affected by substance abuse.

Significant progress on the *Victims of Crime Strategy* that was released in August 2009 — this framework guides Yukon government programs and services for victims of crime. A new *Victims of Crime Act* passed the Legislature in the spring of 2010 after an extensive consultation. The act enshrines the rights of victims and causes service providers to provide information to victims during criminal justice proceedings.

The new transitional women's living unit, completed in November 2009, provides space for up to nine minimum- and medium-security female inmates to take treatment and lifestyle orientation programs.

A new series of publications are available to assist family law litigants who choose to represent themselves in court. The publications provide information on the court process and forms required by the courts for people seeking court orders on legal issues, including divorce, child custody, access and support, spousal support or division of property.

Corrections redevelopment, the implementation phase of the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre, is already underway. The Yukon Housing Corporation — a project I was very happy to work with — purchased and then donated the land at 810 Wheeler to the Habitat for Humanity for construction of a three-plex. I would be very remiss to not point out that the owner of that property had actually sold us that land at less than the market value, so she was definitely a part of this project. We donated it to Habitat for Humanity. Yukon College has provided the beginning apprentices, carpentry apprentices, to do the work. In fact, Yukon College started a second apprentice group that year and hired an additional instructor to get these people through.

It was built to SuperGreen standards. The Yukon Housing Corporation also supplied the expertise to the apprentices and the Habitat for Humanity people to learn the technology of building to the SuperGreen standard. Eventually we will get involved with mortgages and this sort of thing with them.

The main thing with that is it's a win-win situation. We get more carpenters trained and more apprentice carpenters out in the workforce; we get these people out there trained in SuperGreen technology, who will then go out and work with construction firms across the territory, who will take that expertise and that knowledge of SuperGreen technology out to the workforce. So it's a win-win-win situation. It has just worked so well. We are working on the prospect of getting another property so we can keep Habitat for Humanity doing their good work.

We have the Family Law Information Centre, which opened in 2007, and the Community Wellness Court was established with court-monitored treatment for offenders with drug or alcohol addictions, if they have symptoms of FASD or mental health issues — that started in 2007.

If we continue to look across some of the things that we have been able to accomplish and good governance — because that is what this debate is all about — here are some of the other things that have been accomplished. We represented ourselves at cultural performances and traditional sport demonstrations at the Vancouver Olympics — youth ambassadors in many venues — the aboriginal pavilion, which was great — Canada's Northern House was, it was generally agreed upon, the most effective and most popular of the houses, or the sites. In fact, one day, the waiting line stretched for four blocks, and we were starting to cause a real traffic problem at that spot. In all, more than 100 individual and groups represented Yukon during the games from that February 12 to 28, 2010. I think it was a resounding success on the part of everyone who put that together. In fact, the group that put that together received the Premier's Award of Excellence for what they managed to actually do.

A municipal heritage resource guide was developed by Tourism and Culture to inform municipalities about identifying and caring for historic documents within their jurisdictions. It outlines the benefits of heritage preservation and the municipal provisions of the *Historic Resources Act* and describes how to create a municipal heritage management program.

All of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a tiny jurisdiction of 36,000. I would say that's pretty darn good governance. I would consider all of these are demonstrated needs in developing the culture and the quality of life for what I would want for myself and family and for your kids. This is really what it's all about. We have done that while building a savings account — one of two jurisdictions in Canada — and having the best economy in the Yukon by doubling the fiscal capacity. I think if anyone really takes a look at all these accomplishments, and there are many more — and then concludes that this government hasn't been fiscally responsible and hasn't responded to the needs of Yukoners, well, I would say a few things, but I probably shouldn't in this House.

As a result of the spring 2010 intake for the advanced artist awards, 12 Yukon visual, literary and performing artists have been awarded a total of \$40,000 to further their personal artistic development and create new work. The Yukon explorer's passport program, combined with the adventure contest, showcased Yukon community museums and attractions. The number of people who participated by visiting at least 10 heritage attractions has increased significantly over the last three years. As of September 2010, more than 2,500 people have participated in the program. Who knew? That's up from 1,158 people in 2008. In fact, it has better than doubled.

The second annual Yukon tourism champion award was given to Marg White and the team of Dennis Shorty and Jennifer Fröhling. The award emphasizes the importance of word-of-mouth promotion of the Yukon and honours citizens who raise Yukon's profile elsewhere, purely out of love of the territory. I think that that is actually an award that could go to a large number of us who live here by choice and have no intention of leaving.

From April to the end of March 2010, the arts fund contributed a total of \$546,050 to 49 recipients, representing a wide variety of activities and disciplines. The fund offers support to artist collectives, non-profit societies, communities and First Nations for group projects that foster the development of the arts in the Yukon. Again, I believe that we are up around 10 times the national average, per capita, in contributions to culture, sports and recreation. That's not bad for our tiny jurisdiction.

The touring artist fund created in 2007 continues to provide support for professional Yukon artists to travel and present their work outside of Yukon. In the current fiscal year, to June 15, 2010, 10 awards totalling \$58,975 — recipients represent a wide array of activities, including arts and crafts exhibits, dance showcases and music festivals.

Beginning in 2007, the Yukon government has supported the use of the Old Fire Hall as an important cultural and community venue for the Yukon — and Whitehorse specifically, of course. The Yukon government entered into a \$450,000, three-year lease — this is in 2009 — with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce partnering with the Yukon Arts Centre to continue to see the Old Fire Hall used to animate the Whitehorse waterfront. And we're very pleased to have put — if memory serves — into the pot community development funds, or CDF funds, some time ago to make sure that that place was renovated and utilized.

We've increased the acquisition funding from \$10,000 to \$25,000 to assist in gaining 11 new works for the Yukon permanent art collection. The funding increase will support eight Yukon artists through the acquisition of new works in 2010. These are the works that we see in offices and galleries and such all over the government — and some very, very good works indeed.

The Yukon government's arts funding programs encourage the development of the arts in Yukon. Through the arts fund, the touring artist fund, the advanced artist award, the arts operating fund and all these things, the department contributes more than \$2.7 million annually in support of art and culture. It's a

big figure. But, you know, the Leader of the Liberal Party is going to do everything he can to make sure that he doesn't exceed a budget that was done before. But he won't tell us what he'd pass — what he'd cancel. What would he pull back? Maybe he'd drop that \$2.7 million — maybe he'd drop it to \$1 million or maybe drop it to nothing. He won't tell us. That is the very definition of hiding, which he likes to accuse us of doing. I'm laying out what we're doing — no problem in the world doing that. He won't tell us what he would do.

The government arts funding programs encourage the development of the arts. It's a big thing. The operation and maintenance funding for museums now is in excess of \$1 million annually — annually.

Special projects funding to Yukon museums and Yukon Historical and Museums Association to support special projects and new initiatives was increased to \$300,000 annually since 2006. It has reached, to date, a total of over \$1.5 million. It's something else, I suppose, the Liberals could cut back on and make that magic number.

Per capita funding for arts and culture amounts to over \$400 per person. That puts us in a league of our own in Canada. Annual funding support for the arts increased by over \$500,000 in 2007-08.

In 2008-09, new funding guidelines were launched and increased funds provided to a wide variety of organizations. The Yukon Archives created an on-line exhibition entitled, "Winter." It seems a fitting name for the Yukon — a little too fitting when you look down in the next few days.

The exhibit uses reproductions of archival records to tell the story of winter activities in the Yukon and the importance of the winter season to Yukoners. The archives processed and transcribed a large volume of paper records and photographs of the Yukon Indian Arts and Crafts Co-operative, and the inventory to this important collection is available on the Yukon Archives website at www.yukonarchives.ca.

Private owners of historical structures across the Yukon have access to matching funds to repair and restore their property. The historic properties assistance budget was \$100,000 in 2009-10 and this funding aided owners of the Caribou Hotel in Carcross, as well as Klondike Kate's restaurant and Bombay Peggy's Inn in Dawson. We translated and revised the content of www.travelyukon.com — the tourism site — and launched the full French language version in 2009.

A little aside on that is, if people want to take a look at the mining investment sites of my own department, they will find that they are in English and in Mandarin Chinese. The reason for that of course is that's our target, that's where we're looking, that's where we want people to take a look. That may change, since I understand Yukon Gold Mining Alliance is taking a look into Europe and we may add languages to that, but again, it's only fitting that we do this in much more than English.

The Yukon historic resources fund — the Yukon government contributed \$30,350 to eight projects that further the preservation, interpretation and appreciation of Yukon's historic resources. The Artist in the School program budget increased

from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to allow more comprehensive sets of programs for Yukon students.

The archives and Yukon paleontology program partnered in the creation of an exhibit entitled "Buried Treasure" that was presented at Arts Underground, the summer of 2009. The exhibit used reproductions of archival records to tell the history of paleontology research in the Yukon and the importance of the Yukon fossil record for scientific research. I do have to admit my surprise when I first came to the Yukon to find that we actually had a paleontologist on staff. It makes perfect sense — by far a demonstrated need.

The Yukon government has committed just over \$1.3 million to support the implementation of the *Victims of Crime Strategy* for the next three years. This includes just over \$500,000 for a new three-year community-based social marketing campaign focused on the prevention of violence against women, to be led by the Women's Directorate in 2010 to 2013, and that's Women's Directorate in conjunction with the Department of Justice.

The Government of Yukon participated in the 2010 Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues' annual women's forum, entitled, "Your Health is in Your Hands". That was a wellness forum. In 2009, Nancy Poole, an internationally renowned researcher and educator, offered four training sessions for Yukon substance abuse workers, counselling professionals and other service providers in women-centred care.

Front-line service providers and program managers in Yukon government, non-government organizations and First Nations participated in the workshop. The trainings were offered in response to a recommendation in a report entitled *Improving Treatment and Support for Yukon Girls and Women with Substance Abuse Problems and Addictions*. That was the Women's Directorate in conjunction with the assistance of Health and Social Services.

The women's equality fund was recreated and enhanced to provide a three-year sustainable operational or project funding for women's organizations and projects. The annual ceiling for requests was raised to \$50,000.

We launched the Protect Yourself, Protect Your Drink campaign in 2009. The campaign's intent is to warn Yukoners about the presence of date rape drugs in Yukon and to urge people to take steps to protect themselves from being inadvertently drugged. The prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund doubled from \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually. Since 2004, the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund has contributed \$900,000 to support projects designed and developed by aboriginal women for their communities. That is through the auspices of the Women's Directorate.

If we take a look and move over a bit toward Yukon Housing Corporation in a more direct experience in portfolios — through the Yukon Housing Corporation, the government has increased the inventory of affordable housing for seniors and elders with a variety of different projects, including the 48-unit athletes village residence, the nine-unit seniors building in Haines Junction, and is in the process of constructing and opening seniors buildings in Watson Lake, Teslin and Faro. We also have the 30-unit replacement of the Alexander Street apart-

ments that are down in Spook Creek. We also have a variety of replacements of double-wide trailers that will go into various communities. We also have other facilities right across the Yukon that we're looking at. While we have not built yet or issued tenders, we certainly are in the design phase of other facilities that I think people will be very happy with.

The 12-unit Watson Lake seniors building is under construction and should be ready almost any time. It's supposed to be in the fall of 2010, so that's on schedule for the very near future. The building features Yukon Housing Corporation SuperGreen home and accommodating home standards. The building promotes independent living and the opportunity for seniors to reside in a barrier-free environment, thus enabling seniors to remain in their community — and that's what it's all about.

The \$4-million tender was awarded to a local Watson Lake contractor, Murphy Construction. They've done a very nice job.

The eight-unit Teslin seniors building promotes independent living and the opportunity for seniors to reside in a barrier-free facility, thus enabling seniors to remain in that community. Construction is underway by Thomas Contracting of Teslin; anticipated completion is also within the next few months.

In the six-unit Faro seniors building, it promotes independent living and the opportunity for seniors to reside in a barrier-free environment, thus enabling seniors to remain in that community. Construction is at the finishing stage; grand opening was held on August 31; over 50 local residents were in attendance and it looks like that will be a resounding success.

We entered into a Yukon asset construction agreement, or YACA agreement, with the Kwanlin Dun in recognition of the Whitehorse affordable family housing project that was to be constructed on the Kwanlin Dun First Nation traditional territory. Construction is underway on the six-unit building in the Ingram subdivision and completion is scheduled for the very near future — again, not only get something built that stimulates the economy and creates jobs, but it is being done by Kwanlin Dun's own construction crew, their own development corporation. It will build capacity. They even involved Challenge with some of the workers in the early phases. Going through that place, I think most everyone is quite impressed with the quality of that facility. I would hire this crew to do anything in the north. My hat is off to them.

The Habitat for Humanity housing project, in partnership with Yukon College, which I mentioned — also three affordable home ownership units. We purchased the land for about \$170,000; we also funded to offset the construction to SuperGreen standards, paid the difference that was involved, because there is an additional cost. That will come back in the future because, as we've joked so many times, the SuperGreen facilities could be heated with a cat. Some of the Ingram units are quite a bit larger, and they would take two cats. It's just amazing.

The first couple of facilities, stand-alone houses that we built, are electrically heated and, including appliances, electric heat and everything, we're down in the range of \$117 a month

during the dead of winter, so that gives you an idea of how energy efficient these places are.

Yukon Housing Corporation also partnered with the Department of Health and Social Services to replace the children's receiving home in Whitehorse. The construction is complete now; the grand opening was held July 14. They're in it; they're using it. I had lunch with some of the people the other day and they seem to be very happy with the results of that.

The 2009 flood relief program assisted residents affected by the flooding in 2009, primarily in Rock Creek and Dawson City, and we also had some problems — not from that flooding — with Zircon Lane in Whitehorse. That again responded to a demonstrated need. Nothing on that appeared in the budget. We didn't say, oh, on such and such a date there's an ice jam that's going to happen and it's going to take out a couple of houses. It's a demonstrated need when it comes up, but the Liberals, digging in right now for their own reasons, saying we will come as close as we can to that budget — maybe this is something they'll cut. They won't tell us; they won't say what they're going to cut; they're being very secretive about things.

We've instituted a requirement whereby clients accessing loan funding for new home ownership construction are required to build to Yukon Housing Corporation's energy efficiency standards. We don't want people to build inefficient homes; we want them to build right up to date, up to standard, homes that will be reasonably easy to heat and power.

To that end, we've developed that SuperGreen energy standard, which promotes construction that results in lower energy costs and benefits greenhouse gas emissions.

The SuperGreen standards are in the range of an EnerGuide rating of 85 and all construction of Yukon Housing Corporation residential buildings will meet that standard. That is our commitment to the Yukon. It makes sense. I have to point out that that standard was developed by employees of the Yukon Housing Corporation and they deserve a huge round of thanks and a pat on the back for that development. They have done a marvellous job that stands as some of the best construction techniques in the world.

We have assisted lot owners in Whitehorse Copper who could not obtain financing from banks due to problems with the survey of the lots. We stepped up to the plate at that point in time — it was a demonstrated need — and said that while that survey problem is being dealt with, we will start putting the funds out until it is in a position where the banks can take over with mortgages. Ironically, some of them kept mortgages with the Yukon Housing Corporation. That is some of the background of why the mortgage portfolio became oversubscribed at one point. It was a good project that was too good. We had a good project and people take advantage of it. Well, that's what we are trying to do, so you can't really be too upset about that.

The home repair program lending limits went from \$35,000 to \$50,000 to better address the specific needs of disabled occupants. That came about when a particular family had some disabilities with the children. The \$35,000 was not going to cover all the renovations necessary for the disabled kids. It was necessary to up that. It was a demonstrated need and we were happy to do that — not a problem. We didn't know about

it when the budget was first set, but it was a demonstrated need and it had to be done.

We have done grants and interest-free and low-interest loans due to the 2007 flood relief program to assist homeowners with that. Sometimes we would lend to the various programs. We have had priority assessment for victims of violence and abuse. In 2006, the Yukon Housing Corporation introduced priority assessments whereby applicants who are victims of violence and/or abuse, followed by seniors in rural Yukon who have medical conditions and require relocations, effectively received the highest scores in their applications. They will be offered vacant units ahead of other applicants on the waiting list. There is a very detailed scheme and plan for that priority list. I really have to stress to people that that priority list is dynamic. It is not static. It does not sit there. What you see this week could be very different the next week, so when people call and want to know where they are on the list, that's the reason we are not too keen on telling them. If I tell them they are number such and such on the list, it could be a totally different number on the list the next week. It might be a lot higher or it might be a lot lower.

Good work with the Whitehorse Housing Authority and the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors — they do a marvellous job and all of the housing corporation boards of directors for the various communities do a marvellous job of that. I would suggest to people who want to get involved that these are boards and committees that are by appointment. We often have nobody expressing interest to sit on that board. Please, if you have an interest, contact us. Contact our boards and committees secretariat. It's on the website and we would love to know that people have an interest in getting involved.

We are assisting homeowners by providing independent inspections of oil-burning appliances to help protect the health and safety of Yukoners. That is a program from 2008 to current. We have developed and completed a study of the safety of oil-burning appliances in the Yukon with the Energy Solutions Centre and the City of Whitehorse and Community Services. The Yukon government is providing more training for inspectors and tradespeople and continues to raise public awareness on oil-burning furnace safety. I should point out that there are only 14 certified people in this category in the Yukon, one of whom doesn't work in the field.

So, with 13 trained people, we desperately need to recruit more and we need to utilize these people in a much better way. Between June 2007 and March 31, 2009, Yukon Housing Corporation provided incentives for homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, as well as for alternative energy systems. We helped organize and conduct presentations in the northern aboriginal housing conference in Whitehorse.

To just tie in a couple of little things here — the amendments to the *Liquor Act* and regulations and the fines and the summary conviction regulations substantially increased the penalty for liquor-related offences. Many of these offences are actually Criminal Code. By increasing those fines and such, it was, again, something that was desperately needed. In partnership with the RCMP, the Liquor Corporation continues to undertake regular identification blitzes as part of an ongoing

commitment under the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* — a plan that wasn't supported by the Liberals. The Yukon Liquor Corporation partnered with the RCMP and licensees to enforce and educate about minors in the bars, helping to reduce underage drinking and selling liquor to minors. The corporation supports substance-free graduation celebrations. That's ongoing — has been for years.

We launched the Protect Yourself, Protect Your Drink campaign that I mentioned a moment ago. That's shared with the Department of Justice, the Women's Directorate and the college. They have all educated the public on this important issue.

The Whitehorse liquor store renovations were completed based on customer store surveys. The rural community liquor stores and territorial agent offices have also been renovated and new video security systems were installed in all six liquor stores.

With licensee input, we updated the Be a Responsible Server or BARS program, and they've added a self-study version — an on-line self-study version. The program focuses on server responsibilities, recognizing signs of intoxication and ways to identify and manage difficult or intoxicated persons, as well as how to deal with minors, over-serving and overcrowding. The BARS program was further revised in 2009 to reflect changes to the *Liquor Act* and regulations. I should point out that I've actually taken that course. I went down and I took the course. It's very good. I recommend it. It's required in some circumstances, but even if it isn't required, it's worthwhile. If you own an establishment, if you have staff or if you work in an establishment, take it. There's a lot there to learn.

We released a booklet, *Be Prepared to Talk to Your Children about Drinking*, a tool to help parents discuss drinking and drink-related issues.

Be Prepared to Talk to Your Children About Drinking is a tool to help parents discuss drinking and drink-related issues with their children; again, a huge area. We're a very small jurisdiction when it comes to this and we tend to borrow a lot from other jurisdictions, but we're very active participants. One of the interesting things that I saw was one jurisdiction had produced little hanger tags that you could put on bottles in your liquor cabinet that basically just said, "We would be very disappointed if you raided this." Better worded than that, but it's just kind of a way to send the message to the kids and let them know. I think children have to understand that alcohol is something that can be horribly abused and cause huge problems. I think most people understand how it can be used, how it is used and enjoy social responsibility with it, and that's something we have to get through to children. It's a fine line and it's a difficult line and I can understand both sides of the argument, but I think in the Yukon we've walked that fence quite nicely and we can address it quite nicely.

There is another book, *Alcohol as We Age*, a new booklet aimed at helping seniors, families and caregivers understand the risks related to alcohol consumption as we age. That was released in October 2009 and it was released in both English and French. It has been well distributed and we're pretty pleased with the results.

Associated with the Liquor Corporation is the Lottery Commission, and they've provided \$775,000 in funding to 52 organizations for projects contributing to the development of art and recreation, and that's from the May and November disbursements of 2009. They provided \$170,000 to art and recreation groups to travel expenses for 800 participants and 13 support persons to attend 70 events both inside and outside the Yukon. They've allocated nearly \$400,000 to municipalities and local authorities to allow for local decision making to meet community recreational needs. They removed Keno monitors — and that's not the town of Keno, no — don't jump up on that. The game Keno from six retail locations — there were some concerns over the gambling effect of that — and again, that's determined by the Lottery Commission, not by any government officials. The Lottery Commission is another group that looks at gender equity as well as regional equity. There were articles saying that they seemed to have very high expenses for travel. It's because of that.

You look at this and the opening is really for a woman residing in the Watson Lake area, for instance. This is going to incur travel expenses, but it also encourages and incurs equity in genders, as I say. We are often looking for members for the Lottery Commission. It is, I believe, a 10-member board and if anyone has an interest in that, we certainly encourage them to express that.

I'm sort of picking individual things all over the place that look at good government and what we've accomplished. In some of these, if we look at the diversification — people say, "Well, you know, are you diversifying the economy?" Yes, we are. The clearing and grubbing work on Whistle Bend subdivision is underway with the first lots available by the fall of 2012. That's through the Department of Community Services. People should realize that there is something like \$30 million earmarked to get that going — \$30 million. That's next year, I believe. I think even the city was a little taken aback when they realized what was going into that. We are aware of the need for housing. That's something that we really do have to promote and we really want to promote. But again, the Liberal Party is saying, "No, we want to come as close as we can to that budget." Well, maybe these things develop and, if there's a need somewhere else, that one can go by the wayside. They won't tell us priorities; they won't discuss them; they won't tell Yukoners what their priorities are or what they would do, or how they would change things, or what programs they would close. They are very secretive about that and that kind of concerns us because all they do is sit back and point the finger at everyone else and say that they're being secretive, but they sure don't want to talk about what they would do.

We're investing in waste-water infrastructure by undertaking upgrades in repairs in Burwash Landing, Carcross and Destruction Bay through Community Services. Providing facility upgrades and renovations and repairs and improvements to 17 volunteer fire departments — I think I mentioned that before.

There are new regulations, if we stay within Community Services, to allow licensed practical nurses in Yukon to perform a full range of nursing tasks, just as LPNs elsewhere in Canada do. That passed in 2010 and, for me, this was a good

issue. Unfortunately the person has moved away, but while I was knocking on doors during the last election, I met an LPN who was very disappointed that she had come to the Yukon to work and found that she couldn't. She couldn't do the work she was trained for. It was a demonstrated need, and we addressed it and now licensed practical nurses can perform the full range of nursing tasks.

The new secure drivers' licences and general identification cards will be produced in the Yukon this fall. The security features will meet national and international standards — and God knows, we know that has been necessary. We don't need anybody to tell anyone that. It has been really obvious for a lot of years. In keeping with the Member for Porter Creek South's collection of horror stories — my son in Seoul, Korea, tried to trade in his driver's licence for a Korean driver's licence and was told that it was obviously false and they would only do it if the Canadian Embassy agreed. I happened to be at the embassy, and they said, "Well, no, it's obviously fake." So I pulled out mine and showed it to the ambassador. He was horrified. He said, "My God! It's real!" I said, "Yeah. It really is. It's real." That has been necessary, but it had to be done in a metered way so that it would meet all of the requirements of Homeland Security in the United States. They were the holdup on it. It was rather frustrating, because that will also be the general identification card for people getting on an airline. What do you do in Old Crow? You don't have a car. Why would you have a driver's licence? But when you fly, you might very well need that photo ID. There's that aspect.

I remember a musher coming to the Yukon Quest from Fort Yukon, Alaska, within inches of being turned back at the border because he couldn't produce a driver's licence. They just couldn't understand when he said that they didn't have any roads, so why would he have a driver's licence.

We get the other aspect, of course, of someone who, for physical or aging reasons, can't get a replacement of their driver's licence. It hurts. We want to have something that is similar and serves as an identification card, but obviously isn't a driver's licence. It's necessary for that. The old liquor card — and no one ever came out with criticism, so if you are going to criticize it, no one ever picked up on that, but it certainly would have been a good one — under the old *Liquor Act*, you had to be eligible to drink in order to get the liquor identification card. In other words, you had to be 19 years of age and be able to prove it, et cetera.

We had a couple come in, 18 years old, with a baby, from the Lower Mainland. They had had all of their ID stolen. The problem is that they had to get on a plane and they had no photo ID to get on the plane. How do they do this? I thought that was very easy. They could go down and get a liquor card to prove they can drink, but that's not the point. At least they would have a photo ID. It was illegal under the old act to get a liquor ID card unless you were able to drink. That makes no sense. That is now changing and will change so anyone can get an ID card. It just makes perfect sense.

The Municipal Fiscal Framework Review Committee was established to respond to a number of significant issues facing Yukon municipalities. The committee will be conducting con-

sultations during the fall of 2010. The report, through Community Services Community Affairs branch, will make its report in the spring of 2011.

Through assessment and taxation, approximately 14,000 municipal properties were reassessed during 2009-10. We have worked with the Town of Faro on its infrastructure issues through an interdepartmental committee of Community Services and Energy, Mines and Resources. We secured funding through the federal community adjustment fund in 2009-10. We funded structural repairs and recreation upgrades to make Dawson's recreation centre fully functional. That is something new from a lot of years.

Over the next five years, Community Services will provide Dawson City with funding and technical expertise, as requested, for structural repairs to make the building safe and for recreation upgrades to make the facility central to Dawson's health and well-being as a community — from a city that was allowed, under the previous Liberal government, to seriously overspend its authority and get itself in huge financial difficulties. This government has not only turned it around, but is assisting Dawson in getting facilities back and again, retaining its status as a very vibrant community.

By 2012-13, the comprehensive municipal grant will increase by \$4 million to more than \$16 million. The Yukon government is also providing additional municipal-type service funding for unincorporated communities. This funding will help boost the fiscal capacity of communities and help them meet the demands of operating and maintaining new and aging infrastructure. The aging infrastructure is a huge problem everywhere. For those who follow the news and remember a week or so ago — the gas explosion in California that completely took out about four city blocks and a lot of people killed and injured, and a gas main — a 30-inch gas main or something like that — exploded. That's obviously an extreme of aging infrastructure, but water, sewer — everything — as it ages, you have to be continually upgrading. You have to be continually looking at potential problems and responding to that demonstrated need.

If that need comes up, it darn well better come up in the budget process, according to the Leader of the Liberal Party, because he had better know about it, because he's going to do everything he can to make sure that he hits that target, that he doesn't exceed that budget target.

Okay, which one are you going to cut? You won't tell us, of course. Which one are you going to cut?

The Canada-Yukon gas tax agreement contributes to healthy Yukon communities by supporting long-term planning and sustainable infrastructure. Fifty-seven municipal gas tax projects have been approved — three in Carmacks, seven in Dawson City, four in Faro, two in Haines Junction, six in Watson Lake, 10 in Teslin, 25 in Whitehorse, and that's in 2009-10. The gas tax funds were extended into 2014 with \$60 million spread over four years to support infrastructure that leads to cleaner air and cleaner water and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Eight municipalities and five local advisory councils had successful elections in fall 2009 and the Yukon government

supported and trained staff and new members of local governments to lessen that steep learning curve, and I think everyone in the House knows about that steep learning curve. In some cases, it would appear a learning wall, but that's another story.

We've had continued support in good governance in unincorporated communities through funding and technical support for local advisory committees that work on behalf of rural unincorporated communities. The Yukon government officially recognized and celebrated the anniversary of several municipalities: 25 years for Watson Lake, Teslin, Mayo and Haines Junction; 40 years for Faro.

The AYC president and Community Services minister signed a memorandum of understanding on consultation and cooperation. The Yukon continues to foster positive working relationships by collaborating and finding ways to provide services that will lead to a better quality of life and good governance in Yukon communities.

We hosted our second annual gas tax workshop to help municipalities and First Nations work together to successfully implement the gas tax agreement.

We've also assisted and supported municipalities to incorporate Public Sector Accounting Board requirements for tangible capital asset reporting. All these various accounting things are so important. People don't realize that this is constantly being reviewed by the Auditor General of Canada; it's being reviewed by internal auditors; it's really necessary to do things right.

The Building Canada fund will enhance Yukon government's commitment to community infrastructure by directing funds toward priority spending categories, including drinking water, waste water, solid waste, green energy infrastructure, and roads. Starting in 2009, Ross River, Haines Junction, Teslin, Carcross and Marsh Lake will receive improved water treatment systems, or have received.

Improving animal protection and continued support of the important work of the Yukon Humane Society and the RCMP, the Yukon government improved the *Animal Protection Act* in 2008 and is implementing an operational plan to support the enforcement and undertake education and awareness initiatives to encourage the humane treatment of animals. Again, that's within Community Services, community operations.

We're working on the Marsh Lake water system, and the first phase of directional drilling and water intake is complete and a contract has been awarded for the second phase, which will complete the project in 2009. In Carmacks, a waste-water treatment system is now operational. There are always further refinements underway — that always happens, but it is essentially pretty well there.

When we look at some of the other things we've done, when we look at water and everything else, things that have come up that you don't expect — I mentioned the change in regulations in terms of acceptable levels of things like arsenic — we've put a Yukon infrastructure plan in place working on that that will focus on the drinking water, waste-water and all those things. You have to do that long-range planning, but there's always something that's going to come up. A full review, consultation and options study was completed for the 20

solid-waste facilities in the Yukon government. That has been a great concern to a number of particularly our rural MLAs. I believe the Member for Lake Laberge has brought up many times the fact that his solid-waste facility in Deep Creek seems to catch fire with great regularity.

Carmacks waste-water facility is now operational — I think I mentioned that — with further refinements coming.

We've developed a consolidated application form for all placer mining permits required under the *Environment Act*, so that's a good process. We've secured \$32 million in federal funding for remediation and closure planning activities, as well as maintenance for the Faro mine complex and Mount Nansen. Faro is perhaps the most stellar incredible example of how not to mine. It's a disaster — we all know that and we simply have to point out not to judge mining by what you see there. It is not an example of how to do it and a good example of how it can go wrong.

We've delivered an \$11.5-million early remediation project at that Faro mine complex.

A synthetic liner was placed over a large area of contaminated rock, mitigating potential environmental risks at the site and ensuring protection of human health and the environment. The project provided significant training, employment and business opportunities for affected Yukon First Nations and, really, all Yukoners. We've implemented a watershed-based placer authorization from the Mayo River. We produced public resource materials, including a guidebook on mitigative measures for placer mining operations. That has all been produced.

Amendments to the quarry regulations are in place to streamline the day-to-day management of quarries permitting. The Yukon government's renewable energy and energy-efficient products and services assist Yukoners in accessing energy efficiency programs. The directory also provides transportation and energy tips, information on income support and tax relief and a very good, long list of government programs.

The Yukon Geological Survey is working on four projects to study how permafrost and landslides impact Yukon terrain and improve Yukon's ability to access the effects of climate change. That was started in 2008. It's ongoing for a number of years.

The Forest Management branch — Canadian Council of Forest Ministers Climate Change Task Force continues to be a high priority. Activities involve developing a framework for assessing tree species vulnerability and adaptation planning and reporting on the sustainability of Canada's forests under a changing climate. The Forest Management branch completed an initial status report on local-level indicators for the Champagne and Aishihik traditional territory planning area. The Forest Management branch is working with the Environment department to inform the selection of forest harvesting practices that minimize impacts on lichen habitats.

Effective intergovernmental cooperation with several First Nations in developing regional land use plans — and these plans are also conservation resource management options in support of protecting and preserving areas critical to wildlife. I do have to point out again, Mr. Speaker, the statistics that Yukoners don't have and members of the Opposition — or the Lib-

eral opposition — are not about to put on the table. But when you look at the percentage of protected areas in the provinces and territories in Canada, in British Columbia, they have the highest percentage of the province protected at 14.39 percent. Yukon is a very close second at 12.68 percent of the territory, which is already protected. It has nothing to do with the Peel or anything else. It's what is already protected — 12.68 percent.

Alberta comes down to 12.42 percent, and it gets down into places like Quebec — 8.14; Newfoundland and Labrador is 11th at 4.57; and you go all the way down to Prince Edward Island at 13, at 2.8 percent. The Canadian average, just for comparison, is 8.69 percent. So let's keep that in mind when someone's criticizing that we're not protecting enough. There are always other areas to look at. We have to do proper consultations, and we have to look at all of this, but we are the second best in the country and that's not a bad position to be in.

Staying with the environment — just give me a little bit — and looking at environmental issues, and what involves good government and what this government has accomplished, and what we've done while maintaining one of two savings accounts in Canada — one of two jurisdictions that has no debt whatsoever — Yukon and Alberta. And on a per capita basis, Yukon's got Alberta beat. We're number one. We also are one of two jurisdictions that had the highest gross domestic product in Canada — GDP — highest in Canada was Yukon. Second was Prince Edward Island — less than half of ours, and beyond that it was all negative growth right across Canada.

Beyond that, it was all negative growth right across Canada. So we have the best economy, the best savings account, no net debt — and I'm just touching the surface of some of the things that this government has accomplished. I'd say that's a darn good government and darn reasonable, I think, compared to the Liberals who have in this House, a few moments ago, said, "We will come as close as we can to that budget." But he won't say what he'd cut. What's he going to cut? What programs, what agencies and what groups would he cut? He's being very, very secretive on that. That's bad enough, but then to come around and tell me that we're being secretive and very wishy-washy — and I could keep going. I mean, I'm happy to — as I say, I'm only touching the surface on this.

We meet the criteria for the leadership in energy and environmental design, which is LEED, Canada — as a requirement for the design for the new F.H. Collins school facility in 2010. It's under development as we speak. We've established a Yukon Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence at Yukon College, beginning a part of what will eventually come to be an institution of higher learning — could be an institution and a university — which is exactly what members of the NDP have asked for. Again, a lot of that involves the magic wand, and we just ain't got one. But, we can certainly start making one, and that's what this is all about.

We are undertaking individual energy and environmental assessments of Yukon schools using the lead criteria. This project complements work underway by Highways and Public Works to establish energy performance standards for government buildings in support of Yukon's climate change strategy. As a commitment to the climate change action plan, we imple-

mented an environmental stewardship initiative for the Education department and Yukon schools. An advisory committee has been established that reviewed environmental best practices, completed a survey of environmental initiatives in the department and hosted a sustainable schools forum in 2008 with intergovernmental representation. The environmental stewardship initiative will build a system-wide framework that includes reducing energy costs and increasing understanding of environmental literacy in schools and government. We hosted a Sierra Club office-cooling workshop with the Yukon federal council to help staff reduce their environmental footprint. That was back in 2009.

One of the other issues, which is certainly bigger — just massive — is the Marwell tar pit. We have been working with the Government of Canada on cleaning up the Marwell tar pit. It is the largest hydrocarbon contamination site in the Yukon. This 10-year-long project will cost almost \$7 million. It will be led by the Yukon government. Maybe that will help the Liberals balance their budget by cancelling that. I don't know. I wish they would give us some ideas.

Providing \$1.8 million over three years, 2009 to 2012, to the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, helps the organization expand its programs and seek other funding opportunities. I think that most people know that I have been involved in the Wildlife Preserve. I am a charter member of it and have been involved in it. It was one of the first places I visited when I came to the Yukon. It was one of the first places I visited in my current role in government. It is an incredible facility. I encourage people to get out there and see what's there. It is a legacy for our children and our children's children for many, many years to come.

We have provided \$1.9 million over two years for the design and construction of an animal research and rehabilitation centre at the Yukon Wildlife Preserve. That is a critical step in obtaining accreditation with the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. We should note on that, again, that having worked with CanNor to come up with that funding, there is a partnership in there. Again, we have managed to leverage those funds from CanNor and we are very happy to have done that.

We now offer a second year of permit elk hunting and continue to implement other actions called for in the elk management strategy. We wrapped up the winter tick management program that began in 2008 and there was a marked improvement found in the Takhini elk herd and some improvements in the Braeburn elk herd. It utilizes a drug that is very useful — very easy to use though logistically a little difficult to get it on the animals, but obviously our staff has done a marvellous job with that. We have revised bison hunt areas and seasons in the fall of 2010, as recommended by the wood bison technical team. That bison herd is a big issue here.

Swan Haven is a marvellous facility in conjunction with the Girl Guides and some other organizations. More than 3,000 people attended Swan Haven for various celebrations in 2010, including 21 different school groups. It is a marvellous success story. I don't know. I would hope that the Leader of the Liberal Party would keep that as a thing, but maybe that's something he is thinking about cutting.

About 800 people participated in other wildlife viewing programs delivered in the summer of 2010, such as elk bugling. If you hear strange sounds in the distance, it might not be an elk. It might be your neighbour. There are mushrooms and bat-night walks — I am not going to even begin to comment on that one — and migratory birds. Multi-year research projects are underway on moose, caribou, grizzly bear and selected fish populations.

Information gathered informs the government's wildlife management and land use decisions. Make your decisions with data; don't simply guess. I know again the Leader of the Liberal Party has said a number of times that decisions were made — political decisions — without proper consultation. What an insult to all of the staff in our departments who spent countless hours and days, researching and advising and telling us the best way to do something. He thinks it's a political decision. Maybe that's how he would run a government. We can't tell; he won't tell us.

We've budgeted \$550,000 for remediating three contaminated sites owned by the Yukon government as part of the Yukon government's new approach to managing environmental liabilities. We have many environmental liabilities and we are going to have to address those. We have to start now. We have continued to work with State of Alaska staff on efforts to accurately determine the population of the Porcupine caribou herd. We have made progress this year. Hopefully information will be coming out. Then we can make decisions based on data. Unfortunately, much of that survey is dependent upon weather. If the weather gets to be that bad and it can't be done, well, that's something you can't put into the budget. Maybe the Liberals would really be happy about that or maybe they were happy about that. Because they couldn't get the aircraft up to see the caribou, they didn't have to spend the money.

So maybe that's something they would get involved in and, with federal help — again, leveraging — we've invested over \$600,000 in Tombstone Territorial Park in 2010. A new trail with interpretive panels, a bridge, a viewing platform and boardwalks, restoration of disturbed landscape around the new interpretive centre and restoration of historic buildings — and I'm not even going to attempt that pronunciation of the territorial park in Herschel Island.

One of the things that our community development fund sponsored with Yukon Wildlife Preserve was viewing platforms and interpretation plaques so that you could go around on your own and observe, get better photographs and see the interpretation. Something that I believe they did last year and would probably do again this year — I certainly would encourage them to do — is we used to go up there and go cross-country skiing along the roads, so you're not in with the animals, but you can certainly see them and visit them and it's marvellous skiing up there and what an incredible family outing.

When you go back and look at the Highways and Public Works as a department and some of the things that they've accomplished — we haven't really gone near that department too much — we used a warm-mix asphalt on the north Klondike Highway and this product is economical and requires less fuel.

It is a pilot project to look at whether or not this is useful for continued use.

Together with Laval University — the Shakwak permafrost distress project, with scientists studying the effects of climate change on permafrost stability — the department is working with scientists to monitor permafrost and develop strategies for reducing maintenance and construction costs.

We've established energy performance standards for Yukon government commercial and institutional building construction and renovations that meet or exceed the LEED standard. Examples are the Whitehorse correctional facility, expansion of the airport terminal building and the proposed F.H. Collins school.

Construction of the Dawson City waste-water treatment facility has begun to provide a new environmentally appropriate and sustainable waste-water treatment plant. That's underway now. The work continues on the Dawson City heating infrastructure project, using locally obtained woodchip fuel for the existing reservoir pump house and waste-water treatment facility. The project will lessen Dawson City's dependence on fossil fuels and create markets for biomass fuel in the Yukon. It's going on now as we speak. We've adopted new energy efficiency standards for computer equipment even. That was sort of brought home to me in a facility that we suddenly moved eight computers into and we now pretty well heat the building with computers. That's a hard one to explain to the insurance company.

We've implemented a green procurement policy. It could involve a little bit more money but it's the only right thing to do. But if you're trying to hit that magic number, I guess the Leader of the Liberal Party would say, "We're going to hit that number," and maybe he'd cancel that. We just don't know; we can only speculate.

The purchase of more fuel-efficient vehicles for Yukon government's light vehicle fleet and retirement of older inefficient vehicles — that's an ongoing program that started some years ago and continues. To encourage lower fuel consumption, Yukon government is adopting a total cost-of-ownership model for procuring heavy equipment. That has been quite an interesting model that has been developed by the Department of Highways and Public Works, and they've done a very good job on that.

The corporate shredding and recycling program was established in 2006 as a partnership between the Yukon government and Raven Recycling. The Public Service Commission operates the program through the workplace diversity employment office, in partnership with Raven Recycling. The pickup bins are in 92 locations and, in 2009-10, 53 tonnes of paper was processed.

I have to insert in there, too, the fact that Raven Recycling received a grant through the community development fund and that, for every one who visits up there now, you'll notice the configuration is quite different and a little bit easier to sort and vastly easier from the inside to service, and that all came through the Department of Economic Development's community development fund.

The Yukon Liquor Corporation — I'm just bouncing around here — eliminated single-use bags as of April 2010 and started selling reusable bags. That initiative alone will divert 12 metric tonnes of waste per year from the Yukon waste system. It reduces carbon emissions related to transportation and we were very fortunate with our good staff over there to secure bags that can be sold for a dollar, which is pretty much what it costs us, so it's really revenue-neutral but has a huge effect on the environment for that.

The central warehouse now secures liquor orders in reusable pallet wrappers when possible, rather than using plastic stretch wrap. That has significantly reduced the waste generated by the warehouse, so that has been a huge issue as well.

If we continue to look at some of the things that, I think, really do define good governance, you know, what have we accomplished? What have we done? What are we trying to do? I think that the people have to understand that.

Canada and Energy, Mines and Resources launched a new green infrastructure fund in 2009 in partnership with Yukon government and First Nations. The Government of Canada will provide up to \$71 million of the Mayo B project. Expanding hydro-generating power will displace thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year, creating a greener Yukon while providing more cost-effective energy and employment for Yukoners.

The Yukon government proposed a partnership with the governments of Canada — again — and First Nations and the private sector to complete the Mayo B project, which includes phase 2 of the Carmacks-Stewart transmission line project. This supports Yukon government's commitment to join the two existing grids and complete the Yukon-wide electrical grid and reduce and lower the carbon footprint. The Yukon government and First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun signed a memorandum of understanding on the Mayo B project. The memorandum of understanding guides the inter-governmental relationship, enabling both governments to work cooperatively to identify and take advantage of potential opportunities associated with Mayo B hydroelectric infrastructure project.

The Yukon government has committed up to \$10 million to expand Yukon's electrical grid with the construction of the Carmacks-Stewart transmission line, which will supply power to the new Minto mine. That actually occurred in 2009. They contributed a huge amount of money toward that.

When I look at that, Mr. Speaker, and I go back to some of the criticism that has been levelled by the Official Opposition — by the Leader of the Liberal Party — he seems to have this philosophy that I don't understand, that we should save our money, keep everything in a little savings account until we have the cash to write the cheque. He actually used the phrase "mortgage" this time. I don't know. When I purchased a home when I first came up here, I worked with a very good real estate agent who I think gave very good advice — make a reasonable down payment on your home; you will take a mortgage, there is a cost to that mortgage over time, but you will have the home to live in and to develop. The value likely will go up. The concept of a mortgage is very well defined, whether it is Mayo B,

whether it is the Watson Lake or Dawson hospitals, whatever it is — a reasonable down payment and there will be a mortgage.

I think any real estate agent would be able to understand that concept. I can't really think of any who wouldn't — but that's maybe just me.

We have signed a \$5-million Growing Forward agreement with the Government of Canada to give Yukon farmers stable, bankable programs and enable key investments in farm innovation and marketing. Now, I do joke about this from time to time because of my background as a veterinarian — when I travel, the subject often comes up about Yukon agriculture. I once joked on a visit to the State of Idaho with the Governor, Butch Otter, that we had an amazing agriculture sector — that we didn't number our cattle. We actually named them, and Sally Sue Cow was a Jersey up on Sister Island. A year later, I was quite amazed when Governor Otter actually, in a meeting, called me by name and asked me how Sally Sue Cow was doing, and I had to report that she was killed in a tragic boating accident off Sister Island.

I joke about it, but the reality is we have a vibrant agriculture community, and it is getting more vibrant all the time. The Agricultural Association is continuing to develop programs and develop farms and develop local produce — the farmers market — the Fireweed Market down on the waterfront here in Whitehorse. A lot of good work is happening there and we're very pleased to get involved with that.

Energy, Mines and Resources, which houses the Agriculture branch, hosts the annual North of 60° Agriculture Conference and banquet each year to support Yukon's growing agriculture sector. In 2009, speakers explored a variety of subjects, including adding value to primary production, opportunities in agriculture for new farmers and northern greenhouse technologies and how to best use the Growing Forward initiative that I mentioned. It started in 2009; it continues to work through implementation of the 2006 agriculture policy and the 2008 to 2012 agriculture development plan to support sustainable agriculture industry. It was at one time simply a boutique lifestyle choice. There are now those who are supporting themselves and making a living in agriculture and that's good to see. I think that's going to add to itself.

The Yukon government is demonstrating the northern application of solar power with the installation of a grid connected photovoltaic system atop the main Yukon government administration building in Whitehorse. The installation provides the opportunity for Yukoners to learn more about the application of this renewable energy technology in our unique northern climate. There are some difficulties with it, of course.

The extensive periods of darkness in the winter, which is when we need the power, is problematic. We have often lots of sun in the summer — sometimes we have lots of sun in the summer — and that's not necessarily when we need the power. There are challenges, but this is something that Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Development Corporation are looking at.

They are also looking at wind power. Wind power and the development of so-called "wind farms" has amazing potential — incredible potential. Given the right circumstances, the right

place, and the right plan, this is an incredible opportunity to develop. The problem with it is that we haven't got many of those places up here. In the Yukon, there are only, I believe, two places that Yukon Energy has identified to be a reasonable place to put a wind generator. One is way off the grid — incredibly outrageous to try to connect it to the grid. The other one is in an area that perhaps could come to the grid, but is right in the middle of wildlife sanctuary. I don't think anybody wants to get into that debate. Here, wind power becomes reasonable when it's at height. When you put it at height, you have what is called "rime icing," similar to what aircraft experience. Again, in the summer, you don't have that problem and that's not really when we need the power. In the winter, with all the heating plants and such, we need the power and you can expend a good, reasonable percentage of power generated by that wind turbine, simply to keep the ice off the blades. So, again, it's problematic, but it is something that's being looked at. It has to be.

The enhanced \$1.8 million Yukon mining incentive program, or YMIP, is fully subscribed, with a total of 106 mineral exploration projects that proved through the program. Yukon government remains active in the promotion of the two northern pipelines that will continue to pursue the seven interests identified in its pipeline strategy, including regulatory certainty for the Alaska pipeline project. It's interesting, as the two continue — the Liberals put all of their eggs in one basket for the Alaska pipeline. The general theory, lately, has been that probably the Mackenzie pipeline will come first, but if people in the Northwest Territories continue to shoot themselves in the foot and reload and keep firing, that may change. That may change dramatically. So, we're hoping that there are going to be some decisions to be made on that. There are some deadlines coming up pretty quickly. We do have to implement the strategic action plan developed with Alberta and British Columbia to provide that regulatory certainty in Canada for the Alaska Highway pipeline.

The Yukon government has created a long-term vision for the responsible development and managing of energy resources to meet Yukon's needs within the *Energy Strategy for Yukon*. The energy strategy will guide energy policies and outlines of vision for meeting Yukon's current and future energy needs while reducing environmental impacts and minimizing energy costs. We also promote energy conservation through initiatives brought forward by the Energy Solutions Centre and through the Yukon Housing Corporation, and this is an ongoing thing that's quite involved.

Yukon Zinc's Wolverine project should start shipping ore in the coming weeks and their tailings and infrastructure design and construction plan was approved by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources in 2009. The approval demonstrates how Yukon's regulatory regime enables the development and management of Yukon's natural resources in a very responsible and a very sustainable manner.

We've issued oil and gas rights in the Eagle Plains Basin for northern Yukon following the spring 2009 call for bids. The successful bid demonstrates that industry is responding to the certainty provided by Yukon's disposition process even during

these challenging economic times. On June 10, 2009, our Premier announced a \$3-million rebate to reduce Yukoners' monthly residential electricity bill.

The interim electrical rebate will provide residential electricity customers with a maximum rebate of \$26.62 per month until the Yukon Utilities Board has completed a cost-of-service review. In March 2009, the Good Energy program was renewed to provide cash rebates ranging from \$100 to \$500 on high-efficiency kitchen and laundry appliances, solar domestic hot water systems, pellet and wood stoves, oil and propane furnaces and boilers and on outboard motors. The Good Energy program supports the Yukon's energy strategy by helping Yukoners choose efficient projects and products that can reduce their energy cost and consumption.

In the 2009-10 budget, an additional \$50,000 was allocated for the Land Planning branch to increase community land planning initiatives. The increased funding for the community land planning supports an enhanced focus on developing local area plans for unincorporated communities and rural areas. Yukon products are now being able to be sold in local stores. That is something that is fairly new.

We've implemented changes that streamline and modernize the Yukon's mineral claims administration. The amended claim provisions reduce administrative costs and improve Yukon's competitiveness for attracting mining.

I think we've done a marvellous job of that, Mr. Speaker, considering that we were voted and determined to be the fourth best place in the world for mining investment.

Amendments were made to the Yukon *Quartz Mining Act* and accompanying regulations that will lower exploration costs by streamlining and modernizing how mining claims are administered in the Yukon. The royalty provisions have also been modernized to provide Yukon with a competitive fiscal regime for mine development. The *Miners Lien Act* has been modernized to enable suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, lending institutions and project proponents to better assess and qualify financial risk, providing increased certainty to Yukon's mineral sector.

In 2009, I think that everyone knows that the Sherwood Mine in Minto was fully permitted and has commenced construction now. It is called the Capstone Mine. The introduction of the new placer regime in 2008 was completed by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Yukon Placer Secretariat with the assistance of the Yukon Water Board Secretariat. That was in 2009.

We continue to develop area-specific forest management plans. I think that the real buzzwords there are "area-specific". One of the things that we saw when we first came into government was the idea of protecting a large area and, some would say, dropping a park on a mine. This meant, who in their right mind would invest? Who in their right mind would invest knowing that they might be wiped out and their investment would have no value? It looked at site-specific actual areas and deals with that. It makes no sense to drop a park on an area without really knowing what is in it.

While I certainly watch with great interest the development and consultation on the Peel regional planning, I do won-

der about the reasoning of the Official Opposition to continually try to go after the Minister of Environment, who really has nothing to do with that consultation. Land use planning is in Energy, Mines and Resources. That is the minister who needs to be dealing with it and answering the questions. The fact that the Official Opposition, the Liberal Party, doesn't accept that, doesn't understand that — again, I can't imagine them not understanding. I have to think that there are other reasons involved in that continual line of questioning. I leave that up to others to determine.

We have \$31 million in a three-year program to upgrade the Robert Campbell Highway. Now, the Leader of the Liberal Party, at one point, was critical of the "road to nowhere". I guess he didn't notice there was a \$400 million mine on that road, right at the end of where the work is being done. He didn't read that part of the budget. Shakwak project work has continued with an emphasis on paving stable areas. New pavement was placed on 17 kilometres of the Haines Road. There are a number of areas that we have looked at in there.

Again, the inability of the Leader of the Official Opposition to understand the concept of a mortgage and — whether it be a housing mortgage — and his constant saying that we have to save our money and do without until we have money in the bank to simply write a cheque for that project is beyond me. I can't imagine anyone actually believing that, so I have to think there are other reasons for that. But, as he said earlier, "We will come as close as we can to that budget." What would he cut? What things — when he gets close that budget — what programs would he cut? Would he cut the work at the Wildlife Preserve? Would he cut the funding to arts and sports? Would he cut the funding to municipalities or to hospitals?

He said already today that the \$50-million hospital could have been \$15 million. I hope he would feel that way if he suddenly needed medical services out there. I think the residents of Watson Lake and Dawson would like, and I think everyone who uses those highways would like, to have a good, solid medical facility there and available. He has already said that he would cut the hospitals. What else would he cut? Why is he being so secretive in not telling us what things he would remove in order to hit that magic number? We haven't got a magic wand. We haven't got one. I'm sorry, I just don't. He would imply that he does have a magic wand, and I would sure like to know where he got it — probably off eBay. That was one of the great economic development projects that the Liberals suggested a couple of years ago: a course to teach people on how to sell on eBay. Well, there would be a lot of old household effects to sell as the people were fleeing the territory in droves — as our Minister of Justice put it — the teary little eyes pressed against the back windows of trucks and such.

You can often judge — these economic factors — how we're doing by the number of U-Hauls. There was awhile in there where you couldn't find a U-Haul trailer here; they were all heading south. Now I see piles of U-Hauls up here. That's part of the problem. They can't get them back empty because nobody wants to leave. They want to move here.

Kids are staying here; kids are educated here; people are retiring and stay here because of the health care, because of the

social programs; increasing numbers of social workers; better education through Yukon College; better education through new schools in the communities. People are saying, “Well, you support only ridings that you hold.” Boy, did we mess that one up in Carmacks. Sorry.

You know, boards and committees — the last couple of people I’ve appointed have been former NDP candidates.

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

Debate on Motion No. 1022 accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.