

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, March 28, 2012 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Aboriginal Languages Day

Hon. Mr. Kent: I rise in this House today to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Languages Day. National Aboriginal Languages Day is celebrated across Canada each year on March 31. It was established by the Assembly of First Nations in 1989 to create awareness of the languages of the first peoples and to build support for the preservation of their languages.

Prior to the colonization of North America, approximately 300 indigenous languages were spoken on this continent. These languages have variations of dialects and distinct, diverse cultures associated with them. Today there are almost 60 different aboriginal languages in Canada. Of these, only three are considered safe from extinction — Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktitut.

In Yukon, seven of the eight First Nation languages are still being used, each with its own distinct dialects. First Nations throughout Yukon are working diligently to revitalize their languages. International research states that as many as 90 to 95 percent of spoken languages may be extinct or very seriously endangered during this century. Most of the threatened languages are indigenous languages. Indigenous languages in Canada are in a precarious position and must be considered critically endangered.

In 1996, UNESCO stated that, “Canada’s aboriginal languages are among the most endangered in the world.” Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo stated: “Indigenous languages represent the collective heritage and identity of this country and this land. Our elders have called upon us to never forget our languages, to teach them, and to learn from our languages. Indigenous languages must be recognized, respected, fully supported and should be a source of celebration and pride throughout Canada.”

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, endorsed by Canada on November 12, 2010, calls on states to work with indigenous peoples in the spirit of mutual respect and partnership. It can serve as a guide for the work required and establishes important standards, stating: “Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.” That was Article 13 of that declaration.

The Department of Education here in the Yukon is committed to assisting our First Nations in preserving and revitalizing their languages. We offer continued support of the Yukon Native Language Centre. There are 20 Yukon First Nation language programs offered in 20 different Yukon schools and one example of the support being provided has been the purchase of 11 Promethean boards as a pilot for the Yukon First Nations’ language teachers. The department will also be providing training for this exciting interactive technology. As part of our commitment to 21st century learning, we will use this modern technology to engage students in learning a Yukon First Nation’s language.

Mr. Speaker, let us honour aboriginal languages in Canada and commit to protect and promote this important part of Canada’s past, present and future. Thank you. Mahsi’ cho.

Mr. Tredger: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to Aboriginal Languages Day, which was established by a special chiefs’ assembly on education as National Aboriginal Languages Day, March 31.

Language is culture. A person’s culture is most clearly expressed in the process of their language use. Thinking patterns, values and actions are all a part of language expression. Daily use of the language means that the culture is strong and is passed on.

The history of aboriginal languages in Canada is not a positive one. First Nations’ traditional culture and languages have been gravely affected by the imposition of mainstream languages. One of the most destructive acts of those in charge of residential schools was to forbid the use of aboriginal languages and to punish any child using their original language. It may have been done with the objective of supporting First Nations to obtain language skills that were essential in a dominant society. The unfortunate result has been devastating to the languages and culture. In many cases, the aboriginal language was the only one some children knew. Taking it away meant great difficulties in learning.

Today First Nations are anxious to preserve their languages and their heritage. Many elders continue to use aboriginal languages and to encourage children to learn them. Aboriginal languages are used in many First Nations’ administration of their government. Many First Nation teachers are expanding their language ability to teach each other, but there is still a serious concern about the threat of extinction of these languages. Several languages across Canada have been declared extinct or are used only in ceremonies. More can and must be done here by all governments and First Nation speakers to preserve the languages. We can all be instrumental in actively using and supporting these essential tools of an important part of Yukon culture.

I wish to pay tribute to Aboriginal Languages Day and commit, on behalf the New Democratic Party Official Opposition, that we will do all we can to support and celebrate aboriginal languages in our territory.

Mr. Elias: I rise today on behalf of the Liberal caucus to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Languages Day 2012.

[Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable.]

National Aboriginal Languages Day, March 31, was established by the Assembly of First Nations in 1989 to create awareness across Canada of the languages of the first peoples to build support for their preservation. There are almost 60 different aboriginal languages in Canada, and of these, only three are considered safe from extinction — Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktitut. These languages have variations of dialects and distinct, diverse cultures associated with them. Our name, Canada, for example, comes from “kanata”, the Huron word for village. Currently only a minority of the aboriginal population is able to speak or understand an aboriginal language.

In Yukon, there are eight aboriginal languages used here. Seven are from the Athabaskan family, which spread from central Alaska through northeastern Canada to Hudson's Bay.

These seven are Gwich'in, Han, Kaska, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Tagish and Upper Tanana. The other is Tlingit, spoken in parts of British Columbia, Alaska and southern Yukon. These languages reflect distinctive histories, cultures and identities linked to family, community, the land and traditional knowledge. They are essential to our aboriginal cultures.

Today in the Yukon, some aboriginal languages are being learned as a second language and being taught in school. Unfortunately, this is not being done across our country of Canada. When young aboriginal people gain the ability to speak the language of their parents and grandparents, they will be able to communicate at a higher level with their older family members in their traditional language and that becomes invaluable in life. For many First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, these languages are at the very core of their identity. The process of learning the language will help to contribute to one's increased self-esteem and community well-being, as well as cultural continuity. I believe that it is going to take an ongoing commitment from each individual, each family, each community, each First Nation and all levels of government to ensure that our aboriginal languages survive in this great territory of ours.

[Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable.]

Mahsi' cho, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

In recognition of Red Cross Month

Hon. Mr. Graham: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House on behalf of all members to ask everyone to join with me in recognizing March as Red Cross Month. When we hear of the Red Cross we often think immediately of international aid work that the agency undertakes around the world. The Red Cross is present wherever disaster strikes, whether it be natural or civil unrest. It provides emergency shelter, food, water and other necessities to people who are in immediate need; however, many of us don't know about the lifesaving work the Red Cross is busy doing in communities across Canada. The Canadian Red Cross provides emergency services when disaster strikes in Canada, including shelter, food, first aid and other necessities. The Red Cross also provides a service, working to reunite families after separation during a disaster. The Red Cross has been a strong partner of our emergency social services in times of crisis.

Many of us are familiar with the Canadian Red Cross' safety programming, including water safety, swimming and first aid. More than 27 million Canadians have learned to swim and play safe around water, thanks to the Canadian Red Cross.

In some communities, the Canadian Red Cross assists individuals who require support to stay in their homes and maintain their independence. They do this by providing assistance with meals, housework, transportation and medical equipment rentals. The Canadian Red Cross is also involved in educating Canadians about healthy relationships and safe communities. They offer awareness and prevention programs, workshops and training to adults and youth that encourage respectful, non-violent relationships. There are so many ways that the Red Cross has touched our lives as Canadians and the people who live around the world. I ask all of you to join with me in recognizing the dedication and hard work of the Canadian Red Cross staff, volunteers and donors.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In recognition of Celebration of Swans

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Today it is my pleasure to pay tribute on behalf of this Assembly to the Celebration of Swans, a unique Yukon event now in its 19th year. This morning I was pleased to give each member this year's poster, which features a spectacular photo of swans in flight taken by local photographer Peter Mather. This is a celebration, I believe, everyone is proud to share. A Celebration of Swans runs from April 14 to 22 this year, with Swan Haven opening on Sunday, April 1 — this weekend.

Celebration of Swans is Yukon's premier bird festival, bringing many people out to great swan viewing areas to welcome spring to the north. Over this nine-day period, visitors flock to open water, making the Celebration of Swans the largest birding event in Yukon.

Thousands of residents and visitors alike welcome the chance to view trumpeter and tundra swans and other water birds at the Swan Haven Interpretive Centre on Marsh Lake, as well as viewing sites and events at Tagish Lake, Johnsons Crossing, and Kluane Lake.

M'Clintock Bay and Swan Haven Interpretive Centre welcome about 10 percent of North America's trumpeter swans during their spring migration. When the birds arrive in March, most Yukon rivers and lakes are locked under ice, but at M'Clintock Bay they find shallow, open water filled with much-needed food. Because the surrounding ice provides security from approaching predators, this spot offers everything that the migrating birds need: rest, food and security.

M'Clintock Bay is one of the most important spring staging areas along the swans' flyway. The open water is also very attractive to canoeists, boaters, fishers and others eager for the return of spring. Concern about how these activities disturb the birds first led to an education program in the late 1980s. As more people became aware of the birds' needs, activities in the water decreased.

In April 1994, with the support of the Yukon government's wildlife viewing program, the Girl Guides of Canada, and Ducks Unlimited Canada, Swan Haven Interpretive Centre was opened.

Staff is available weekday evenings and afternoons from early April to mid-May to share information about the swans and to help you discover what makes M'Clintock Bay the special place it is.

Environment Yukon's wildlife viewing program coordinates the Celebration of Swans, but this event would not be possible without help from many different community organizations and businesses. While people enjoy the celebration, for the swans it's a life saver — literally. Before we had an organized viewing program in place, people tended to go far out on the ice or use boats to get close to the swans. We now know that disturbed swans can't rest and feed properly, affecting their ability to make it safely to their breeding grounds.

Activities during the Celebration of Swans teach us about the importance of early spring open water while viewing the birds at a respectful distance. In closing, I would encourage all members to visit Swan Haven in April, or participate in one of the many interpretive events during this year's Celebration of Swans. Thank you.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Kent: It's my pleasure to welcome Mr. Deuling's other grade 11 social studies class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School. His first class joined us here on Monday, and his second grade 11 social studies class is joining us here today.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Kent: As we did on Monday, I would invite members who are able to join us in the members' lounge following Question Period to answer some questions from the students, as they will join us there as well.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, could I have my colleagues on the floor welcome a constituent, Dave Brekke.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling today the Queen's Printer Agency business plan for 2012-13.

I also have for tabling the Fleet Vehicle Agency's annual report for 2010-11.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I have two documents for tabling. One is a report to the community, 2012, produced by Yukon College, entitled *Building for Tomorrow*. The second is the 2010-11 annual report of the Yukon Lottery Commission.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling today a Yukon Judicial Council annual report, 2011.

Mr. Elias: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling today a letter dated February 20, 2012, addressed to the honourable min-

isters John Duncan and Leona Aglukkaq, signed by five MLAs from across Canada's north, which addresses the Nutrition North Canada program.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 2 — response

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I rise today to respond to the petition that was tabled in the Legislature recently, which calls upon the Yukon Legislative Assembly to support the conservation and long-term protection of middle McIntyre Creek for the benefit of present and future Yukoners.

The petition also speaks to the designation of middle McIntyre Creek as an environmentally protected area and urges the Yukon Legislative Assembly to oppose any municipal proposals for roads, housing or other developments.

In 2006, the Yukon government and the City of Whitehorse signed the *Land Development Protocol Agreement 2006*. Pursuant to that agreement, the city is responsible for the planning, design, consultation and approvals for land development within the boundaries of the City of Whitehorse, and those also designated for development within the Whitehorse official community plan.

As our economy continues to flourish and our population continues to grow as a result, so too does the demand for housing. During the recent territorial election, making land and housing readily available topped the list of priorities for Yukoners in each and every community.

Our government recognizes that adequate, available and affordable housing is fundamental in building and maintaining strong communities and is working diligently with our partners to maintain a supply of building lots that will help address Yukon's housing needs now and well into the future.

Since 2002, the Yukon government has worked cooperatively with municipal and First Nation governments, the private sector and the public in developing residential, commercial, industrial and recreational lots throughout the Yukon. By the end of 2013, the Yukon government will develop and bring to market an additional 300 building lots. The Government of Yukon has recently completed a number of land development projects, including 20 industrial lots in Dawson City, 49 single-family lots, and three multi-family lots in Haines Junction, country residential lots in Destruction Bay and rural residential lots in Grizzly Valley.

The government is also working with municipal and First Nation governments on additional land development projects in Dawson, Mayo and Carmacks. Likewise, the Yukon government is also pleased to work closely with the City of Whitehorse on land development within the municipal boundaries. As per the protocol agreement, the Whistle Bend subdivision and Porter Creek D planning has and continues to be led by the City of Whitehorse. The Yukon government respects the city's jurisdiction in this regard and, as such, will await the outcome of the planning and approval processes in accordance with the protocol.

The Yukon government very much recognizes there is a desire to protect McIntyre Creek. Guided by the City of Whitehorse official community plan that was approved in 2010, land use designations fall within the purview of the city. This includes future development and use of land, as well as environmental matters within municipal boundaries. Land management is a delicate balance between development and preservation that needs to be weighed carefully. The Yukon government, however, believes that all of these various interests can and need to be balanced against the affordable housing and land development needs we are currently facing in the city. We remain committed to working with the City of Whitehorse, First Nation governments, Yukon communities and others to meet the continued demand for land throughout the territory while maintaining the quality of life we as Yukoners continue to enjoy. Thank you.

Speaker: Are there any petitions for presentation?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to continue to work with the Yukon Convention Bureau, industry and Yukon communities to promote the Yukon as a choice destination for hosting meetings, conventions and sports events.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to continue to work with the City of Whitehorse and the Miles Canyon Historical Railway Society to promote Yukon's trolley and railway history.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the 2012-13 budget to begin building a \$7-million recreation centre in Ross River.

Ms. McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to use the 2012-13 budget to provide \$75,000 for an annual business training fund to assist Yukon businesses to access training opportunities to further contribute to Yukon's economic growth.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges that the Government of Yukon to continue working with industry, communities and First Nations to promote the Yukon tourism brand that markets Yukon as an attractive year-round destination.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue working with Whitehorse and Carcross to develop their respective waterfronts.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue promoting employment and training opportunities for persons with disabilities.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to use the 2012-13 budget to live up to its election platform promise to invest in rural seniors and elders by beginning construction of a seniors and elders residence as promised for Mayo for the summer of 2012.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop and implement a Yukon water strategy that will help provide long-term direction for economically and environmentally responsible development, management, and use of water in Yukon and establish principles to guide future decision-making.

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

THAT a select committee on whistle-blower protection be established;

THAT the honourable member Patti McLeod be the chair of that committee;

THAT the honourable members Stacey Hassard, Hon. Doug Graham, Jan Stick and Darius Elias be appointed to the committee;

THAT the committee shall have access to records generated by, or gathered by, the Select Committee on Whistle-blower Protection established by Motion No. 125 of the 32nd Legislative Assembly.

THAT the committee report to the House its findings and recommendations respecting the central issues that should be addressed in whistle-blower protection legislation, including:

(1) whether all public institutions and private organizations performing public functions will be covered;

(2) whether only employees or others — unions, advocacy groups, the media, citizens — can use this legislation;

(3) what types of wrongdoing will be covered;

(4) whether the same office will conduct investigation, mediation and the protection of whistle-blowers;

(5) whether employees will have to exhaust departmental procedures before approaching the whistle-blower protection office;

(6) how retaliation against whistle-blowers will be defined and how long protection will exist;

(7) whether there will be a reverse onus on the employer to demonstrate that adverse decisions on a whistle-blowing employee were not a reprisal;

(8) what remedies for employees judged to be adversely affected will be specified in the legislation; and

(9) what sorts of consequences there will be for employees who engage in reckless or malicious accusations of wrongdoing

and for managers who engage in reprisal against employees who act in good faith;

THAT the committee report to the House its recommendation as to whether whistle-blower protection legislation should include a sunset clause similar to that found in section 35 of the *Ombudsman Act*;

THAT the committee have the power to call for persons, papers and records and to sit during intersessional periods;

THAT the committee may hold hearings for the purpose of receiving the views and opinions of Yukon citizens and interested groups on whistle-blower protection legislation;

THAT the committee have the power to seek background information from experts and to be able to call and hear these experts as witnesses;

THAT while all testimony provided to the committee shall be in a matter of public record, the committee have the power to hold in-camera meetings and to direct that the records of the committee, in specific instances, not contain details that could lead to the identification of an individual group, third party or community;

THAT if the House is not sitting at such time as the committee is prepared to present its report, the committee transmit its report to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and then, not more than one day later, release the report to the public; and

THAT the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly be responsible for providing the necessary support services to the committee.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Justice to create a new independent aboriginal liaison communications officer position at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre as soon as is possible to facilitate relations between inmates, administration, staff, and the public.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Hanson: I rise to welcome Danielle Daffe, president of Fair Vote Yukon, and her class from the Wood Street Centre School, to this House.

Applause

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Electoral reform

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Across Yukon, indeed across this nation, citizens are raising concerns about the state of our democracy. Serious questions around election financing, inaccurate voter lists and so-called voter suppression tactics have shaken the public's trust in our democracy and have led to renewed calls for change. Citizens organized in groups, like Fair Vote Yukon, question the basic premise of the first-past-the-post system that gives 100 percent of power and

decision-making to governments that may only garner 35 to 40 percent of the vote.

My question to the Premier: Is the Government of Yukon interested in engaging with Yukoners in a discussion on improving our democracy?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Electoral reform in the Yukon was included in the Yukon Party's 2002 election platform. Subsequent to that, the Yukon Party appointed a senior advisor on electoral reform who issued a final report on February 1, 2005. While recognizing that some Yukoners feel passionately about electoral reform, the report recommended that the political parties focus on legislative renewal rather than on electoral reform.

Yukon Party in its two subsequent election platforms — 2006 and 2011 — has done exactly that. In the section "practising open, accountable, fiscally-responsible government", the Yukon Party committed to promoting consensus building, collaboration and compromise, rather than confrontation in government and working to improve the conduct and decorum of members in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Ms. Hanson: I'll just point out for the Premier that, in fact, that report was done by an individual appointed, yes, by the Yukon Party government to go and sit in on the discussions in British Columbia — not participate but sit in — and then report back to this territory at some expense in excess of \$200,000. That really didn't talk about what I'm talking about.

In December, the New Democratic Official Opposition introduced a motion to establish a select committee on democratic reform. Our plan to strengthen and renew democracy is up for debate this afternoon, and the public will be watching how this government responds. Our plan is not radical. It's not a step-by-step manual. It begins with the simple concept of starting a discussion with Yukoners on their democratic system and how it may be improved. Our plan would create a committee of this Legislature to consult Yukoners, starting this spring, and receive the public's views on how elections are conducted, how they're represented in the Legislature and on other matters of interest to the public. Does this government support letting Yukoners be part of the discussion on improving our democracy?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The three successive Yukon Party governments have followed through with their election platform commitments and have focused on legislative renewal. Yukon Party government reinvigorated the Public Accounts Committee, which has not been functioning properly. The Yukon Party government established an all-party standing committee to oversee appointments to government boards and committees that had been included in the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly for years, but never implemented by the previous NDP or Liberal governments.

Yukon Party government passed more unanimous motions on matters of importance to Yukoners by working in collaboration with the Official Opposition and the Third Party than any previous government in the history of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. Yukon Party government established more all-party committees of the Legislature to conduct public consultation on matters of importance to Yukoners, such as anti-smoking legislation, human rights, whistle-blower protection, the

lation, human rights, whistle-blower protection, the *Landlord and Tenant Act* and safe operation and use of off-road vehicles.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, you know, it's really wonderful to see so many young people in the gallery.

I really had hoped that their experience in the Legislature would strengthen their connection to our democracy and actually move them to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities. Unfortunately, when the Premier goes on to list a litany of failed things — the fact that we have the whistle-blower legislation coming back again, without a timeline — when you have the minister citing a renewed Public Accounts Committee — this is the government that wouldn't sit with that Public Accounts Committee. We may finally have a meeting; the first meeting in two years occurring maybe at the end of this month. It is sad — and I can understand sometimes why too many of our youth across the country and in Yukon are disengaging from politics when they hear this kind of palaver that goes on. It's no surprise when much of what they see in politics amounts to personal and childish partisan attacks instead of thoughtful discussion on serious issues.

Speaker: Order please. The member's time has elapsed.

Ms. Hanson: Will the government support...

Speaker: I said the member's time elapsed. Please take your seat.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I would like to point out to the opposition that indeed the Yukon has traditionally, and continues to have, one of the highest voter turnouts in this country. I would like to point out that the Leader of the Official Opposition often speaks to respect and decorum in this House, but yesterday the member opposite referred to the Third Party as "irrelevant". I find that very disrespectful.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, again the Premier is misquoting the Blues. He did this yesterday. I didn't call the party — I called their position irrelevant.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The Hon. Premier is quoting what the member said as shown in the Blues yesterday. I believe this is merely a dispute between members.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I read the Blues this morning, and I believe the Premier is not quoting them completely. I would ask that if members are going to quote the Blues, please quote the sentence in its entirety. The statement by the Leader of the Official Opposition yesterday, in my opinion, referred to the Third Party's stance and not necessarily the party itself.

The Premier has the floor.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to say that, while the decision is that it was on a stance, I think it also speaks to the context of the position that has been taken. Certainly, the Member for Whitehorse Centre made similar comments during the recent territorial election when she dis-

missed the Liberal Party's chances of being elected, yet today, Mr. Speaker, two members of the Liberal Party are sitting in this House, duly elected by Yukoners to represent their communities.

The Leader of the Official Opposition's remarks certainly, to me, speak to the fact that there is no interest in the fact that there are more than two parties in this House and it certainly, I think, disrespects those members from Vuntut Gwitchin and from Klondike. I think it also certainly disrespects their families and their friends — the people who supported them and continue to support them. I think it certainly speaks, also, of those people who voted for them and that they represent all the people of Dawson City, all the people of Old Crow, and I do believe that Yukoners deserve better from the Official Opposition.

Question re: Seniors housing

Mr. Tredger: The experience with this government — as with most issues, they will wait until there is a crisis before any action is taken. This has had serious consequences for housing where we have had a crisis for years and still, little has been done.

We are all aware that the population of seniors across Canada is growing substantially and statistics reflect this in the Yukon. The minister must be aware that in rural Yukon, seniors and elders are very concerned about their housing needs. We need a comprehensive seniors housing strategy.

When will this Yukon Party government live up to its election platform and share its coordinated response to seniors' and elders' concerns, including those who reside in rural Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Kent: In response to the member opposite, again, I had the opportunity to travel to a number of ridings throughout the Yukon throughout January and February. I visited new seniors housing projects that were constructed by the Yukon Party government. I was in seniors housing projects in Teslin and Watson Lake and Faro, and I visited new social housing projects in Dawson City, Carmacks and Ross River. A tremendous amount of effort has been put into addressing the needs of seniors and social housing, not only in Whitehorse, but also in the rural communities. The Mayo seniors housing project is something that is included in our platform and a promise that we intend on living up to during this mandate.

Mr. Tredger: I'm very glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker. There are over 100 seniors and elders in Mayo. The Premier flew up during the election campaign, and the Yukon Party's election platform also indicates that housing will be built for them in their community. They were told construction would begin this summer. The government has reiterated in this House that they don't have a strategy, they have a platform, so it was with some disbelief that I realized that there is nothing in this year's budget for it and of more concern, there is nothing I can find in the next five years to fulfill that capital plan.

Will the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation tell this House when the Yukon Party government will live up to its commitment to the seniors and elders in Mayo?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my previous answer, this project is included in our platform and in our plan to build housing across the Yukon. It was included

when we ran in the fall, and we intend to follow through on that commitment during this mandate.

When I was in Mayo recently, I did meet with the mayor, and the community of Mayo has designated a lot that they feel would be appropriate for this. We are certainly very pleased and happy to be able to partner with that community. They are the ones who brought this idea forward for the seniors housing complex in Mayo. We very much enjoy a strong working relationship with the community of Mayo and the First Nation of Mayo, and we intend to follow through on that commitment during this mandate.

Mr. Tredger: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear that; however, the seniors and elders in Mayo lack the information. They are worried they will soon have to leave their community and be away from their friends and family, because this government has ignored their housing needs.

These seniors and elders have contributed to their community and the Yukon in many ways over the years and are the foundation on which the Yukon is built. They need information they can rely on to make hard decisions. These are not political pawns; they deserve better than to be misled.

Will the minister or the Premier live up to the promises they made and respond to the people of Mayo with a firm answer as to when they can expect a seniors complex, so seniors can have the information to make important life decisions?

Hon. Mr. Kent: In reviewing the wait-lists for the various communities and looking at Mayo and having visited there and visited the social housing units that were in the community, there are no people currently on the wait-list as of September 30, 2011, which is the most recent information I have. There are no people on the wait-list for Mayo. We have committed to, I would imagine, what would be a six-plex seniors complex in Mayo. The land has been identified by the community. The Yukon Housing Corporation and the board of directors will look at that property and ensure that it's suitable for this. We'll take the time to design this facility and we'll construct the facility within this mandate.

I know the member opposite has raised this with me as an extremely important issue. It's very important to the governing party; we included it in our platform. But I noticed that it wasn't included in the platform of the New Democrats during the fall campaign.

It is important enough to us, and it is something we want to make sure that we build, but I couldn't find it in the platform of the New Democrats.

Question re: Fiscal management

Mr. Elias: Yukoners have seen their public savings account dwindle in the last few years. Even record transfers from Ottawa couldn't keep up with this government's overspending. Despite getting \$3 billion from Ottawa in four years, the government still had to deplete \$150 million in savings just to get by. That is a 70-percent drop in Yukon's savings account, which doesn't make it much of a savings account at all. The new Premier has promised to turn that ship around; instead of continuing to drain the savings account, he will start building it back up.

For the record, could the Premier please tell us where the territory's net financial resources will stand at the end of this year?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I am proud to stand here as the Minister of Finance, one of only two ministers of finance in this country who can stand and say that they are in the enviable position of having no net debt. That means that when you take assets — that is our investments or cash and accounts receivable — and you subtract all of our liabilities — accounts payable, liabilities against environmental cleanups — we still have money left over. We are not using tomorrow's money to finance today.

As we have reported, we're looking for approximately a \$29-million surplus in the current year, 2011-12, and projecting net financial resources for the end of this fiscal year of approximately \$49 million.

Mr. Elias: I thank the Premier for that response. As the budget does indicate, net financial resources currently stand at \$49 million, and should, if this budget proves accurate, be at \$101 million by the end of the year. When it comes to these numbers, it's usually the main budget that shows a rosier picture and gets the most attention. Then, in the fall, the government quietly tables a supplementary budget that includes all the spending they didn't account for in the beginning. Will the Premier confirm today that when he tables the supplementary budget that the net financial resources won't be revised down from its rosy \$101-million projection?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think the question speaks to perhaps a lack of understanding of the process and what we do. As I've said and rose in this House and said on more than one occasion, a budget is a plan, and that means that it's not static. I'm sure for the government — it's the same for everybody here and the members in the gallery — a budget is plan. Does that mean it's going to be exactly the same at the end of the year? No, I believe that it won't, but we are in the enviable position, having money in the bank, of being able to deal with risks if they materialize, deal with problems — perhaps we have a major fire season — or also have the opportunity to deal with opportunities if they arise, to give us the flexibility to be able to do that without having to pull the credit card out and spend tomorrow's money to pay for today's bills.

Mr. Elias: You're going to have to forgive me for belabouring the point, but I've heard this before. I just want to be sure about how much faith we should put in the budget and, specifically, how much faith we should put in the Premier's commitment to build up our savings account. The Premier promises to double Yukoners' money this year. That wager sounds awfully good to be true and Yukoners should look at past events when deciding if they want to take that bet. That includes years of increases to net financial resources in the budget, but decreases in the supplementary budget. That created a \$100-million drop in just two years. That's some serious taxpayers' dollars.

Given the track record, how can the Premier be certain that he can deliver the net financial resources he promises in his budget?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We don't have to look very far back to see the record of the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party when it comes to managing the finances of this territory. In fact, when the Liberals were in power they had to borrow money to pay salaries for the government employees. That is where they were. When the NDP was in power — record deficits; \$64-million deficits. In fact, this government had to come forward with a *Taxpayer Protection Act* to put in place mechanisms to ensure that such financial mismanagement does not occur again.

We are moving forward with a plan and that is exactly what it is. It is a budget, but it gives us that flexibility. For example, when projects like the water supply in Old Crow come in significantly larger than what was originally projected, we have the flexibility to continue to commit to that project and ensure it is done, even though it is now going to cost more money than what we originally thought.

We are committed to financial prudence, ensuring that we are spending taxpayers' money wisely and so that Yukoners get the most out of every dollar that they give to us to do the good work — the programs, services, and the commitment to investment and infrastructure — as requested by all Yukoners.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre programming

Mr. Barr: Last week I met with the Minister of Justice and his officials twice to ask them to deal with concerns from some of the inmates at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. I am glad that he worked with us and was able to have the staff distribute blankets to inmates who were cold and that inmates are now able to smudge. Access to cultural practices can have a grounding effect for the inmates, so I'm glad that this is now available to them.

I was also able to visit Whitehorse Correctional Centre last week and speak to inmates personally to help them defuse the situation, and I thank him for that. But, Mr. Speaker, we are now hearing conflicting reports of a hunger strike by inmates in one of the dorms, now into its third day. Can the minister confirm that some of the inmates are refusing food?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, before I answer the member's question, I think it's very important to let the citizens of this territory know that Whitehorse Correctional Centre is managing and setting a new tone with the inmates as they move into the new building. As we know, they moved in just a short time ago. This move allowed Whitehorse Correctional Centre management to confiscate a considerable amount of contraband items that pass from inmate to inmate, from the old facility, that could potentially get into the new facility. They are setting the stage. The staff is running Whitehorse Correctional Centre and not the inmates, so we just want to be clear with that.

During the confiscation — nothing too serious — items like unauthorized shoes, jewellery and other personal effects were confiscated. As I said, there was nothing too serious. Inmates didn't like this very much, but it was the right thing to do. At the end of the day, it is about the safe operation of the facility.

Mr. Barr: Mr. Speaker, inmates have been calling the opposition offices with a number of concerns and the minister

needs to ensure that the environment is safe and stable for all of the staff and inmates. Will the minister immediately investigate the concerns of the inmates who have told us they are refusing food because their complaints are not being handled appropriately?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In addressing the member opposite, as I was just mentioning with the new building, we are providing inmates and staff with a better place to live and to work. One thing that's more conducive to programming — and we are encouraging all inmates to participate in programming as it's rolled out in due time, but at the same time, we need to maintain a safe facility.

The information that the member is opening himself up to by responding to complaints from the WCC — I can assure him that at the same time that our staff is trying to set the parameters for the WCC inmates, we also have the situation where the inmates are trying to set the parameters for the staff. As I stated before, it's the staff that run WCC; it's not the inmates who run it. I have my full confidence in the team and the management up there as they unroll the new correctional facility and as they continue with the operation of the building.

Mr. Barr: My concern is for all there and in confirming that there is a hunger strike, I would hope that the minister is looking into this and will be able to verify this so that things do not escalate and so that things are safe. The minister needs to direct his officials to improve working and living conditions in the new facility to avoid a serious incident. Staff and inmates, as well as the public, need assurances that this situation will not escalate.

Will the minister allow an independent observer to talk to the inmates to try to help resolve this serious situation?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Well, the member completed those interviews last week. I understand that he was up there. As he is getting information about hunger strikes and other information he is getting through phone calls from inmates, what I can tell the member about the hunger strike is that there have been several inmates who have refused to eat food coming from the cafeteria. However, when it comes to pop and chips and Cheezies and Coffee Crisps and granola bars and beef jerky from the canteen, they are happy to take that food. As to what the situation is — yes, I am looking into it. Is there a hunger strike? I don't believe so, but those are things I'm working on, on a day-to-day basis.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre programming

Ms. Moorcroft: We have heard concerns that the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre isn't as complete as the minister believes. The open visiting room, a feature of the new facility that supports inmates to visit with their families and keep connected to their community, isn't yet open. The healing room hasn't been used. The library isn't yet available for inmates to read books or magazines, and currently no new programs are being offered. This is making the transition to the new facility difficult for staff and inmates alike. Can the minister tell us when the entire WCC facility will be available for the use of inmates, staff and family visitors?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I thank the member opposite for her question. I want to reiterate — because it seems that they're getting a lot of information from phone calls coming from inmates — about programming and so on and so forth. I assured the member opposite not very long ago that the programming will be rolled out in due time. They're moving into a new facility. We need to look at all of the angles in opening a new facility. You don't just move in and everything's working and operating perfectly. That doesn't happen when you move into a house — whether it's new or old.

I'm going to reiterate — and I'll reiterate over and over again — we have staff working in a new facility. They have been trained; they have done role-playing and they have been extremely proactive. We have first-class management up there, and I can assure members that it is the Whitehorse Correctional Centre staff and the correctional staff who are operating that building. It is not the inmates who are operating this building. It'll continue to work like that. I'd be quite concerned if I were seeing otherwise, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Moorcroft: I can certainly agree with the minister that a facility is unable to operate perfectly when, in fact, several areas of the facility are not yet in use. Last week, when I asked the minister what new programs are being offered at Whitehorse Correctional Centre, he told me that, "...First Nations have been there, front and centre" and are involved in the development and delivery of First Nation programming.

The Whitehorse Correctional Centre elders advisory committee has not yet been to the facility to use their new office and elder-friendly meeting space, and the elders have yet to talk with the inmates who were moved in on March 15 — 13 days ago. Will the minister undertake to arrange for representatives of the elders advisory committee to meet with the inmates before the end of the week, and to arrange for regular elders visits, to help both the staff and the inmates during this difficult transition period?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As I mentioned in my previous statement and in meetings, the Whitehorse correctional facility, as with any other building that's YG or people in the gallery or business people, in opening up a new facility or moving into a new facility, there are tweaks. You always find things that aren't quite working as you had hoped. We're in the process right now of moving forward and getting away — I guess resolving some of those issues that have happened up there. I think the big issue here is that they'll continue to answer phone calls from inmates. The inmates are trying to set the parameters in the facility. As I have instructed our staff of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre and the first class management team that we have up there, they are in charge of Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Okay? I'm not going to micromanage them, as we've seen from the opposition, where they're asking for how much somebody spent on peanuts on one day and how much they spent on accommodations the next day. We're not moving in that direction.

I have professionals up there. They'll continue to work, as directed, and they'll move out programming in due time as they see fit. It's not a switch — you don't turn on the switch when we move into a new correctional facility and everything is set

up and programming is rolled out. This stuff will happen in time. The Whitehorse correctional staff will continue to operate the facility.

Ms. Moorcroft: Mr. Speaker, the minister needs to explain why he is standing in this House and telling the public that new programming is being offered, when at the present time there are, in fact, no programs being offered to inmates at the Correctional Centre. The minister also needs to explain why they haven't hired more staff to be able to deliver programs. There were two years to plan for the move to the new facility, to hire more staff and to develop programming that would benefit the inmates and staff alike. That's not micromanaging; that's the minister's responsibility.

Can the minister tell us when they will be able to deliver programs at Whitehorse Correctional Centre, and will he direct his officials to offer interim programming, even it's only to be able to get books and magazines to read?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In addressing the member opposite again, I will reiterate that it is the staff of the Whitehorse correctional facility that is operating WCC. They will determine when it is appropriate to start programming, such as smudging, which started on Monday. They will move in as the issues are being resolved. They will move forward and roll out the programming as they see fit in due time, and I don't expect that will be a lot of time. I would hope that over the next two to three weeks we will see things like that being rolled out.

As for specifics on programming, I did mention to the member opposite last week or the week before some of the programming that is going to be offered at Whitehorse Correctional Centre: substance abuse programming; anger management programming; spousal assault programming; sexual offending programming; mental health services; cultural activities; Alcoholics Anonymous and so on. Those will be coming out in due time, but right now, with the opening of the new facility, it is about safety and security of both the inmates and the staff.

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. 65 — adjourned debate

Clerk: Motion No. 65, standing in the name of Ms. Hanson; adjourned debate.

Mr. Elias: It is a pleasure to rise again in the House to address the motion. This motion was brought forward to the floor of the House in the fall of 2011 session, I believe. I would just like to read the motion:

THAT this House establish a Select Committee on Democratic Reform to meaningfully consult Yukoners during the spring and summer of 2012 for the purpose of receiving views

and opinions of Yukoners and interest groups on means of improving our democracy, including, but not limited to:

(1) reviewing electoral processes and amendments to the *Elections Act*;

(2) consideration of fixed election dates;

(3) consideration of proportional representation;

THAT the membership of the Committee be comprised of equal representation from the Government caucus, the Official Opposition caucus and the Third Party caucus to be determined by the Premier, the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party;

THAT the Select Committee on Democratic Reform report to the House its findings and recommendations no later than the 2013 Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly;

THAT the Committee have the power to call persons, papers and records and to sit during intersessional periods; and

THAT the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly be responsible for providing the necessary support services to the Committee.

I believe that was the end of the motion.

As far as the Liberal caucus is concerned with respect to this motion — first of all, it's important to recognize that I respect the intent of the motion, and I commend the Member for Whitehorse Centre for putting this motion forward, because it recognizes that there is an issue for a lot of Yukoners — not only in our capital city, but in rural Yukon as well. I have heard over my tenure six years that we need some sort of change. In saying that, however, I do take issue with a couple of points within the motion that I cannot support on the floor of the House today. I'll go through a couple of them.

One of them is with respect to item (3). It says "the consideration of proportional representation". I have a couple of issues here.

One, if we go to proportional representation, as it stands in the definition of "proportional representation", my riding will not have representation as a special riding within this Legislative Assembly. I guarantee you my constituents of Vuntut Gwitchin and my constituents of Old Crow will wholeheartedly endorse me voting against this motion because of that right there. Secondly, it assumes what the solution is and it is looking for Yukoners to validate it, and I have a problem with that as well.

Now on the bigger picture. Previous to the election, it was our caucus' policy — and we did put it in our election platform, which I'll read into the record today. Under "Representative and Accessible" responsible governance, we have a bullet that says: "Building on the community leadership of Yukon citizens for electoral reform by establishing an independent and representative citizens' commission on electoral reform, with a mandate to research various options and to inform as well as consult the public."

There are a couple of important issues that we have to represent here. When we talk about a motion that talks about our democratic responsibilities within the western parliamentary system — and when we talk about voters' rights, when we talk about false majority governments, when we talk about electoral reform, when we talk about our electoral system — to me, this

power belongs in the hands of the people — the citizens of this territory. This power has no place being conducted by elected officials. Elected officials should not be the ones leading this process. When we talk about grassroots democracy — that should be led by grassroots Yukoners, not elected officials. It is not our caucus policy to pre-empt public solutions to such an important democratic matter.

I realize the intent of the motion. We in the Liberal caucus cannot support it for a number of reasons, and I hope I'm spelling them out.

There is a petition out there that has been signed already, as I understand, by thousands of Yukoners. There is a petition out there that is going to end up, ultimately, on the floor of this Assembly for us as elected officials to deal with. I'm going to read the "therefore" of this petition that's going to end up on the floor of this House for us to deal with as elected officials. It says:

"THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to recognize the will of the undersigned, and in doing so to establish a citizen's commission to study in depth our current electoral system, alongside alternative electoral systems; and after having studied the question of electoral reform in Yukon, this citizen's commission shall make recommendations to the Yukon Legislative Assembly."

So now, if I compare what's out there, and what thousands of Yukoners have already put their name to, to the motion that's on the floor of the House today, they're in direct conflict.

Those are some of the points I want to put on the floor today, because this petition that's circulating around our territory — in rural Yukon and in our capital city — is going to end up on the floor of this Assembly and we had better pay serious credence to that petition when it hits the floor of this Assembly.

I have said this before and I will say it again: over the course of my time here, I've pointed in the direction of — I believe it is New Zealand. They have gone through this process. I believe it is in Scotland. I believe it is in the aboriginal people and the Maori. I believe this has gone through in the creation of the territory of Nunavut. There are templates out there that should this ever come to — whether it be a referendum or however Yukoners choose — their democracy to make decisions on behalf of the greater good. There are examples out there. I have looked at some of them, and some of them are quite unique. Some of them are sculpted to the needs of those regions.

So, again, I appreciate the intent of this motion. I understand that it is trying to address what a lot of Yukoners feel is lacking in our territory in terms of our democracy. I tend to agree with some of the points that Yukoners have brought to my attention over the years.

However, Motion No. 65, as it stands and as it reads right now, cannot be supported by our caucus. Again, we will be dealing with a petition that is out there. We need to do this properly and we need to do this with as much distance from elected officials as possible, because it's my personal opinion that elected officials shouldn't be the ones who are leading this type of electoral reform in our system in our territory. Again,

this is the type of power that belongs in the hands of the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Electoral reform in the Yukon was included in the Yukon Party's 2002 election platform. Subsequently, the Yukon Party government appointed a senior advisor on electoral reform who issued a final report on February 1, 2005. While recognizing that some Yukoners feel passionately about electoral reform, the report recommended that the political parties focus on legislative renewal, rather than electoral reform.

The Yukon Party, in its two subsequent election platforms in 2006 and 2011, has done exactly that.

In the section, "Practicing Open, Accountable, Fiscally Responsible Government" the Yukon Party committed to promoting consensus building, collaboration and compromise, rather than confrontation in government, and working to improve the conduct and decorum of members in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. Three successive Yukon Party governments followed through on their election platform commitments and focused on legislative renewal. Yukon Party government reinvigorated the Public Accounts Committee that had not been functioning properly. A Yukon Party government established an all-party standing committee to oversee Yukon government appointments to government boards and committees that has been included in the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly for years, but never implemented by the previous NDP or Liberal governments — even though they committed to it.

A Yukon Party government passed more unanimous motions on matters of importance to Yukoners by working in collaboration with the Official Opposition and the Third Party than any previous government in the history of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

The Yukon Party government established more all-party committees of the Legislature to conduct public consultation on matters of importance to Yukoners, such as the anti-smoking legislation, human rights, whistle-blower protection, the *Landlord and Tenant Act* and the safe operation and use of off-road vehicles. The motion today on whistle-blower protection is continuing that tradition. Our government is going to continue to work with all members of the House, regardless of our differences in political philosophy, to act in the public interest by cooperation to effect positive changes in a matter where we conduct public business in the Yukon. We respect all members of this House.

Meanwhile, we still recognize that there are Yukoners who believe that an electoral system that provides proportional representation to political parties based on a party's share of popular vote would be better than the Yukon's current system. Under proportional representation, the ridings of Klondike and Vuntut Gwitchin may not, based strictly on population, merit their own seats in this Chamber. Yet I'm sure every member in this House agrees, in fact, that both ridings deserve representation here because of their unique situations. I also believe that we would all agree that we are enriched by the relevant contributions made by their members.

I question if, under electoral reform, the people of Vuntut Gwitchin or other rural ridings would continue to enjoy such a level of representation as, again, proportional representation would result in reduced rural representation.

We also note that there are other Yukoners who advocate for abandoning party politics completely and changing to a system similar to that used in N.W.T. and Nunavut.

While we respect both viewpoints and appreciate anyone who contributes to the discussion about improving our voting system, we are focused on working on the priorities we told Yukoners we would focus on. Our priorities include health care, land availability and affordability, education, economic diversification, infrastructure, justice, supports for children with disabilities, helping seniors, among others. These priorities are identified in the Yukon Party 2011 election platform "Moving Forward Together," as well as in the throne speech delivered last fall in this House.

We appreciate the passionate commitment of citizens who advocate for electoral reform, but we will continue to focus on delivering the commitments we made to Yukoners.

We are committed to reviewing the report of the chief electoral officer of the 2011 election, once completed, and to working with all members of the Legislative Assembly to determine if improvements to the *Elections Act* should be made.

Improvements can often be accomplished, not by completely dismantling the old system, but by refining it. Certainly, it is true that the advances made in law would not be possible if every time a decision was rendered, with which the losers disagreed, the losers rejected the legitimacy of the courts and demanded sweeping changes. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that in pursuing improvements to our system, we ought to recognize both the weaknesses and the strengths of the current system. I would like to thank the staff of Elections Yukon who worked so hard during the campaign. I think there are some areas where we could improve the ability of Yukoners to enjoy and exercise their democratic right. But overall, the staff of Elections Yukon did an excellent job and was very well organized.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on Motion No. 65. I thank the member for bringing this motion to the House today, but we will not be supporting this motion.

Ms. White: It is my honour to rise and speak to this important motion that would create a select committee of the Legislative Assembly to consult with Yukoners on their democracy. In preparing for this important debate about our democracy and democratic reform, I had a look in the dictionary for some definitions. Here is a definition of "democracy": "A government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system"; and, "A state of society characterized by formal equality of rights and privileges." Here's the definition of "democratic": "Pertaining to or of the nature of democracy; pertaining to or characterized by the principle of political or social equality for all"; and, "advocating or upholding democracy". Here's the definition for reform: the improvement or amendment of what is wrong, corrupt, unsatisfactory, et cetera; to change to a better

state, form, et cetera; improve by alteration, substitution or abolition.” I believe that it is important to start with these very heavy definitions. The Canadian people believe in democracy. In our history, Canadians have died in wars to safeguard our democracy. Canadians have been sent to foreign lands in our belief that our Canadian values of fairness, freedom and democracy are good things that we all wish for everyone. It comes from an inherent belief that people should be free — free to choose who represents them, free to voice their unhappiness and anger when their government does not listen — and here we are.

Yukoners feel that they aren’t being heard, that government has stopped listening. Yukoners feel disenfranchised — that no matter what they say or how loud they say it, it just does not matter. Yukoners feel frustrated; disillusioned. They no longer trust. Yukoners have turned their backs on politicians. They have turned their backs on politics. It’s up to all of us as elected officials to stop and listen to what they’re saying. It’s our obligation to restore the public’s trust and confidence in their government. This won’t be easy. It will take time. For far too long, we haven’t listened. We haven’t heard what they’re saying. We need to engage the public. We need to give them the chance to tell us what’s broken and how they want it fixed. The process starts by respecting the public — respecting their views and their experiences — and ensuring that we give them the forum in which to speak. That’s what this motion is all about.

This isn’t a radical plan. Passing this motion would start a conversation with Yukoners on whether we need to make changes to our democracy. We certainly have some preferences in the NDP caucus.

For example, we tend to agree with citizens who criticize the first-past-the-post system as not the best way to select representatives and reflect the diversity of opinion that exists in our territory. That may be the take as the Official Opposition, but we are not calling for this motion. We are merely trying to get a conversation started to go out and canvas Yukoners and their views on many matters of our democracy: Can we make improvements to our elections process? Should we have fixed election dates like in other jurisdictions? Should we explore different ways to select representatives?

In other places in the world, things have changed. We need to study models in other places, keeping in mind our special situation in the Yukon. It would then be up to the House to decide what to do. Any changes should then go back to the people in the form of a referendum. We are optimistic — we were optimistic — that given the Premier’s pledge to conduct affairs in a more constructive, cooperative manner that this motion would be supported, and I am sad to hear that it will not be.

Our democracy needs continuous renewal, regular check-ups. Democracy is not static. The late Todd Hardy, who championed many democratic reform initiatives, spoke of our democracy as a garden, a garden that needs to be cultivated to flourish. There are some worrying signs that this garden is in need of some major work. We have voter apathy and low voter turnout. We have got voter suppression tactics. We do not

know about election financing. We have an unelected Senate packed with friends of the current government.

There were issues coming out of the last territorial election back in October. Some citizens wrote letters to the editor with perceived problems with our election process that led to disenfranchisement. It would have been good to go out with the select committee right after the election to canvas public opinion, to find out how people felt. There were enumeration issues. We heard complaints in the media and from individuals that there are a number of Yukoners who were not enumerated, or not able to vote on election day because they couldn’t find someone within their poll to vouch for them, whether they knew them or not. Sometimes they had to be right across the street in order to be in that same poll. Does that seem fair?

Lists of electors were not provided electronically in the Yukon in 2012. They are still handwritten and this creates problems for parties — all parties — in terms of data entry and legibility problems, among others; problems for parties, electors and especially polling clerks. Why are we starting from scratch every election? Maybe we need a permanent list that gets additions or subtractions. I think the select committee would gather important points from citizens on problems with the election process.

We heard stories of enumerators talking to one person in a residence and just simply taking their word that five or six people within that household were eligible to vote, without any requirement that they show identification but, on election day, a person not enumerated had to have ID and someone to personally vouch for them.

We know that enumerators collected the first initial of the first name. This created problems on election day with large families or common names. These are just a few examples, just to give you an idea of what we’ve heard — and likely, all parties heard in the last election.

We’ve also heard about difficulties in voting after special revision. Voters needed to bring ID and, again, someone to their poll to vouch for them. In other jurisdictions, federal elections — B.C. and Ontario — they have a less cumbersome way to deal with those not enumerated while still ensuring that the system is legitimate and secure.

We need to ask the question of how effective our current rules are, in terms of ensuring that poor or homeless Yukoners or transient Yukoners are not disenfranchised, but they get left behind. We heard that in Whitehorse Centre — transient people were told that the political parties should be the ones to enumerate them — that they should go out, they should find them and they should take them in to get them enumerated. This select committee would provide a great opportunity for the public to have a say — to be heard — and I think they would have a lot to say about improving our election process.

There has been a steady flow of letters to the editor about all things democratic. Fair Vote Yukon put out a petition to move toward a consensus-based proportional electoral system. They got a lot of signatures. They point out that all three modern democracies, Canada being one, use proportional voting systems.

The public has a lot to say about the current model we use to select representatives and whether there is a better way to ensure the diversity of opinion in the territory is reflected in the decisions made here in the House. This was a simple step — a simple step to talk to Yukoners about democracy. We can't measure the appetite for change without starting the conversation. Now, knowing that that conversation won't be had, it is too bad. I support this motion.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I will just rise briefly to speak on this. We are interested in expediting debate and getting on to other motions today. A couple of things that I would point out that the Member for Takhini-Kopper King mentioned in her remarks and I think should be specifically noted is that, in fact, the *Elections Act* issues are something that — the Chief Electoral Officer will be doing a report on the 2011 general election and making recommendations on where she believes that improvements can perhaps be made. That is something that will be presented to all members of the Assembly and there will be an opportunity to review it. As a result of reviews from previous elections and feedback from MLAs and candidates who were not successful in the 2006 election, changes were made to the *Elections Act* last time to allow for swear-in at the polls.

The issue the Member for McIntyre-Takhini mentioned regarding some people not being able to swear in if they couldn't have someone to vouch for them doesn't take into account the fact that from 1982 — I believe it was — until 2011, if someone showed up at the polls and wasn't on the voters list in a territorial election, it didn't matter how many pieces of ID they had or how many people they had to vouch for them, they simply did not have the opportunity to vote. So that change was, through discussion by this Assembly, made. That was an improvement that was intended to allow more people to vote.

The voter turnout in the Yukon increased actually, in 2011 compared to 2006, contrary to the member's statement about declining voter turnout. Part of that was related to swear-in at the polls, but if the member looks at the numbers, there is an additional increase beyond what's accounted for by swear-ins at the polls, demonstrating increased interest by Yukon citizens in going out to exercise their democratic right.

The Yukon's numbers, I'd also note, comparatively to the rest of the country — in federal elections, I believe the number was 61 percent, or roughly around the 60-percent mark, in terms of overall voter turnout across the country. The Yukon's average from the last election was almost 75 percent voter turnout. In some ridings, we had over 80 percent voter turnout, so again, some of the comparisons and analogies the member is drawing to national numbers aren't reflective of the Yukon situation.

As the Premier noted in his remarks, we very much appreciate the people who passionately support changes to the system, which would strengthen the influence of the party vote within the system. We also respect those who take the opposite view and would like to see it move away from party politics completely, but each government, each party can only accomplish a certain number of things within a mandate. We're committed to focusing on the things that we told Yukoners

we'd focus on and that we campaigned on in the 2011 general election and outlined in our platform. Again, we appreciate those who provide constructive input on this issue and who advocate for their point of view around how to improve our democracy. Even if we disagree with their opinion, we do appreciate that and think that citizen debate and citizen dialogue around where our system could perhaps be improved is always a good thing if it is done constructively and respectful of everyone else's viewpoint.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, she will close debate. Are there any other members who wish to be heard?

Ms. Hanson: Well, that is a disappointing turn of events. I had hoped, after we introduced this motion in December and spoke to it at fair length during the legislative session, that there may have been some thought given to the issues raised. As my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King has said, these issues are not simple. What I would like to point out to the members as I close debate on this motion that I feel quite strongly about — I would not have brought it forward if I did not feel passionate about it. In response to the minister opposite, yes, it is one thing to say that it is quite a good thing for citizens to raise these issues, but — you know what? The history and the pattern of behaviour of this government is, "Talk all you want; we are not going to listen." You know this? It is like the things that kids used to say.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The member is imputing unavowed motives and actions to the government. She's making statements that are not factual. She suggests that the government is not listening to the citizens, which is very much contrary to the facts and is expressing a motive contrary to the way in which, in fact, we operate. That of course is outlined under Standing Order 19(g), which speaks to imputing unavowed motives to another member.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, there are no imputed motives. I am just merely making an observation.

Mr. Elias: Mr. Speaker, I do believe that the Leader of the Official Opposition referred to the government, and not a specific member. The Standing Order says, "imputes false or unavowed motives to another member". I believe she said "government" and I believe this is a dispute between members.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: There is no point of order. The Leader of the Official Opposition was merely expressing her personal feelings on the government's actions.

Ms. Hanson: Maybe, Mr. Speaker, I will speak first of all to the position established by, or set out by the Premier, and in a moment I will speak a little bit about the concern that was raised by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, but I think, in reflecting on this, this concern about how our democracy works

in this territory and how it works in Canada didn't arise in December. This is not an issue that just sort of sprang from disaffected individuals in this territory.

Mr. Speaker, among others, I have participated over the past year or two in some meetings held by citizens, which led to the formation of a Fair Vote Yukon chapter.

One of the documents that a former Commissioner of this territory helped to put together was a brief history of electoral reform. It's fairly interesting to me, and I'm sure to all members of this Legislative Assembly, to realize and to think about the fact that in 2001, my predecessor, the former Member for Whitehorse Centre, along with another colleague, researched a paper entitled, *The Right to Have Your Vote Count*. It was a background paper on electoral reform. So we're talking 11 years ago when people were getting serious about the need to think about how our representative democracy works in this territory.

In 2002, three independent MLAs travelled to the Yukon communities to discuss electoral reform and I'm glad to recognize one of them in the Legislative Assembly here today in the visitors, gallery: Don Roberts. Thank you very much for your work way back then.

In 2002 — and this is very interesting to me — the Yukon Party election platform promised, upon formation of government, to strike an independent commission of citizens to hold public consultations on electoral reform in the Yukon — something that the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin was calling for. It would have been nice, wouldn't it?

This commitment was reiterated in the February 27, 2003, Speech from the Throne and in a speech by the then Premier to the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. They committed to forming an independent commission of citizens. Wouldn't it have been nice? Yes, he did. It's unfortunate. It's too bad the minister — or the representative from Old Crow — hadn't paid attention to that one.

Unfortunately, because of the history of the Yukon Party and how they approach these things, instead, having made this commitment in 2002 — reiterated in 2003 — in June of 2004, they appointed an individual to provide recommendations related to the mandate and operation of a Yukon electoral reform commission and how the Yukon public can be involved. Well, we all know where that went. After spending some time observing what was going on in British Columbia at great expense to the Yukon taxpayer, this individual provided a final report recommending that Yukon not proceed with electoral reform — not a discussion within the Legislative Assembly; not a discussion with the public — an individual. Really? That's democratic process?

In 2005, in September of that year, the then Premier told the *Whitehorse Star* that Yukon doesn't need electoral reform. In response to that, Yukon Citizens for Electoral Reform launched a petition calling for establishment of an electoral commission and a referendum process to choose a preferred system. That petition contained the signatures of 700 Yukoners. So there have been many, many attempts.

The approach that the NDP has taken in proposing this was not to suggest that we had the answer. What we are saying is

that Yukoners have some deeply felt, passionate views on how our representation for a territory of 35,000 people could be more effectively conducted; how we can ensure that every single person, every person with the right to vote in this territory, feels not only that they have that right but feel compelled to exercise that right. That is a healthy democracy.

I heard the concerns being expressed by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, assuming that the outcome of this would wipe off the map the electoral district of Vuntut Gwitchin or now, as the Premier is suggesting, Klondike — well, you know what, that is just such a far-fetched kind of idea. With the current regime that we have in the Yukon government, we take pains to ensure representation by ensuring that in those geographic regions we have representation. I would assume that the citizens of this territory would take that into consideration. At minimum for Yukon elections, there has to be a minimum of 76 electors in Old Crow to conduct an election. I don't think that would change; that's not what we are talking about. We are talking about providing citizens an opportunity to engage in that discussion and to have their voices heard, to modernize the electoral system and the process of democracy in this territory.

So, in closing, as I commend this motion — Motion No. 65 — to the Legislative Assembly, I have to say that I am reminded of a famous son of the Klondike, Pierre Berton, who wrote a book quite a long time ago. In it, he was describing a certain approach to decision-making, and the book was called *The Smug Minority*. In fact, I think the smug minority could really classify or describe the situation that we have now in the electoral system — a smug minority that gets the majority government with a minority. It is unfortunate that the side opposite has not the creativity nor the compassion or the passion to listen to Yukoners. The Yukon NDP and the Official Opposition will stand committed to listening to Yukoners and to working on their behalf. Thank you.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: If it is agreeable to House Leaders, we will proceed.

Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: D'accord.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Disagree.

Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are six yea, 12 nay.

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

Motion No. 65 negatived

Motion No. 80

Clerk: Motion No. 80, standing in the name of Mr. Elias.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Third Party

THAT this House urges the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to ensure the proper implementation of the Nutrition North Canada program that delivers healthy foods to citizens living in Old Crow, Yukon by:

(1) ensuring the Nutrition North Canada program includes a personal shipping transportation subsidy from Whitehorse to Old Crow of “nutritious perishable foods”, “non-perishable foods”, “non-food items” and “essential non-food items” for the residents of Old Crow via Air North at a cost of \$.80 per kilogram for Level 1 foods and \$2.15 for Level 2 foods;

(2) ensuring that any surcharge or tax associated with the shipping of personal orders is incurred by the Nutrition North Canada program and not the citizens of Old Crow; and

(3) maintaining a transportation subsidy that is administered by Air North with the company being accountable directly to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

Mr. Elias: It's with a renewed sense of vigour and zeal that I stand to once again represent my constituents with regard to the newly implemented Nutrition North Canada program. I say that because we have approximately 13 new members in the Legislative Assembly. For corporate history purposes, I have brought a similar motion to the floor of the Assembly twice before. Because of its importance, past Assemblies have graciously provided unanimous support for my previous motions with regard to this issue.

As everyone knows, I represent the fly-in-only community of Old Crow. We are the only community in the territory that can benefit from the Nutrition North Canada program, and I want to begin by expressing my community's appreciation. The old federal food subsidy program was an investment. It meant a great deal to my constituents, and my constituents wish to once again benefit from a similar program when the Nutrition North Canada program is properly implemented.

My testimony to you today, Mr. Speaker, will focus on the Nutrition North Canada program objective to ensure that healthy foods are more accessible and affordable to our community of Old Crow.

Two years ago, Mr. Speaker, my constituents predicted that the Nutrition North Canada program objectives would not be achieved should the program be implemented solely as a retail subsidy as of April 1, 2011, and, boy, Mr. Speaker, were

they correct. Having one store in Old Crow from which our citizens can purchase foods is inadequate to say the least.

Two years ago I travelled to Ottawa and asked the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development that the program have enough flexibility to maintain the personal shipping transportation subsidy from Whitehorse, our capital city, to Old Crow for nutritious, perishable food, non-food items, non-perishable foods and essential non-food items via Air North, Yukon's airline. I also asked that the transportation subsidy be maintained and administered by Air North, removing Canada Post from the picture altogether, with the airline being directly accountable to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. Implicit in this task is the ability for our community members of Old Crow to purchase affordable healthy foods from wherever they choose in Whitehorse and to take those healthy choices to Air North, which provides the only and most direct transportation service route possible to get the healthy foods to the dinner tables of my constituents in Old Crow. We feel this community-based solution to address this major flaw in the Nutrition North Canada program is the best way to fulfill the program objectives, and nothing has changed. There is a cost to a flawed program being implemented in an isolated northern community and the cost is a healthy community, the cost is social, the cost is financial, the cost is individual health, and we can see these costs becoming very prevalent in my community of Old Crow these days.

It is my hope that today our united message from the Yukon Territory will provide the necessary justification for a change in mandate, a program exemption and flexibility to fully meet the Nutrition North Canada program objectives, thus helping to maintain our strong, vibrant, healthy Arctic community in Old Crow, Yukon.

Previous to the Nutrition North Canada program coming into effect, I believe we already had a workable system in the Yukon. With some fine tuning, it could have been more efficient and cost-effective. My constituents are wondering what the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada was actually trying to fix in the Yukon, with the cost-cutting measures, coupled with the level of overhaul in the food mail program that is considered to be excessive and unnecessary by my constituents.

I'd like all members to imagine the families and the single mothers and our elders who are on a fixed income and live in Old Crow and are trying to raise their families when a jug of milk costs \$14 and a small box of laundry soap costs \$44 and a loaf of bread just over \$5.

I can go on and on about the cost of fruits and vegetables, but there are enough members in this House who already know of what I speak. The Nutrition North Canada program is viewed as a step backward and a disservice to our community. It has been almost a year since its implementation, and we live it every day. A program should get better when it is reviewed and not worse.

The motion I put forward today is a continuation of our community's effort to reaffirm our territory's commitment and unanimous support to fix this problem and to move forward to

the proper implementation of the Nutrition North Canada program. This is basically how it used to work in our community of Old Crow. Residents of my community of Old Crow either phone their families in our capital city of Whitehorse, phone food distributors with a food list, or travel to the capital city to shop at the stores they wanted to shop in for the most affordable and healthy foods. We had a variety, and now community members are forced to shop at one store in Old Crow.

Whether it was one of the larger food stores, right from Porter Creek to Riverdale, or the Alpine Bakery or health food stores or the local pharmacies or even Riverside Grocery, for that matter — wherever — we had variety and access to healthy foods. We would then take our food to Air North, the subsidy would be calculated at the Air North hangar, and the food was treated as priority and shipped to Old Crow as soon as possible to get to the dinner tables of our families.

We don't ship our foods from Yellowknife. We don't ship our foods from Inuvik. We don't ship our foods from Dawson City, and we sure don't ship our food from Edmonton or Vancouver, as suggested in some of my meetings with Ottawa bureaucrats. For us to get healthy, affordable foods on our tables, our capital city — Whitehorse — is it.

I received a couple of phone calls before Christmas, and my constituents wanted me to actually show the rest of Canada on television what exactly the issue was for us, so I did that.

I bought Christmas dinner for a constituent and I invited the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network to follow me from shopping to shipping. We actually compared the prices of the old food mail program and the new Nutrition North Canada program. I bought \$101.13 worth of Christmas dinner supplies at a store here in our capital city. We're talking the basics here, Mr. Speaker — a turkey with some trimmings. It cost me \$90-plus to ship that Christmas dinner to Old Crow with the new Nutrition North Canada program. Previous to this, with the food mail program, it would have cost me around \$40.

To prove this — and these are verified numbers and weights — the food mail rates previous to April 1, 2011, for what was then called a "type A" box of food — and that includes fruits, vegetables, breads, meats, cheese, eggs, milk, cereals; the highest level of nutrition — costs my constituents 80 cents per kilogram plus 75 cents per box.

For a type B, which basically was canned vegetables, canned stews, cooking oils, rice, pasta and flour, coffee and tea — it costs my constituents \$2.15 per kilogram plus 75 cents per box. This is an important note: the Government of Canada paid for the associated surcharges and the associated taxes. Now, under the Nutrition North Canada program, the actual cost to my constituents for the same — which is now level 1, they are calling it; the same level 1 is now fruits, vegetables, breads, meats, cheese, eggs, milk, cereals. The customer pays 83 cents per kilogram plus applicable surcharges and GST based on actual freight charges. For a level 2 box of food, the customer pays \$2.63 per kilogram, plus all applicable surcharges and GST based on actual freight charges. So, for example, a 50-kilogram level 1 personal order shipment from Whitehorse to Old Crow that is filled with the most healthy foods that my constituents choose to feed their families, now costs my con-

stituents approximately \$96 under the Nutrition North Canada program and that same type A box from the old food mail program used to cost my constituents \$40.75.

We can see that it is approximately 137 percent more for anyone to ship nutritious perishable foods from Whitehorse to Old Crow and approximately 50 percent more for non-perishable items. This price differential is simply baffling to me, Mr. Speaker. As you can see, the Nutrition North Canada program falls significantly short of the benefits previously provided under the federal food mail program.

We want to keep the transportation subsidy for Old Crow and not just give a huge cheque to the corporations. Also, we want to commission Air North to administer the program. They have done an excellent job over the decades this program has been administered by them, I might add. That is what is reflected in the motion on the floor of the House today.

For the most part now, especially with people travelling from Whitehorse to Old Crow just about every single one of my constituents has a bag filled with fruits — apples, bananas, pineapples, oranges, whatever — as their free carry-on item. That is the regular order of business now and it should not be. And it is also about care and control. Another characteristic of the Nutrition North Canada program is that if someone actually uses the program to ship food to Old Crow, which is absolutely rare now because it is not a subsidy at all and there is no net-benefit to my constituents using it — everything has to be weighed and documented, and a receipt has to be provided, which is terribly cumbersome and time consuming, not to mention the wear and tear on the food products themselves.

Now, on to another aspect of how important this program is and why it is so important with regard to the Porcupine caribou herd. This is the second time in five years that they did not migrate past our community of Old Crow when they were supposed to. As far as food security goes, upwards of 80 percent — obviously it fluctuates from year to year — of my community's food intake is from the Porcupine caribou herd.

If there is a prolonged absence of the caribou, we are just simply an unhealthy community — cased closed — based on the nutritional requirements of our community members. So the access to nutritious perishable foods immediately affects the day-to-day lives of my constituents. It simply compounds the situation ten-fold when the caribou don't come by. The new program takes away the opportunity and choices that my constituents had to access healthy foods, and that is unacceptable to me.

I will conclude my comments — and I believe I do get closing comments, right? Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my comments for now by saying that when corporations and the federal government have absolute control of healthy foods, affordability and accessibility, that spells bad news for my constituents in Old Crow. That's the sentiment of many of our community members — they feel that some other entity has control over their access to healthy foods.

I'll leave members with this sentiment: I wonder how people in Toronto or Ottawa would feel if the cost of their fruits and vegetables virtually doubled overnight.

I wonder how acceptable that would be to the citizens in those large city centres. I look forward to listening to the supportive comments from other members in the Chamber today, and I'll leave it with that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Mr. Tredger: I rise in support of this motion from the Leader of the Third Party. From my years of experience in education, the positive impact of healthy food on children and their ability to learn cannot be overstated. Nutritious, perishable foods constitute a large portion of the healthy diet all people need, especially our children and elders, in order to have the healthy lifestyle that promotes wellness and helps prevent disease.

Access to the right foods enables children to develop the healthy habits that will support them for a lifetime. It has been demonstrated that children who have a healthy breakfast do better on standardized tests. The Yukon's Food for Learning program is on the right track. They have recognized the importance of healthy food to children. They are working to ensure that all children have healthy food each day.

Yukoners in all walks of life are acknowledging the importance of healthy and affordable foods. In the same vein, we in the NDP support the intention of this motion, which is to ensure our citizens in remote communities have the ability to choose healthy eating habits, no matter what their income. We agree there should continue to be a personal shipping transportation subsidy to enable the residents of Old Crow to have healthy foods.

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'll just begin by saying I don't think any reasonable person could take issue with the ability of all citizens in the Yukon to have access to affordable healthy foods. Good nutrition is an important part of every individual and community's health and well-being. It's crucial for healthy growth and development, effective functioning of the body and prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Healthy eating depends on our knowledge of good nutrition and availability and pricing of healthy foods. Food security is foundational to achieving healthy eating; access is critical.

"Food security" is defined as the ability of all people, at all times, to have physical and economic access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food to meet dietary needs and preferences, for an active and healthy life. Nutrition North Canada is meant to be a response to food security in the north. In Yukon, 21 percent of residents experience food insecurity. This is a much higher percentage than Canadians in general, which averages about 14 percent. This is in part due to the high cost of living in the north, high food costs in remote communities and limited availability of nutritious food in our rural and remote communities.

Yukon has in place a nutritional framework, which is a long-term plan to address the major nutritional issues facing Yukoners in an organized and integrated way. This is a collaborative effort by multiple stakeholders guided by the territory's registered dietitians. The framework has four nutritional goals: promotion of healthy eating practices; improvement of

food security; support for special populations and their nutritional needs; and finally, to address major nutritional and health issues facing Yukoners. Right now I would have to say that the food subsidy program operated by the federal government does not support all four of these nutritional goals identified by Yukon, especially as it relates to those issues related to food security.

A year ago, as the member opposite has stated, the federal government replaced the food mail program with Nutrition North Canada. This program continued to subsidize shipping associated with personal food orders. It is now providing funding directly to retailers, wholesalers, processors and distributors who have applied and have met the program requirements and entered into an agreement with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. They felt this would allow retailers to negotiate the best possible price for their consumers. I believe that the intent was good. The government would pay a higher level of subsidy to the most nutritious, perishable foods: fruits, vegetables, bread, milk, eggs, meat and cheese. Non-perishable items, such as flour, crackers, frozen foods, et cetera, would be subsidized at a lower rate; however, the reality for a place like Old Crow is that the program is not working anywhere near as well as it should. Old Crow is unique. It is landlocked, where most of the other communities eligible for the program are either on the coast or have winter roads — not so in Old Crow. They have, however, added some additional foods that are eligible for Old Crow, as they do not have seasonal surface transportation available.

Under the old system, residents of Old Crow could buy what they wanted, where they wanted. They could shop around for the best prices, as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has indicated. They could shop at their preferred merchandiser, they could shop locally in Whitehorse, if they so desired, and then they would take the goods to Air North which would be shipped home to Old Crow at a subsidized rate. The system worked.

When the Nutrition North Canada program was first announced, no Yukon retailers applied to the program, so residents of Old Crow were not benefiting from this streamlined approach. Today, only one firm, AN Food Distributors, has stepped forward. It is an arm of Air North and is now an authorized distributor for the community.

Eighteen months ago, the Legislative Assembly voted to urge the federal government to keep the transportation subsidy where it belongs — with transportation. However, the federal government did not listen to us and changes to the program were significantly altered, despite recognition by that same government that Old Crow is unique.

We support the motion, as tabled by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, and we commit to urging the federal government to change the implementation of the program to better serve the citizens of our northernmost community and provide them with access to healthy food choices.

Clearly, nutrition is linked to personal health outcomes, which, in turn, are significant to our health care system. We support the call for the inclusion of a personal shipping transportation subsidy from Whitehorse to Old Crow for nutritious,

perishable foods; non-perishable, non-food items and essential non-food items, and a commitment from the program to cover the cost of surcharges or tax associated with shipping of personal orders so that these are not borne solely by the citizens of Old Crow. We have committed to supporting Air North as our carrier of choice in Yukon, and this is another way we can demonstrate that support. Thank you.

Ms. Hanson: As Leader of the Official Opposition, I have both a personal history and understanding of the complexities and the seriousness of this issue. As a social worker when I first came to this territory — I won't even say how many years ago, but a significant number of them — I would say they exceed the presence on this earth of one of the members opposite. We'll put it that way.

I'm very much aware of the fact that, as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin spoke to, in times when traditional foods are not available, the reliance of the community of Old Crow on the availability of nutritious foods is just like the reliance of you and me. We go to the grocery store and we expect to buy food at a reasonable cost. It has been impossible, and is impossible, for the community and the citizens of Old Crow.

The Official Opposition, of course, supports this motion and would urge the unanimous support by all members. I would go further, though. It is one thing for the members opposite to talk about the importance of and the commitment by the members opposite to urge the Government of Canada to do this and that, but I would suggest that this is an issue and a situation where we should be hearing from the Premier that he will in fact call upon and use his much-vaunted relationship with the Prime Minister to do something. It is not the passive language of ensuring or urging them to do something. He has said in the past and he has said in the Legislative Assembly that this government has a special relationship with the federal government. Let's see some action here and see that the people of Old Crow actually have access to the foods that they need to live a healthy lifestyle through a program that allows that to happen. As Official Opposition, the Yukon NDP will support this motion and we urge all members to do so.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I'm honoured to rise today to support this motion. Certainly I've spoken about the importance of affordable healthy food for the people of Old Crow on a number of occasions. I had the pleasure last year to be in Old Crow on two occasions. Of course, both times I went into the grocery store and was just astounded by some of the prices of basic healthy food items.

During conversations, not only with leadership, but going and talking with people in their homes as well — seeing the impact of this, because certainly when you have to put more and more money toward just providing healthy foods for your family, a couple of things happen. You start to compromise on healthy food, because you can't afford it or you have less disposable income to allow you and your family to be able to use that money for other things that are important in terms of — not just financially, but socially as a group and being able to participate or being able to send your kids to things or to be

involved in things — you need to be able to have money to do such things.

So certainly the impact of this is not just financial. There is always a social impact when people have to struggle to have enough money to do what they need to do. So this certainly is a very important issue to me and, I believe, to all members of this House.

We have one community in the Yukon that is involved in the Nutrition North Canada program. I know that the food mail program was modified to address some of the issues and concerns that they had in the eastern Arctic. However, I don't think that that was really the case here in the Yukon. To the member's point — I'm hopeful that we can find a way to either create an exemption or to be able to work together. I believe that everyone knows of the strong relationship between Vuntut Gwitchin Corporation, the people of Old Crow and Air North, as well. We certainly — I as an individual — will be speaking to our representatives in Ottawa — our Member of Parliament and our Senator. I encourage all Yukoners to let our representatives in Ottawa know of the importance of ensuring that we come up with a program that will deliver affordable healthy food to the people of Old Crow.

I think that everybody wants to have an opportunity to speak to this. We're very supportive. We will do what we can to help out. I also wanted to just take a moment to thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for the work that he has done, not just now but for years, advocating that we can deliver affordable food to the people of Old Crow. Thank you.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to offer my thanks, too, to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing forth this important motion. I would like to thank him for his positive comments and for the constructive debate, for the most part, that has taken place here this afternoon with respect to this particular program.

The member spoke eloquently about his efforts in previous years and, as a member of the Assembly over the last number of years, I have been privy to much of the debate that has taken place on the floor of the Legislature in support of this particular program. Just as I was able to provide my support on a number of other occasions, I am also pleased to offer my support on behalf of our constituency in support of the people of Old Crow.

There has been a lot said about the importance of nutrition and the importance of having that ability to go to the grocery store in order to purchase those items that are important to your family, so that you can have healthy families and so that you are able to contribute to the quality of life that we have come to know here in Yukon as Yukoners. I have the privilege of living in a community where there is choice — there is lots of choice. I have the opportunity to go to the grocery store every weekend and go to a number of different stores throughout and am able to have that choice and flexibility to respond to some of our needs as a family and other family members, as well.

As the member opposite pointed out, Old Crow is somewhat of an anomaly and we appreciate the unique circumstances surrounding a community that is for the majority, only

accessible by air. It is very important that any program — and of course the one that we are talking about right now is the Nutrition North Canada program — continues to provide that flexibility. It has to provide that accessibility and that affordability. As an individual, as a citizen and as a representative in this Assembly, I very much support that approach.

I think as has already been articulated, we did have a program before the food mail program. I think it did work very well for our particular circumstances in Yukon. I think, you know, we have to press upon other governments, including the Government of Canada, that when we do come up with programs that they are unique, that they are able to respond to the unique circumstances and needs of our northern priorities. Of course, we're looking for a made-in-the-Yukon solution in this particular case and I believe that we did have that flexibility. We did have those solutions before. We just need to be able to impress more upon the Government of Canada about the successes and that it's not a cost to taxpayers; rather it is an investment in young Yukoners' futures and others as well.

I don't want to go on at great length, because I recognize and respect other members' time in this Assembly and want to put their words on record as well, but again, thank you to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, and I very much appreciate his continued passion and tenacity in this respect.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I will be brief in my comments, too, rising to support the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin in this motion today. Many of the comments that I wanted to share with members of the Assembly were shared by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun from his years of experience as an educator. As we know, Canada is experiencing an epidemic of childhood obesity and a crushing burden of diet-related diseases across the lifespan. They certainly exact a high price in health and economic costs that are realized not only by local governments — territorial governments — but also by the federal government. So, really, investing in healthy eating and nutrition and regular physical activity plays a powerful role in preventing chronic diseases, including, of course, heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes, which is something that's very prevalent, as is my understanding, in a number of our smaller communities right across the north.

As mentioned earlier by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, I think, the hot lunch and hot breakfast programs that are offered in our schools today are incentives, not only to encourage students to attend school more regularly, but they're really an investment in the health and well-being of our students throughout the Yukon.

As mentioned, the students and the people of Old Crow are in a unique position, where they're isolated from the opportunities to shop and the choices that we as residents and constituents in other ridings have.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I will just again reiterate that I'm pleased to support this motion and congratulate the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin and, indeed, all of his northern colleagues who signed the letter that he tabled in the Legislature earlier this afternoon on their tenacity and their passion for the people who live in their constituencies.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I rise in the House today to support this motion, too. I'd like to touch just very briefly on a few components of this that I don't think have been touched on yet and those relate — surprisingly — to the economy, because I think there is an economic argument here as well in favour of this motion.

As we know, and as we have discussed in this House before, healthy communities are a prerequisite to a healthy economy. Of course, healthy families are best suited to participate in a healthy economy. Of course, it has been made very clear in members' statements previously that this program really is about the health of the community that receives the benefits of this program.

There are a few things I wanted to point out as well. In our efforts to diversify Yukon's economy, we do encourage the development of a local agricultural industry. That has been relatively successful over the years, and we have seen a number of local food products made available to most Yukoners. But if they are not available to all citizens, including the residents of Old Crow, then something is missing. I think that part of this program is aimed at making sure that healthy foods, like those grown here in Yukon, are made available to all citizens, and that includes those in Old Crow.

Of course, with the changing climate, and as a result of climate change, Yukoners are beginning to realize that there are more opportunities for local production of food, but part of the component of encouraging local food production is to allow Yukoners to access that food production. So I think this is an important component of this motion.

There are a couple of projects going on at the Yukon Research Centre that I think play into this debate as well. There is, first of all, the development of a year-round greenhouse at Yukon College. This could have the potential of perhaps being employed in a community like Old Crow one day, and perhaps then in that community — a remote community — they could develop their own food on a year-round basis. That would be fantastic, but we are not quite there yet, though. Programs like this and the adjustments mentioned in this motion are necessary to bridge the gap to get to a point where locals can produce their own food.

Another project like that is the biochar project going on at the Yukon Research Centre. This is a project that is developed in Yukon by Yukoners in collaboration with our partners at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. It is to use biochar to increase the fertility and moisture retention of soils, particularly our relatively dry northern soils. This would allow, once again, an increased ability to provide local food production, and local access to local foods for the citizens of Yukon. But, once again, we are not quite there yet. It is great that we are doing this work, and it is great that we are undertaking these projects to ensure that perhaps in the future we can increase the supply of local food that is available to Yukoners and even in remote communities like Old Crow.

There is the potential to develop a local food production industry. We're not quite there yet and the intent behind this motion is to help us bridge that gap and get to a position where we can do more.

Of course I support this motion very much and, as I said, I'll keep my comments brief. I look forward to hearing more from other members and I commend the member opposite, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, for raising the motion and tabling it in the House today.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I rise today also in support of this motion from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

Being from a rural riding, this hits a little near and dear to my heart as our store is gone and I will talk about that a little later. In my working in the north, working in the eastern Arctic, and doing a lot of travel in the north, I've seen this before. I've seen the price of food products. I've seen a lot of communities that have a barge come in — whether it is Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay or Pangnirtung — people posting on Facebook, pictures of everybody standing on the sea ice because the planes are coming in, or the barge is coming in with all of their regular staple items — their snowmobiles, their cases of perishables and stuff like that.

But when it comes to nutritional value, I've seen the youth in the communities run off when the case lots come in and buy their pop and their chips and everything else and drinking six and eight a day. The Minister of Health and Social Services alluded to that in his discussion about how important nutrition is. So I'm not going to speak a lot about this, but when it comes to my community not having a store now, I think our community members, my constituents, would feel for the issues with the residents of Old Crow a lot more than they did before. Not having a store, everybody is planning now — planning their fresh produce; their nutritious foods that they need — which comes with a cost. The price of fuel is going up — driving back and forth. So my constituents and I do feel for the member and that's why I rise today here to definitely show support for Motion No. 80.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would like to begin first of all by thanking the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing this motion forward.

I'll be brief in my comments here today, to allow other members to speak and hopefully, to allow us to get to and pass the Member for Klondike's motion that is up later this afternoon, as well as this motion here, which I hope will be passed by the Assembly.

What I would like to note just briefly in talking about this is to recognize the importance — as a number of my colleagues on both sides of the House have identified — of ensuring access to affordable, nutritional food in all Yukon communities. I would also like to note that by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has raised this matter in the past and this House has been supportive of him and has advocated for his constituents' needs in this area. I also want to note, particularly, in the context of the fact that rhetoric in this Assembly can often become quite heated and sometimes fairly partisan in nature, that really this is an example of an area where we can work together. I would also like to give the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin credit for the fact that the member has worked with the government on a number of initiatives related to his community.

We have been able to work together to find solutions for Old Crow and I give the member credit for that fact. It is something that again I emphasize — the willingness of government, and particularly me, to respond to the interest of Yukoners in every riding in the territory. I encourage all members to recognize the fact that if they bring forward reasonable concerns, reasonable issues on behalf of their constituents, we can't always guarantee that we will be able to address those needs in the manner they suggest, but we will certainly give fair consideration to that point. We are willing to work together to hopefully achieve better outcomes for all Yukoners.

Without dwelling too much on the issue of confrontational and heated rhetoric, I have to point out to some members of the Assembly that it is easier to work together if we try to work together on things, rather than beginning questions and rhetoric with characterizations of other members of the government as a whole that are fairly negative in nature. In the interest of trying to have a fairly positive exchange here, I won't point out specific examples, but the main point I want to emphasize is that if members have reasonable and fair concerns on behalf of their constituents — such as those raised by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin — my colleagues and I in the government are more than willing to work with them to see if we can come up with a solution we can all support.

Without spending too much time emphasizing the importance of nutrition, I think members generally are well aware of the importance of it. I do want to emphasize the fact that good nutrition is very important to health outcomes and someone's overall health and well-being. Poor nutrition is not only a cost to the individual, but it's also a cost to the health care system. Conditions like diabetes, heart disease and many other diseases and chronic conditions can result directly from poor nutrition. My point on that is that the cost of subsidizing the shipment of nutritious food to Old Crow is somewhat offset to the Government of Canada and the Yukon government in terms of the fact that we have people who are likely to be healthier — to have better nutrition, better overall health and well-being. So it's good for the bean counters looking at the numbers involved in this, but, most importantly, it's good for the individuals who are helped by having access to affordable, nutritious food.

As my colleague, the Minister of Environment and Economic Development noted, the opportunities for development of agriculture within the Yukon is something that certainly has some potential, both now and into the future, to increase the supply of nutritious, locally available food and that's something we're very much supportive of. Again, Old Crow has additional challenges, even greater than what most of the Yukon has for the ability to grow food, but certainly discussions about what potential opportunities might be in the area for greenhouses or other possibilities for growing food is something I'd be happy to talk to the member about and see if there are areas or opportunities that could be considered there.

Another thing I would like to note — emphasizing again how the government has responded to the needs of Old Crow — is the investment in the Old Crow water supply contained in this year's budget and making improvements there. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin and I have engaged in debate in Ques-

tion Period when I was Minister of Health and Social Services about his concerns related to the water quality within his community. I understand the member's concerns he brought forward, and this investment in Old Crow is how we as government are trying to respond to those understandable and real concerns of the member's constituents.

That investment, again, contained in the budget, as the Premier alluded to in Question Period earlier today, is also an example of where sometimes the initial estimates for project costs end up getting revised once that more detailed assessment occurs. The Old Crow water supply project has come in more expensive than originally anticipated, but in recognition of the importance placed on that by the citizens of Old Crow and by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, we have continued to support this project and added the additional funds necessary to develop those water supply improvements.

Other examples of where we responded to the needs of Old Crow include work that has occurred on roads, on gravel supply, investing in the Old Crow airport, riverbank stabilization, expanding the telehealth network to all Yukon communities and nursing stations, including Old Crow, which allows for improved communication of health care professionals. As I am sure the member knows, it even has little cameras on it that can be used by a health care professional in the community to take a closer look at a wound or other area and transmit that remotely to Whitehorse or perhaps even further south for assistance in some diagnosis of that.

With that, I will wrap up my comments here. I just want to again thank the member for bringing this forward. I note that my colleagues and I on this side of the floor are pleased to support the member in this concern that he brought forward. I am pleased to support continuing to assist the people of Old Crow with having access to affordable, nutritious food.

I'm sure that our Member of Parliament and Senator will review the results of the Legislature's deliberations today in what, hopefully, will be a unanimously supported motion by this Legislative Assembly. I'm hopeful and optimistic that the minister responsible federally will take a look at what we have done here today — once the vote has occurred — and will give the appropriate consideration to the needs; recognize the specific challenges faced by the people of Old Crow in accessing nutritional food; and see that a cookie-cutter approach or a one-size-fits-all program may or may not be well-designed for other areas in the north, but certainly, in this case, is not well-designed for meeting the needs of the people of Old Crow. So, with that, I commend this motion to the House and look forward to voting in favour of it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As both the Minister of Tourism and Culture and the Minister of Justice, I really do appreciate the unique role that Yukon First Nations play in contributing to the social and economic life of all Yukoners through arts, exhibits, festivals, events and programs. I also appreciate the value of partnering with Yukon First Nations to preserve cultural sites and sites of heritage significance.

The cost of food for northerners, especially for a fly-in community such as Old Crow, has often been disproportionate

to communities south of 60. We sometimes will hear an argument that it's a personal choice to live in communities such as Old Crow, Tuktoyaktuk, Baffin Island, et cetera. Our Old Crow is a community that has proven its diversity and flexibility time and time again. It isn't a choice to live there; it's their home; it's their culture; and it's their way of life. We all know that fly-in communities have higher expenses when it comes to construction materials, supplies, consumables, vehicles, and especially recreational vehicles like snowmobiles and quads that can be used for hunting.

For example, when I was in Charlottetown, PEI, a couple of months ago, at the Justice ministers' meeting, I spoke with my northern counterparts from Nunavut and N.W.T. In comparison, the correctional facility that we have just constructed and opened here in Whitehorse would potentially cost, for the same building in Nunavut, upwards of \$200 million in Iqaluit.

In our party platform, "Moving Forward Together", we indicate that, together with First Nation governments, we continue to urge the Government of Canada to ensure that future federal programs are designed to provide strategic short-, medium- and long-term benefits to the Yukon economy. We don't have to look far to find brochures, flyers, advertisements that encourage us to maintain good nutrition and a healthy weight. The benefits of good nutrition can also be found in an improved mental health state; it can be found in better sleep patterns; and it can be found in increased energy. Fresh fruit and vegetables promote good nutrition. Healthy eating promotes healthy hearts and organs; it promotes healthy bones, extra energy — as I have mentioned — and self confidence. Sticking to the five food groups and supplements promotes good nutrition. The retail environment is an ongoing challenge for the food mail project.

More often than not, northern communities don't receive high quality fresh fruits and vegetables. Along with quality comes price. The cost of fresh fruit in the north is more often than not quite high, not to mention inconsistent. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin generously shared with me some information on the cost of food in Old Crow — I won't recite that. He's talked about that here in the House today. We can all appreciate shopping in Whitehorse.

I don't understand how those prices could possibly promote nutrition in any community and I do believe that we can do better. I do know that the food mail program has had several projects over the years where they've attempted not only to collect data and customer input, but also increase the knowledge and skills of community members pertaining to healthy eating, food purchasing and preparation. For northern communities especially, it is essential to promote a diet with more vitamin A, C, calcium and high in fiber, and a diet with less sugar, fat and especially saturated fats. I believe a key goal of the program is to ensure a higher quality and availability of fruits and vegetables. If we also consider price comparison, I'm not 100 percent sure that this goal has been achieved.

I support this motion here today and I thank the member opposite for bringing it forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hassard: It is with great honour that I stand here today to speak to this motion put before this Assembly by Mr. Elias. I believe that —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: I would remind the member not to use the member's name.

Mr. Hassard: The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, sorry.

I believe that I have a fairly good understanding of where this motion is coming from because I have first-hand experience in this matter, both with my many years of being involved with the family grocery store, as well as my time spent in the wonderful community of Old Crow.

I was only in Old Crow for approximately six months. However, that was certainly long enough to be able to attest to the fact that we in the rest of the Yukon often take things for granted, even simple things like going to the store for a jug of milk. I can assure the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, as well as the people of Old Crow and all the members of this Assembly here today, that I will be in full support of this motion. Thank you.

Speaker: If the member now speaks he will close debate. Are there any other members who wish to be heard?

Mr. Elias: On behalf of my constituents, especially the children of Old Crow, I humbly accept every member's concern and thorough words of support here today in the Assembly.

It's difficult for people to sometimes recognize the power of their words. Believe me when I say that I heard some powerful words today, and I really appreciate each and every one who participated in the debate today, and those who didn't, because I know everybody's heart is in the right place and I really thank you.

I'm going to close with a couple of things. I think it's important to go over a bit of the history and the tasks that have been completed to date on this file. It's not an exhaustive list, but it's important to recognize, nonetheless — and the majority of them come from my constituents. I think that it's important to recognize all the work that has been done by our previous and current Members of Parliament in Ottawa. I know those private and public discussions have occurred, and I appreciate them — as well with our Senator and as well with our past and current chief and councils. It was mentioned in the House earlier today that all 17 of our MLAs did vote in favor of previous motions that regarded the proper implementation of the Nutrition North Canada program.

There have been several joint letters that our previous Premier Fentie, Chief Linklater and me and as well former Chief Kassi, sent to the Department of Health, and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

It is important to note that on behalf of my constituents I did travel to Ottawa and submit testimony to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

with regard to the Nutrition North Canada program. My constituents directed me to address the advisory board and the chair of the Nutrition North Canada program, and that was done. They have advised me to meet with senior officials in Ottawa over the course of the years, and to send a message in a different way to the Members of Parliament and that has been completed. As well as attending my constituents, so much work was done attending and participating in various public meetings throughout the years to try to direct the program in the right direction. That has also been done. It is also important to recognize that the Assembly of First Nations unanimously passed the motion on the floor of their general assembly that had specific Old Crow issues about the Nutrition North Canada program in it, and that was passed unanimously as well.

There was a multitude of appearances within the press over the years trying to get the message out. More recently, as I tabled today, a letter was signed by five different MLAs and members of the National Assembly of Quebec to address the Health minister and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and it really specifically identified areas where the Nutrition North Canada program was not meeting its objectives in their entirety. There are some good aspects about the program that are working in various jurisdictions, but there are some that are not and it's really affecting the day-to-day lives of citizens across the north.

In saying that — and recognizing the Leader of the Official Opposition's suggestion today — what I was going to suggest is maybe the Premier or the Health and Social Services minister today could take this on a pan-northern approach as another level of advocacy that this not working in our territory. Bring that to the table and to the agenda as the next level of cooperation to help us solve this very important issue. I think that, to say the least, this is by far the most difficult file I have ever had to work on during my tenure here over the past five years. It has been a tremendous amount of work and hopefully soon we will find an amicable resolution to it.

I would also like to take this time to quote some other politicians and some of my constituents with regard to the Nutrition North Canada program, because I believe they are relevant and deserve recognition. The Hon. Larry Bagnell, the former Yukon MP, said, "I was shocked at what we can see from the testimony today. People are being cut off, some items are ineligible, necessities are being taken off the list, and some communities aren't eligible. The prices are skyrocketing, so how do you know the savings are passed on? Some of those concerns are even a shock to me to hear today."

And from our current Member of Parliament, the Hon. Mr. Leef, speaking about the store in Old Crow, said, "It's tough to find a bag of fruit where a good portion of the fruit isn't bruised or soft, and no different with the vegetables." He also went on to say that "I recognize how nutrition translates into health, how it translates into education and how it translates in affordability and just being able to live and maintain the culture and history in Old Crow. So it's not just the issue of being able to afford a good piece of food to eat. It translates into a whole bunch of other areas in life."

To quote the Hon. Mr. Hart, former Minister of Health and Social Services: “As the member opposite indicated, they have one monopoly that operates in his small town, which makes it very difficult for him to get anything on a competitive basis with regard to good food. Once the winter comes, we all know what the vegetable line looks like here in our own community of Whitehorse. We consider Whitehorse to be the end of the line for vegetables and fruits. One only has to go shopping here locally to find out that most of our stuff will only last three or four days once you take it home.”

I’d also like to quote the late Mr. Cardiff. He said, “I appreciate the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin’s concern in bringing this motion forward. It is what I would consider to be a very important issue, not just for the people of Old Crow, but for everyone in the Yukon. This is about looking after our brothers and sisters and our fellow Yukoners and ensuring that they have the ability to obtain and make healthy living choices and at the same time, try to reduce and maintain the present cost of living in that community.”

As one of my constituents put it: “By the time the fresh fruit arrives in Old Crow, it’s hardly worth buying.” She asked me not to mention who she was publicly, so I’m not going to.

Mr. Speaker, with the federal government trying to fix the inefficiencies of the federal food mail program in eastern Canada, an interim program provides a disservice to our community of Old Crow. The food mail program was absorbed by Nunavut and 34 percent from Nunavik — sorry, 56 percent from Nunavut and 34 percent from Nunavik, which is near northern Quebec, and it’s 10 percent for the rest of the north.

It is important to note that in 2009, Old Crow’s portion of use of the food mail program was about \$333,000. We’re thankful for that. The year before that \$264,800 was used in the food mail program. The total cost for that year was \$55 million on a national scale. It’s a small portion used for Old Crow, but it is incredibly important for a healthy community, and I’m hopeful that the federal government will continue to work with our community of Old Crow to ensure the best possible delivery of the new Nutrition North Canada program to my constituents. It is my constituents who know what works in terms of getting healthy, nutritious foods to their tables.

Again, on behalf of my constituents and the community of Old Crow, who are the only Yukon beneficiaries of the federal food mail subsidy program, we thank you all for your comments, and I ask today that all members join me in sending a united message once again and vote in favour of this motion. Mahsi’ cho.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agreed.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agreed.

Ms. McLeod: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agreed.

Mr. Hassard: Agreed.

Ms. Hanson: Agreed.

Mr. Tredger: Agreed.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agreed.

Ms. White: Agreed.

Ms. Stick: Agreed.

Mr. Barr: Agreed.

Mr. Elias: Agreed.

Mr. Silver: Agreed.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, nil nays.

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

Motion No. 80 agreed to

Motion No. 106

Clerk: Motion No. 106, standing in the name of Mr. Silver.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Klondike:

THAT this House urges the Yukon overnment to work with public schools, the private sector and mining community, First Nations, Skills Canada and other NGOs and Yukon College to develop a comprehensive plan to offer quality training in skills, trades and technology in Yukon that will:

(1) enable Yukoners to gain valuable skills that will allow them to be eligible for opportunities that are being offered throughout the territory;

(2) encourage Yukon youth who wish to pursue careers in skills, trades and technology;

(3) potentially include interprovincial accreditation which recognizes journeypersons throughout Canada;

(4) address the need for the unique skills that are necessary for working in Arctic climates;

(5) create short-term, immediate solutions using cooperative learning to address the current need for training and long-term vision with defined, achievable timelines; and

(6) recognize the high level of academic ability required to enter fields connected with skills, trades and technology.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start with just a little bit of background. Since 2004, economic activity in the territory began to gain momentum with increased exploration spending, following an increase in commodity prices in late 2003. Since 2003, Yukon has experienced eight consecutive years of population increases. It started with a more gradual growth period from 2001 to 2005, and then grew to a much stronger growth trend for the 2006-to-present time frame.

Population growth in the territory is closely tied to the performance of the natural resource sector. The changes in Yukon’s population graphically follow the Bank of Canada’s metals and minerals price index, lagging predictably behind by one year. Global trends of increasing populations, economic

growth and rising purchasing power in emerging economies are anticipated to continue for decades, creating continuing heightened demands for Canada's and Yukon's natural resources.

Starting in 2003, the territory has seen eight years of continuous economic growth that closely correlates to the increases in commodity prices.

These trends demonstrate that all aspects of mining, construction and trades are experiencing significant growth. The increase in mining activity has driven growth in several industries. Our increasingly tight housing market means an increased need for skilled construction workers, for example. There is no doubt the Yukon needs a comprehensive plan to offer quality training in skills, trades and technology. Millions have been spent on feasibility studies and action plans; yet today the tech and trades concept is being downplayed at Yukon College. The buzz word these days is "university".

In January of 2009, the Auditor General of Canada produced a report on education in the Yukon. It stated at the time with regard to the Advanced Education branch, which includes Yukon College, that the department was unable to demonstrate that it successfully prepares students to make an effective transition from high school to post-secondary education, which includes trades.

The Auditor General also reported that a community training fund strategy is needed. It spoke to the need to help address Yukoners' training needs. The fund would support projects in trades and technology, literacy, basic job skills, development and heritage. These projects were intended to help Yukoners prepare for economic development and economic opportunities in a changing job market.

Community training fund contributions allow communities to design and implement training that targets job opportunities in their regions. Contributions can be directed to specific communities or industries by providing training projects that help the private sector meet its needs for skilled workers. The department was unable at that time to demonstrate that it had a comprehensive strategy for allocating these funds or that it had completed reviews to determine whether the funds were spent effectively, economically and efficiently. The most recent Yukon training strategy was prepared in 1998 and had not, at that point, been updated at the time of the auditor's report.

The recommendation by the Auditor General was that the Department of Education should develop a comprehensive strategy for managing community training funds. Contribution agreements should have clear terms and conditions and should be properly reviewed, managed and monitored. The department, in consultation with stakeholders, said it would develop a 10-year training strategy that would address coordinating training needs and training programs, as well as addressing training gaps for the next 10 years. This strategy, which would include an action plan and an evaluation component, would address the shortcomings associated with the current deficiencies in the management of the community training funds, including the monitoring process. I look forward to the minister's updates on such initiatives and other initiatives in these fields.

Industry needs projections. As I mentioned earlier, the mineral industry has a huge impact on employment in the

Yukon. Across the country, we have a shortage of skilled workers and projections are that shortages will get much worse without a comprehensive, proactive government response. I would like to share with the House some of the alarming facts about this labour market shortage. We've gathered this information from a variety of sources, and I would be happy to provide specific references and directions to those sources, if so asked.

Currently, the Yukon enjoys a record 466 registered Yukon apprentices, all of which require Yukon industry engagement. Though this is encouraged, the need for skilled workers in the Yukon is profound. Some reports estimate that in the next 10 years, 200 percent of the Yukon's existing mineral industry workforce will need to be replaced. It is not a unique concern to the Yukon, as Canada and the world are also bracing for skills, trades and technology labour shortages that can affect the global economy. Nationally, Canada's mining industry will have a projected shortage of 80,000 workers by 2017.

Canada's construction sector will have to replace 152,000 skilled workers by 2017. Canada's oil and gas sector will need to fill just over 130,000 positions between 2010 and 2020. Canada's workforce is aging rapidly and our birth rate is declining, which will lead to a shortage of about one million workers by 2020. Economists say that a skilled tradesworker shortage will definitely affect Canada's ability to compete on a global market in the future and will affect our economy's growth in the long term. The shortage of skilled tradeworkers also means that it may take longer for important infrastructure projects such as roads and hospitals to be completed. A skilled trades shortage will affect every Canadian.

As we can see, there are huge shortages in the skilled trades across Canada. In the Yukon, where so much of our economy relates to mining and construction, the effect will be even greater. That is why it is not simply a great opportunity to improve our tech and trades programming here so that Yukoners can take part in our growing economy. In fact, it's absolutely necessary to the economy, to the economic and physical well-being of the Yukon, which is why we have brought forward this motion today.

Trades benefit students. It has been demonstrated that school attendance improves when the trades and technology streams are incorporated within the education systems. School attendance and graduation rates remain serious problems in the Yukon and, in addressing that issue, I encourage the minister to remember the great potential that tech and trades training has for keeping students engaged, interested and on the path to completing their education. The positive effects of trades and technology streams on students' attendance has been observed in rural schools like Ross River, Pelly Crossing and Dawson City, to name a few. It is not only the students themselves who benefit from the training. Many students who have been fortunate enough to experience hands-on engagement have themselves become involved in sharing their skills that they have received through mentorships with other students in the communities.

Dawson City is an example of how skills training can make a profound difference in many lives. Greg Fischer was very involved in skills training in school and in programs offered outside of the school hours. With the help of Robert Service School teachers and the Yukon industry volunteers, Greg was in a position to be recognized nationally as one of the most gifted, small-engine repair technicians in Canada.

Greg now works as a full-time small-engines technician in Whitehorse. In addition to this, he has been appointed to the national technical committee by Skills Canada in Ottawa, which is a very prestigious appointment for an awesome kid, who is now a young man, out of Dawson City.

Trades are not necessarily emphasized now. Unfortunately, not all students in the territory have enjoyed the same opportunities to get involved in tech and trades. Programs related to skills, trades and technology career choices that are crucial to the Yukon economy are not being promoted in Yukon schools as a first-choice or even a second-choice option. In many cases, the existing opportunities are being minimized. Some schools are using their shops as storage. Many others do not have the training to effectively engage students in the trades or access to the expertise they need to develop these skills. We don't have to convince schools to offer this training, because serious interest already exists in the communities of Faro, Mayo, Old Crow and Dawson City, just to name a few.

In short, little has been done in Yukon schools to promote skills, trades and technology-related programs in the past. Programs are being minimized, particularly in rural Yukon, where the need and desire to host programs is great and are simply not happening. I am very encouraged, however, in the new Minister of Education's vision and attitude toward educational directions in tech and trades.

The Yukon could be a study in excellence in terms of producing some of the best trained and most capable skills tradespeople in Canada and in the world. This could be achieved by working in partnership with Yukon industry and with Yukon First Nations. If we don't promote and showcase the amazing opportunities that Yukon has to offer its citizens, we will continue to outsource our jobs and our opportunities outside of the territory.

Good things are happening in regard to trades in the Yukon. It makes sense to review some of the successes and partnerships while we consider the overall issue of improving tech and trades training — for example, Yukon's national standings in skills and trades competitions show the skills of our apprenticeships when we do have access to the right training and opportunities. Established in 1998, Skills Canada Yukon won just two medals after the first decade in national competitions. In recent years, Yukoners have gained the stage and won a much greater share of the prizes. Over the last four appearances, Yukon has taken home 21 medals. At this year's nationals, which were the largest ever, with over 500 participants, a total of 21 Yukoners competed in 16 trades.

While winning medals is a challenge Yukon is stepping up to, getting Yukoners interested in trades is a different one altogether. The head of Skills Yukon has said, and I quote: "These trades are under-represented in the Yukon. We have a tremen-

dous amount of resources and opportunity here, but I feel we're failing our youth a great deal by not offering the tools they need — primarily in the communities that are dying for these opportunities. Skills clubs are very few and far between. I feel the Yukon has a long way to go. We have to do a lot more in Yukon College, a lot more in schools, a lot more in society to get these people engaged."

We do not need to reinvent the wheel to get more tech and trades education in our schools. The Ontario youth apprenticeship program has been running for almost 15 years. The program is there for us to use and we have the good fortune of having local educators who are very familiar with the programming. Jim Complak from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in education department used to be in charge of this program through his school board in Ontario and currently has many contacts running in this program in several school boards in that province. Virtual education programs keep students engaged within the school system when they otherwise might drop out. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in education department is advocating for this approach, in which students are registered with the school, but can complete much of their education outside of the school walls in a way that is still meaningful and accountable for the goals of education.

Four courses have already been developed for the virtual-school approach and 17 more are in the process. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in went through the motions of applying for these courses in the format defined by the Department of Education. All parties, including chief and council and representatives from the Department of Education and Robert Service School are eager to get this done. We encourage all members here to recognize the effectiveness of these programs and the communities' interest in seeing them implemented and leading to the potential support of this initiative.

We have seen Yukoners in skilled trades take their place in national competitions. We have seen individual Yukoners who enjoy tech and trades training excel in their careers and mentoring others in their communities. We have seen how community members, educators and governments can work together to implement cooperative initiative programming that keeps students engaged with the education system, learning skills that they will use for the rest of their lives.

Seeing what has been and what can be done, I would now like to draw attention to another partnership to come together in Dawson City and how it can and should tie into the larger, long-term tech and trades development plan. Educators in industry are coming together to take advantage of unique opportunities presented in Robert Service School. Robert Service School enjoys an excellent rapport with both the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in education department and local Yukon College campus administrators. It is also located in the relative vicinity of the White Gold district and specifically, Predator Group's Brewery Creek operation.

They have worked diligently on grassroots communications to advance students' academic pursuits in technologies and trades at Robert Service School. They have continued to meet with partners in education to develop a *modus operandi* that will create buy-in among students with great academic

potential who currently fall between the cracks. Industry has come forward to support this initiative. They want to hire Yukoners and if we can train and prepare local people to work in their home communities, well then, all the better. Based on these successes, we urge the government to consider our current and impending skilled labour shortage and create a five-year strategic plan to address it. This plan should outline industry-identified tech and trades jobs needs and the private sector's willingness to provide assistance to accomplish local training opportunities with a guarantee for employment. It should draw on the interests of First Nation governance by identifying the strengths of its citizens that are currently not being fostered.

I thank the members for their attention today and for the support for education that meets the needs of our students and of communities and of our economy.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Before I respond to the motion presented, Motion No. 106, presented by the Member for Klondike, I just wanted to reflect on Wednesdays and private member's days here in the Legislative Assembly.

My experience, when I was here about a decade ago, was that — I think all members of this House know the nickname that Wednesdays often have and unfortunately, 10 years ago when I was here they often lived up to that nickname. But I've been encouraged over the last couple weeks of this current sitting. Last week, we were able to unanimously pass two motions that were of significant interest — one, of course, on Air North; another was on research. Earlier today, we passed the motion from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin on nutrition, with his concerns regarding the Nutrition North Canada program and I'm pleased to speak to Motion No. 106, by the Member for Klondike.

In the first sitting, before Christmas, I did propose what I thought was a friendly amendment to a motion put forward by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. It caused quite a bit of emotion in the House and was certainly not the reaction that I had hoped for or was looking for.

So with the current amendment that I'm going to propose for this motion, I did speak to the Member for Klondike earlier, and he and I have worked closely on this motion and the ensuing amendment over the past week. So I thank him for taking the time to engage with me outside of this Chamber to ensure that we can move forward on a motion that gets the support of not only the government caucus, but members of his caucus as well, and hopefully all members of the House — once we all get a chance to speak to it.

What I would like to outline, prior to moving my amendment, is the work that is underway in the Department of Education with the many stakeholder groups that the member outlines in his motion with respect to skills development and continued education in Yukon's labour market. This work is achieved through the labour mobility framework developed in 2008 and 2009 and represents a comprehensive approach to Yukon's labour market needs. The framework consists of five strategies and respective action plans that were created as part of the framework, including labour market information, comprehensive skills and trades training, as the Member for Klondike

spoke about, immigration, national recruitments and employee retention.

The Advanced Education branch led the development of the framework through consultations with individuals representing business, industry, all levels of government, and employees affected by labour market demands. The Advanced Education branch wishes to accelerate collaborative achievement with other departments in regard to successfully implementing our government's part of the labour market framework. There have been various action plans guided by the framework's five strategies that have been developed. The labour market framework and action plans are currently undergoing an evaluation. The framework evaluation plan is designed to focus on evaluation work to be completed over the next couple of years and includes evaluation methods, data tools and a work plan for carrying out the evaluation activities.

I'll just take a few moments to speak about the five strategies that I mentioned and provide a little bit more background as to what they involve. The labour market information strategy — the goal of this strategy is to provide relevant and timely labour market information for users to make informed decisions regarding the labour market in Yukon.

The comprehensive skills and trades training strategy that the member spoke about earlier — the goal of this is to ensure training opportunities are available for all Yukon people to adapt effectively and efficiently to changing skills, knowledge and ability.

The immigration strategy — the goal of this strategy is to support a responsive and sustainable approach to Yukon immigration, addressing business and industry labour force needs through improvement and monitoring of the Yukon nominee program. Training and international immigration will certainly go a long way to solving some of the labour issues that we see here in the Yukon today, but we have to also include national recruitment and employee retention strategies. The goal of these two strategies is to facilitate Yukon employers' ability to recruit suitable employees and to enhance Yukon employers' ability to retain skilled employees. It's important that we increase awareness of Yukon as a desirable location to work and live, as well as increasing the return rate of Yukon students who leave for school and return back to the Yukon for work.

The objectives of the retention strategy are to enhance Yukon employers' ability to retain skilled employees by increasing awareness of the importance of employee retention, improving Yukon employers' access to information and tools to support their ability to retain employees, and to increase employers' awareness of the barriers to employee retention.

A number of actions are being led and developed by the Advanced Education branch through each of these five strategies. Of course, I'd be happy to direct all members to the website. I don't have that information with me, but, of course, if anyone is interested, feel free to contact my office and I can provide them with more details on those five strategies.

As we go through the Member for Klondike's motion, there are a number of things that are currently underway in the department — as mentioned with those five strategies. Under the subheading of "(1) to enable Yukoners to gain valuable

skills that will allow them to be eligible for opportunities that are being offered throughout the territory,” some of the programs that we do have in place are the Yukon grant, student training allowance, support for Yukon College, and the community training funds.

Again, the Member for Klondike mentioned the Auditor General’s report and the recommendation made by the Auditor General at the time for community training funds — comprehensive strategy.

So, in the 2010-11 Department of Education annual report that I’ve tabled in this sitting, you can find on page 14 of that document, recommendation 62: “Community Training Funds - Comprehensive Strategy. A full review of the community training fund was completed by the department to ensure funding decisions aligned with defined needs and priorities. This includes revising and updating the 1998 Yukon training strategy and developing comprehensive skills and trades training strategy. The funding agreement template was revised in accordance with recommendations made in the 2009 Auditor General report and those reflect government-wide changes to the process and template. Contribution agreements have been changed in accordance with a new initiative by the Department of Finance and are now referred to as transfer payment agreements. These forms include an evaluative component to ensure the program objectives are being achieved. Finally, more human resources have been dedicated to monitoring the community training funds.”

It goes on, Mr. Speaker, to state: “In the new labour market framework announced in February 2011, a comprehensive package of strategies was released to guide the Yukon labour market for the next ten years and the strategies include a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy to replace the former 1997 strategy and the recruitment and retention strategy, immigration strategy and labour market information strategy”, which I spoke to earlier in my remarks.

Further to point 1 in the member’s motion, we also have the student training and employment program, summer career placement and the targeted initiative for older workers.

Under subheading 2 of the member’s motion, which is to encourage Yukon youth who wish to pursue careers in skills, trades and technology, there is, of course, the Yukon apprenticeship program — again, support that the department offers to Yukon College. The department has made a commitment to initiate three trade-targeted secondary programs by 2016. I am hopeful and I have had discussions with the Member for Klondike that we need to move more quickly on the dual-credit aspects, especially on the trades side in our secondary schools. We need to identify the strengths of the students who are entering our high schools, coming out of elementary schools, and identify those for whom trades and technology are a real option. I think that is going to be extremely important, and we would be proud to direct students in that direction if that is the aptitude and skill set that they are showing as they enter high school and as we prepare them for their life beyond high school and beyond their post-secondary education.

Subsection 3 of the member’s motion is to potentially include interprovincial accreditation that recognizes journeypersons throughout Canada.

To that, the Yukon government offers two programs to Yukon residents to become a certified journeyperson in 48 designated trades. The Yukon apprenticeship program certifies apprentices who have received on-the-job experience and in-school technical training. The Yukon trades qualification program offers access to certification for individuals who hold trades certification from other Canadian jurisdictions or countries and individuals who have gained the required trade experience without a formal apprenticeship program.

Since 2007, over 350 Yukoners earned their trades certification through these programs. Over 300 of those also earned their interprovincial standards or their red seal. Obtaining a red seal in a trade ensures recognition of a journeyperson’s certification throughout Canada without further examination.

To labour mobility — the Yukon is committed to the national *Agreement on Internal Trade*. The Yukon is already in full compliance with chapter 7 of the agreement, with the exception of one outstanding amendment regarding chartered accountants. Subheading (4) of the motion is to “address the need for the unique skills that are necessary for working in Arctic climates.” In the spring of 2011, Yukon College received funding to conduct a two-phase feasibility study for the centre for northern innovation in mining, which I will speak to after moving my amendment.

Then, of course, the work of the Yukon Research Centre and the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre addresses some of the issues surrounding those skills that are necessary for working in Arctic or colder climates.

The fifth part of the member’s motion is: “to create short-term, immediate solutions using cooperative learning to address the current need for training and a long-term vision with defined, achievable timelines”. Through the community training funds, the government is committed to providing Yukoners with the education and training opportunities necessary to adapt and succeed in an ever-changing local and global economy. We have the labour market agreement funds — the funds that are associated with the labour market development agreements, the work we do through Skookum Jim Friendship Centre and the youth employment program.

Finally, the sixth part of the member’s motion is, “to recognize the high level of academic ability required to enter fields connected with skills, trades and technology.” For this, we have upgrading available at Yukon College.

The recent announcement by the federal government regarding the adult basic education funding is welcomed here to bring many Yukoners who want to move into careers in the trades and technology up to a basic level of skills so they can move beyond that and attain jobs and increase their success as students and as lifelong learners.

Of course, we have the student apprenticeship program and the training and funding associated with the various initiatives. One other program that I’d like to mention that we have funded for the next two intakes is the licensed practical nurse program — an extremely successful program being offered at Yukon

College. I understand from the Minister of Health and Social Services that the graduates of that program have all been placed in positions throughout the Yukon. So we're pleased, not only with the training offered and the innovation that they offer in delivering that training, but also the end result, which is meaningful employment in the career that they've chosen.

So, as you can see, there are a number of initiatives that are already underway by the Yukon government. It's to that that I'd like to now move an amendment to Motion No. 106.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move

THAT Motion No. 106 be amended by removing the phrase "develop a comprehensive plan" and replacing it with the phrase "implement existing plans", and by inserting the phrase "and explore new models" immediately following the phrase "technology in Yukon."

I do have enough copies here for all members to review, and of course, the pink copy for the Clerk's table. So perhaps I'll give that to one of the pages, and allow the members to review it.

Again, I had shared this with the Member for Klondike prior to making this amendment today, so perhaps I will, at this point, sit and allow other members to speak to this particular amendment.

Speaker: The amendment is in order. It has been moved by the Minister of Education

THAT Motion No. 106 be amended by removing the phrase "develop a comprehensive plan" and replacing it with the phrase "implement existing plans" and by inserting the phrase "and explore new models" immediately following the phrase "technology in the Yukon."

Hon. Mr. Kent: I will be very brief in my remarks on the amendment, because I know there are a number of other members who want to speak to the original motion. I want to try to get this motion to a vote prior to the end of day.

In bringing forward this amendment, I just wanted to recognize the good work of the Department of Education and officials. I have only been minister now for four or five months and certainly there has been a lot of work accomplished.

A number of plans have been put in place and that's why I have asked that we include "implement existing plans", but of course we've heard — I know there are a number of conversations that have been taking place throughout the Yukon on exploring new models to deliver trades and technology training, whether it's talking to representatives of Skills Canada or industry or the education system. I think there are still some great models out there that we can take a look at and introduce into what we're already doing. So that's why I've put forward this amendment to Motion No. 106.

Mr. Silver: I have no problem with the minister's amendment to the motion, as it doesn't deviate from the original intent of my motion.

I rose today and talked about the need for skilled techs and trades because of what I know, and because of my experience

in education over the last 15 years and that's it; that's all I can attest to. I also know the amazing work that's being done currently in my community of Dawson City. With the help of the current Minister of Education, I am very confident that this motion will help in facilitating a direction for the people who are involved currently and basically use the talents and the resources that we currently have.

Speaker: Are there any other members who wish to speak to the amendment?

Mr. Tredger: I would like to speak to the amendment. One of the concerns that I have with what has happened currently is that we're reacting in an ad hoc manner to the needs of our children and to the people who are going into our employment force. It speaks to a need for an overall plan and a strategy that will bring together all of the various people who are providing the skills. What we need is a plan to sit down and bring the Skills Canada and the Yukon Women in Trades and Technology and the people from Yukon College and the school system together to make a comprehensive plan that will then take a look at the skills we have, the resources we have and where we're going. Right now, we don't have that and we need — in my understanding of the motion, as originally proposed, I was quite excited because I felt it gave us the opportunity to do that: to step back, to make a plan that would be comprehensive and include all of the parties, rural as well as Whitehorse. I am quite disappointed in this amendment, and I haven't decided how I am going to vote on it yet.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Question has been called. On the amendment, are you agreed?

Amendment to Motion No. 106 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any member who wishes to speak on the amended motion?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to first begin by thanking the member for bringing the motion forward and agreeing to the amendment. I would like to begin by reviewing what it is we committed to doing during the last election. We committed to educating today for jobs tomorrow. We committed to continuing to provide Yukon students with the fundamental skills necessary to prepare them for jobs, responsible citizenship and lifelong learning.

Our vision is to develop an inclusive, adaptable and productive workforce that contributes and strengthens Yukon's economy. We committed to implement the labour market framework for Yukon, which includes a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy. We pledged to encourage greater participation of women in vocational skills and trades training, such as the women exploring trades program. We said we would promote trades as a career choice for persons with disabilities, and that we would encourage the underemployed to pursue vocational skills and trades training.

I want to mention several items in response to this motion.

Earlier today, one of the members opposite complained that we didn't have any programming in the correctional facility. Let me mention one that is directly relevant to our discussion today. We are offering an intro to carpentry May 9 to 13 at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — a week-long carpentry workshop happened at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Five female inmates were given the opportunity to learn basic carpentry skills while they constructed a greenhouse. This was a partnership between Yukon College, the correctional facility, the Downtown Urban Gardeners Society, and Yukon Women in Trades and Technology. The greenhouse was constructed on WCC property and then moved to a downtown location of DUGS. Two instructors facilitated the workshop. They made it easy to learn and understand while creating something productive and seeing a finished product.

My colleagues are speaking to different elements of this motion. I want to focus on the efforts we are making to encourage more women to pursue the trades and technology sector.

We are working with Yukon Women in Trades and Technology. Their mission statement: As a vibrant, sustainable non-profit society, in order to increase the number of women in Yukon trades and technology jobs, we educate about the viability of trades and technology opportunities for women.

They recruit by finding women and employers who would be successful together. They support potential and present tradeswomen. They do this because they believe gender should not be a barrier to pursuing workplace opportunities. I don't have time to go through their goals, but they are important and deserving of our attention. To achieve these goals, YWITT delivers a series of programs targeting youth in high school, grades 8 to 12. The first program is the Yukon Women Exploring Trades career fair.

This one-day career fair at Yukon College is for grade 8 girls from Whitehorse and the rural communities to provide hands-on experience with different trades in a fun and supportive environment. An introduction to three trades-related workshops and a demonstration of positive women role models gives these young girls a hands-on opportunity to explore trades and meet people actually working in the trades to encourage young women to participate in future careers in trades.

Some of the workshops included automotive, electrical, carpentry, multi-media, culinary arts, plumbing and blueprint reading. Each workshop was 75 minutes long and involved a maximum of 15 girls participating in hands-on activities. Tradeswomen and women instructors will be used as much as possible to maximize role modelling and mentoring. Each workshop is designed to produce something tangible for the girls to take away. Girls are able to participate in a total of three workshops of those offered. In each workshop, the girls not only learn hands-on skills, but create items, such as extension cords, culinary feasts, bird feeders, electronic Christmas cards and copper pipe sprinklers that they can take home and show their friends and family their talents.

To further engage with schools, the students deliver an after-school program called "Cool Tools". Cool Tools is a 12-week after-school trades and mining exploration program for young women, using Yukon College as the main venue for the

delivery of workshops. This program is open to girls from grades 8 to 12. The goal of the project is to increase the number of girls taking shop classes in high school, thus increasing the likelihood of them pursuing trades careers upon graduation. Cool Tools provides the opportunity to connect the girls in grades 8 to 12 and hopefully continue the relationship into post-secondary trades training and ultimately a career in the trades and technology sector.

The gold show in Dawson — YWITT participated in the Dawson City gold show with an information booth. An individual met many local tradespeople, who were overwhelmingly supportive of women in the trades. This individual met contractors with 50 percent female crews, female heavy equipment operators, and made excellent partners and contacts.

I just want to reiterate — and I think this message will come time and time again — that education is really a key priority for this government. In fact, it leads our platform, and we believe that to achieve a better quality of life, we need to educate today for jobs tomorrow. While the value of an education extends far beyond what career options it allows, the fact remains that many careers require a specialized skill set, and we recognize that not every student learns in the same way. We understand that different students need different supports, so we went to work and expanded on the support of alternative education and apprentice programs and post-secondary education.

These commitments speak to this motion. The motion calls for the government to work to enable Yukoners to gain valuable skills that will allow them to be eligible for opportunities being offered through the territory, and this part of the motion asks what we are doing throughout the Yukon. So I would like to offer the following information in response: The Yukon government is committed to providing Yukoners with education and training opportunities necessary to adapt and succeed in an ever-changing local and global economy. The community training funds have proven successful at providing for these training opportunities.

For the 2011-12 fiscal year, the Government of Yukon provided \$1.5 million to the community training fund. As in past years, these funds support various training initiatives in trades and technology, literacy, basic employment skills development, heritage and cultural development. The community training fund consists of three streams: community-based, economic sector-based and project-based. Training funds are discrete funds established either with a committee representative of the community or sector, or with a sponsoring institution, or with a transfer payment agreement directly with the Department of Education. Project funding is not restricted to a specific region or industry. I understand that work is continuing on that front, and I look forward to hearing more good news from my colleague. I would like to extend my thanks to the Minister of Education on that file.

The motion speaks to working with schools and the college. I would like to share our progress with respect to that element of this motion. Skills Canada provides youth in Whitehorse and communities with hands-on workshops and skills clubs facilitated by volunteer mentors and coaches, which aim

to promote trades and technology as a viable career option. The Advanced Education branch provides annual funding and support to enable Skills Canada Yukon to deliver these workshops and clubs.

The Territorial Skills Competition, a qualifier for the Canadian Skills Competition, was held at Yukon College on April 29 of last year, with over 1,000 students from across Yukon competing or participating in demonstrations. Twenty-three Yukon students participated in this year's Canadian Skills Competition in Quebec City — sorry, I guess it was last year in June of 2011 — winning a record two gold and two silver medals. Over the past five years, Advanced Education has provided the following funding to Skills Canada Yukon: 2007-08 was \$74,000; 2008-09 was just over \$78,000; 2009-10 was just over \$79,000; 2010-11 was almost \$80,000; and 2011-12 was roughly the same figure.

The last item urges the Government of Yukon to recognize the high level of academic ability required to enter fields connected with skills, trades and technology. Literacy is the foundation to success in academia and in the world of trades and technology.

I just want to share that what this government is doing to address literacy skills of Yukoners. Yukon College offers a wide range of programming to meet literacy-based needs in Yukon, including college prep offerings and community-based literacy and essential skills courses designed with and for rural Yukon. Of its base funding, approximately \$500,000 goes to the delivery of the adult education programs. Yukon Learn is Yukon's principal literacy service delivery agent. In 2011-12, Yukon provided core funds to Yukon Learn at \$175,000, which covers operational and program/learner expenses in addition to \$100,000 for community development.

A couple of other funds, quickly, and then I'll wrap up, because other people would like to speak. The Kwanlin Dun House of Learning received just over \$175,000 in 2011-12; Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, or LDAY, received over \$80,000; Yukon Literacy Coalition, again, \$25,000; and Yukon Literacy Coalition's *Linking Essential Skills to Life* — \$30,000.

Again, I commend the member opposite from Dawson, the Klondike, for bringing this motion forward and accepting the amendment and I trust that our colleagues in the House will also support this.

Ms. Moorcroft: I'm pleased to rise to speak to this amended motion and as New Democrats we certainly see the value of education and the value of working with public schools and the private sector and the mining community, with First Nations and Skills Canada and other NGOs, with trade unions — who I see are not included in the motion as it presently reads — and with Yukon College to ensure that we are offering to the people of the Yukon good training in skills technology and the trades. As New Democrats, we see a need to inspire youth about the value of education. One of the things that we know youth respond well to is experiential education programs. Those resonate with many students and experiential programs have been developed in a number of areas. The mu-

sic, art and drama program, experiential science programs and those kinds of programs are all ones that show that previous governments have done a considerable amount of work to support various innovative models of education and training for people.

We also would like to acknowledge that there is a need to strengthen and enhance Yukon College community campus training and learning opportunities by fostering better working relations with First Nations employers, non-governmental organizations and other community interests.

The Minister of Education spoke about a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy, and the Minister of Justice spoke about one of the programs at Whitehorse Correctional Centre where the Yukon Women in Trades and Technology — a very important organization that has done a lot of great work supporting women in the trades — had helped to deliver a program where inmates could use basic carpentry skills to construct a greenhouse. It is important in looking to the kinds of programs that are offered for inmates that we recognize what their needs are and that there be core programming there that includes literacy and arts and culture.

In considering what a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy needs to do, there is a need to expand basic literacy programs, particularly in rural Yukon, so that it can reach unemployed Yukoners. We need to see the stimulation of small business, local infrastructure and housing — that all creates local employment and on-the-job opportunities. We also want to see that there are new and flexible training programs for those who are already employed, so they can upgrade their skills, improve their wages and be more productive.

Item 3 of the motion speaks to including interprovincial accreditation, which recognizes journeypersons throughout Canada and, as the Minister of Education indicated, there are 48 designated trades and the red seal interprovincial standard is one that allows journeypersons to practise in every jurisdiction in Canada.

We have brought forward to this Assembly during this sitting what we see as a need and what has been identified for a number of years as a need, which is to add to that list of designated trades and designate oil burner mechanics as a trade. We need to see regulation so that there are certified oil burner mechanics installing and maintaining furnaces, and we need to establish licensing requirements and see proper inspections in place to enforce those standards. This will improve public safety.

The motion acknowledges the work of many organizations, including Skills Canada, which has said they have over 400 apprentices in their programs, and we have seen many apprentices win competitions and medals over the last several years at Skills Canada competitions, and we're really proud of what they can accomplish.

We as New Democrats have indicated support for a school of mining to train more Yukoners for well-paying jobs in mining and related industries by working with Yukon College, industry, unions, First Nations and non-government organizations.

As I mentioned earlier, the trade unions have played a leadership role throughout the history of our nation in advocating for workers' safety, for young workers' safety, for rigorous training and apprenticeship programs. Trade unions are an important partner in promoting and delivering training. I expect it was an oversight, but I hope that the Member for Klondike will see it as a friendly amendment to insert the words "trade unions" into the motion.

Amendment proposed

Ms. Moorcroft: I move

THAT Motion No. 106 be amended by adding the words "trade unions" between the words "NGOs" and "and".

I have copies of that amendment for all members of the House and have indicated to the Member for Klondike that I would be bringing forward this amendment.

Speaker: The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Copperbelt South that amended Motion No. 106 be further amended by adding the words "trade unions" between the words "NGOs" and "and".

The Member for Copperbelt South has 13 minutes and 14 seconds remaining on the amendment.

Ms. Moorcroft: As I said in introducing this amendment, labour has played a leadership role in advocating for worker safety and for trades. We can look to the February 2012 addition of *Up Here Business* that speaks to making it easier for Yukon apprentices to finish their training. If things go according to plan, Whitehorse United Association local 310 is finalizing a business plan that would see a trades training school opening in the territory's capital. The union's business manager, Don Austin, has said a training school is integral to Yukoners capitalizing on the trade-specific jobs that are coming available. Many older apprentices have families and they cannot always drop everything and travel Outside. The United Association is one of a number of unions that offers their own schools, and the proposal that they have developed is to put forward a training centre that would include mobile training services that could visit the territory's rural communities.

Many of their trades are ones that are exercised in the mining sector and we would want to encourage the mining sector to use trades apprentices in employment. That fits in well with the minister's amendment to this motion to explore other options for offering quality training in skills, trades and technology. We believe these are well worth support from all members of the House. I would encourage members to support the amendment to the motion.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise to say that the government would support the amendment as described by the opposition and thank the opposition for their constructive input in this discussion and in this motion. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the Minister of Education for his excellent job and leadership in this role.

I would also like to thank the MLA for Klondike, certainly, for his motion and the experience he displays profes-

sionally and the wisdom that he has brought forward through this motion.

Mr. Silver: I just want to comment a bit about the background as to why I brought this motion forward to begin with.

The momentum didn't start just recently. We've been talking about this in Dawson at Robert Service School for years and how the original thought was that Dawson should be a tech and trades hub for the Yukon. We see a lot of our aboriginal and other rural students coming into Whitehorse and getting lost in the fray. I taught at F.H. Collins when I first got to the Yukon, and the courses that I taught at that time were indicative of that kind of situation.

We've been holding meetings on this topic for several years now, and it has ramped up considerably in the last few months. We've been having lots of meetings. In those meetings, there has been an open call for anybody to come forward and share their experiences and their knowledge as far as what they want as far as the face of tech and trades in the Yukon.

My problem with the amendment was only that in all these meetings, this is the first time that I have had a chance to consider trade unions being part of the motion.

As far as I am concerned, trade unions fit already in the motion under NGOs and, to be quite honest, I don't have enough information from my previous experiences or from the meetings that we have had as far as what the involvement of trade unions would be. That is my comment.

Ms. Stick: I would just like to rise and speak in support of this friendly amendment, and I will keep it brief. I just think it is important to remember and be aware that it is the Yukon Employees Union members and trade union members across the Yukon who are working with the current 466 apprentices — well, not working with all of them, because some of them are not in the Yukon, but may be employed in other places. It is they who provide the support and often the mentorship that apprentices require in these positions. I think that it is important that they become a part of this motion. I agree with the motion; I think that it is time for the strategy, and I believe that the unions and trade unions need to be involved in this amendment.

Speaker: Does anyone else wish to speak to the amendment?

Mr. Tredger: I wish to speak in favour of the amendment too. I have been a member of a local union. It's a time-honoured tradition within unions to train apprentices and work to continue the trade — whichever it is they're in. This has been taking place since the Industrial Revolution. Trade unions work — people who take and train their apprentices and move on. I think they're an integral part of any planning that takes place and I think it would be a real shame to leave them out.

Mr. Barr: I would like to also speak in support of this amendment. What really appeals to me is the opportunity that rural communities will have with a mobile unit that will be able to go from community to community, rather than break up families for a month at a time — apprentices who, right now, basically for different situations, have to go out to Calgary and spend a month away from their families.

This way, with being able to offer different levels or grades of the trade that they decide to go into, they don't have to leave the community and they can continue to upgrade. It's good, I know, that we can stay at our homes with our families and not break up that continued support, especially with the younger workforce that we want to be able to either upgrade or work on new skills, so I'd just like to say that.

Amendment to Motion No. 106 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any other debate on the amended motion?

Ms. White: I'm going to speak to this from personal experience. We're going to go back to when I was in elementary school and this is when I had someone come in and they talked to our class and they told us that really smart people would go to university; kind of smart people would go to college; and everybody else would go to trades school. When I was in high school, high school wasn't for me and I was one of those youth who had a hard time showing up and I had a hard time being involved and I had a hard time paying attention. I'm sure you've all seen me squirm over on this side.

So I want to say how proud I am of everyone here to realize that we're now supporting a different avenue of education and how important it is to encourage people into the trades.

I'm a journeyman baker. I'm a red seal baker. So from journeymen and women everywhere, I'm very excited about this.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I'll speak relatively briefly, seeing the time and the fact that I believe it's the will of the House to bring this motion to a unanimous vote of support. But I did want to quickly, if I could, correct some of the record in the House today.

We had some discussion about the need for a comprehensive strategy. Of course, I think that something that the Auditor General's office noted in its review of the Department of Education years ago and reflected in the annual report for 2010-11 of the Department of Education was that — they conducted a full review of the community training fund, which was completed by the department to ensure funding decisions are in line with defined needs and priorities. That included, of course, revising and updating the 1998 Yukon training strategy and developing a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy, as the Minister of Education spoke to earlier today.

In the new labour market framework announced in February 2011, a comprehensive package of strategies was released to guide the Yukon labour market for the next 10 years. The strategies included a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy — as I just mentioned — a recruitment and retention

strategy, an immigration strategy, and a labour market information strategy. To answer the Member for Mayo-Tatchun's questions about the need for a comprehensive strategy, I think there is one there. We do need to do more work in terms of implementing it though. I think this motion is a timely one and an important one to continue the good work done by the department so far and to encourage the continued development in the implementation of this.

Another key component is the amendment from the Member for Riverdale North regarding looking at new models. In the amended motion we are debating now, the motion includes attention to new models. I know the Department of Economic Development has worked with the college to provide funding for a two-part review. The first phase of that has been completed, but that review is intended to look at the feasibility of a centre for northern innovation in mining.

I think that has the potential to be a new model for this kind of work that is contemplated in this motion. The feasibility study, which, as I said, was funded in part by the Department of Economic Development and done in collaboration with the college, found a number of interesting findings. Phase 1 noted that it focused on the collection of data and information to provide a current and comprehensive socio-economic portrait of global, national and territorial context within which a centre for northern innovation in mining would operate. The issue around pressures of labour, especially in the mining industry, is not a unique one. It is, indeed, an issue that is faced by Canada as a whole and more specifically in the western Canadian region.

While I attended the Prospectors and Developers Association conference in Toronto earlier this year, I had the opportunity to meet and have a good discussion with a representative from the Mining Industry Human Resources Council, who shared with me an interesting report entitled, *Unearthing Possibilities: Human Resources Challenge and Opportunities in the Canadian Exploration Sector*.

Although this gentleman from the MIHR Council was from the south, he was well-aware of the Yukon and the activity going on in the Yukon and the challenges we were facing. He was quite quick to provide me with this study. It indeed pointed out that the challenges faced by Yukon today — and a lot of the actions contemplated in this motion are being looked at by a number of jurisdictions across the country, so I would say that in that context, it's not a unique problem nor a unique challenge; it's something that is being dealt with across the country.

To wrap up, if I could, Mr. Speaker, the motion of course — the comprehensive strategy and continued implementation of that strategy as well as the new models like the centre for northern innovation in mining — will guide us forward, bringing together those partners, which of course include — as the member who put forward the motion indicated — the private sector and mining, communities, First Nations, NGOs and the college. I think a good example of that is the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining study.

With that, I will turn over the floor, and hopefully we can bring this motion to a vote and support it unanimously.

Mr. Tredger: I just wanted to say that I did read over the amendment a little more carefully. It was sprung on me a little quickly. The phrase “implement existing plans” — now that would be nice. I know it has only been three years since the Auditor General’s report, but the plans are getting dusty. I look forward to seeing the implementation of the plans, and seeing that we’re in agreement there, I’ll turn it back over to —

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I know time is of the essence. I just wanted to add one more point to this. With the past history of this government and the booming economy, this affords an opportunity. We have a lot of new businesses that have moved up to the Yukon — big companies from the south that have afforded opportunities for some of our youth and some of our residents to go through some of this training and apprenticeships. An example is the partnership with the Yukon Party government and the Government of Canada on these cultural centers. I have two employees — two young people in my riding — who are going to wind up with apprenticeship when they’re done. This is important for our youth, and I wholeheartedly support the Member for Klondike. I just wanted to get that across — that with our good economy, we can implement a lot of this stuff. Thank you.

Speaker: Before the member speaks and closes debate, does any other member wish to be heard on the amended motion?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I’ll be very brief in speaking to this. I appreciate the motion brought forward by the member and the amendments made by other members to this. I think this motion speaks to an important area, that being the importance of offering training to enable Yukon citizens to take advantage of jobs available in the mining sector notably, but also within other areas and sectors of the economy, skilled trades, carpentry, welding, et cetera. With that, I will be supporting this amended motion and thank the Member for Klondike for bringing it forward.

Speaker: Are there any other members who wish to speak to the amended motion?

Mr. Silver: I just have a couple of things to say here. The Member for Copperbelt South mentioned experiential learning and I just wanted to do a quick little shout out here, actually. Jesse Jewell, who currently works at the Department of Education, in the experiential branch, was instrumental in taking the curriculum that was presented with this virtual education system from the Ontario board and from the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, and he helped with the editing process to make sure it was available for the current system and for the way that things are done in the education system.

I just wanted to say kudos to him. Also, I can only watch videos and research *Hansard* from previous Legislative Assemblies and read the newspapers as to the moods and methodologies of previous assemblies, but I just wanted to say for the record that the Minister of Education is leading by example in

regard to his working together with all members of this House. As a teacher in this territory for the previous 15 years, I feel that I represent a wealth of knowledge, and the Minister for Riverdale North has been very respectful of this, and I am sure that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun can also attest to this diligence. He is to be commended on that.

Fifteen years in education in the Yukon — I know the quality of students that we have and I know the tragic, missed opportunities that I have seen from a lot of my students along the way. Particular types of rural students and particular types of trades-orientated students have not always had the academic opportunity to shine in the traditional academic system. Give these students a home in our education system and allow them somewhere to shine.

Coming from the only community in the world, I believe, that has a casino in a school zone, I am a betting man, and I will bet all of the resources that I own currently — and basically, with the money that I received from teaching in Dawson for the last 15 years — I will bet all of that money that if we put an emphasis on these students, they will shine. If we allow them a part of our school system that actually takes into consideration their unique academic skills in tech and trades, we will have a very bright future here in the Yukon.

So I’d like to thank all the ministers and members for what sounds like a consent for this motion to pass forward. Thank you.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the motion as amended?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: D’accord.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, nil nays.

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

Motion No. 106 agreed to as amended

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled March 28, 2012:

33-1-35

Yukon Judicial Council Annual Report 2011 (Nixon)

The following documents were filed March 28, 2012:

33-1-11

Queen's Printer Agency 2012-2013 Business Plan (Istchenko)

33-1-12

Fleet Vehicle Agency 2010-2011 Annual Report (Istchenko)

33-1-13

Yukon College, "Building for Tomorrow", Report to the Community 2012 (Kent)

33-1-14

Yukon Lottery Commission Annual Report 2010-2011 (Kent)

33-1-15

Nutrition North Canada Program: letter (dated February 20, 2012) to the Hon. John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Government of Canada and the Hon. Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health, Government of Canada signed by Darius Elias, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin (Yukon); Ron Elliott, MLA, Quttiktuq (Nunavut); Norman Yakeleya, MLA, Sahtu (Northwest Territories); Randy Edmunds, MHA, Torngat Mountains (Newfoundland & Labrador); and Luc Ferland, Member of the Assemblée Nationale, Ungava (Québec) (Elias)