

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, April 3, 2013 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: Before proceeding with the Daily Routine, the Chair would like to make a statement regarding changes to the Order Paper. Yesterday the Chair informed the House that Motion No. 106 had been removed from the Order Paper as it was now outdated. The motion in question was in fact Motion No. 107, not Motion No. 106. Sorry for the confusion.

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will now proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I'd like to recognize in the gallery today Yukon's Member of Parliament. Ryan Leef is here with us today and sitting beside him is Darren Parsons, who I believe is a constituent of Lake Laberge. I would invite all members of the House to greet them.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Hassard: I have for presentation the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Boards and Committees.

Speaker: Are there any other committee reports for presentation?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon, prior to the releasing of genetically modified seeds and agricultural products in Yukon, to:

(1) promote the niche market of the "Yukon brand";

(2) protect biodiversity;

(3) enable prior and informed consent of both the producers and consumers of locally grown food; and

(4) demand that Health Canada independently test genetically modified seeds and agricultural products currently on or proposed for market in order to avoid potential irreversible

consequences of the introduction of perennial and uncontrollable genetically modified alfalfa seed.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explore other options for regulating physicians and surgeons, including the creation of a national college of physicians and surgeons or working with neighbouring jurisdictions to share the responsibility.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that the transfer of the Dawson waste-water treatment plant from the Government of Yukon to the City of Dawson be delayed indefinitely until:

(1) the true costs of operating the facilities are known;

(2) the proper training of staff has occurred; and

(3) a proper acceptance testing period has been completed without major changes to the function or design of the plant.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to act immediately to repair the damage done to the relationship between the government and doctors caused by a lack of communication with the Yukon Medical Council.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Environment to mandate his department to begin the process of hiring a full-time permanent hydrogeologist program manager.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to commission a Yukon cancer task force and direct that task force to develop a Yukon cancer care action plan and that that action plan include the chapters of:

(1) the challenges for Yukon;

(2) prevention;

(3) early detection of cancer;

(4) genetic and molecular testing for cancer;

(5) referral and diagnosis;

(6) treatment;

(7) living with cancer;

(8) improving quality of cancer care for patients;

(9) delivery;

(10) recommendations; and

(11) statistics, references and publications.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This brings us to Question Period

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Select committee on hydraulic fracturing

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, while I support the creation of the select committee on the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing, I do not understand why the Premier has chosen

to put the Member for Copperbelt North into such an impossible position. It is irresponsible to ask any one minister to achieve both the objectives of promoting a shale gas industry, which will require fracking, while protecting the environment. The public needs to know at the end of the process that the Minister of Environment will be informed by science-based evidence and the voices of Yukoners, and that he will rigorously defend the environment.

Wearing two contradictory hats at one time is difficult at best. Will the Premier act to avoid the perception of a predetermined outcome for the select committee and remove the responsibility for economic development from the Minister of Environment?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, I think that there was a lot of thought and consideration put into the fact that the minister does in fact wear both of those hats. He wears the hat of Economic Development and he wears the hat of Environment. I think that speaks to this government and our philosophy that we can have responsible development and protect our environment. I think that speaks very loudly and clearly. The minister has done so very admirably. I have full confidence in the minister performing his responsibilities, both as Minister of Economic Development and as Minister of Environment.

What we do know very clearly is the position of the NDP on this select committee. In fact, the position of the member they have actually put forward is very well, articulately and clearly spelled out in *Hansard*. It says exactly what his position is on this very important topic. As we have said, we are moving forward with the dialogue. We have created yet another select committee that this government has put forward, which will have equal members from both sides of the House. We look forward to the gathering of information, the dialogue with Yukoners, and being able to make very important and scientifically based decisions in the future.

Ms. Hanson: In the Premier's mandate letter to the Minister of Economic Development, the minister is told that he is to, and I quote: "expand the Yukon economy by promoting our economic mainstays such as oil and gas." The Minister of Economic Development, on the motion debate last November on fracking, touted a speech by President Obama promoting the development of shale gas and fracking. Nowhere in that debate did the minister mention the negative impact of fracking. It is clear that the minister sees the American path as the way to achieve the Premier's direction to promote the shale gas industry in Yukon.

Yukoners need to know that the Minister of Environment holds the protection of the environment above all else. That's his job. I ask again: Will the Premier ensure that the public consultation process undertaken by the select committee is unbiased and transparent and remove the responsibility for economic development from the Minister of Environment?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I think it's really unfortunate — the angle the NDP is choosing to take in engaging in the select committee approach. They have indicated they would be willing to participate, yet the Leader of the NDP is immediately engaging in a very adversarial manner, rather than a constructive manner, as previous leaders of the NDP did.

Notably, Todd Hardy and Steve Cardiff, as member and at one time acting leader, engaged genuinely and sincerely in working with the government in the select committee processes, and they worked hard on that. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin during his time in this Legislative Assembly has participated, filled in and worked on select committees and has provided constructive contributions to that process.

The government's record is very clear in select committees, in that we have engaged and allowed opportunity for members of all parties to work together and, in most cases, have come up with a consensus position at the end of these processes. The NDP seems to have a predetermined outcome. They've nominated a member who has been very clear in his complete opposition to even considering anything beyond his narrow viewpoint, and that's very disappointing.

This government continues to be committed to protecting the environment and human health and safety as top priorities and, of course, unlike the NDP, we also recognize the importance of having responsible economic development.

Ms. Hanson: We're talking here about a ministerial responsibility and accountability. I note that in last year's budget the Department of Environment listed in detail its mandate — nine bullet points in length, which was strong environmental protection, stewardship and biodiversity. This year the mandate has been shrunk to a single, vague sentence that includes promotion of resource management. One bullet point, Mr. Speaker — things have changed.

Again I ask the Premier: Will he either appoint a new member to the select committee or remove the responsibility of the Department of Economic Development from the Minister of Environment, so that he can ensure that Yukoners can be confident that the select committee will be able to undertake its work in an open, transparent and unbiased manner?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Unlike the NDP, we believe that economic development and the protection of the environment are not mutually exclusive. We think that we can responsibly develop our natural resources in this territory and do so in a way that respects the environment and respects the health and human safety of Yukoners. It's disappointing to hear the NDP take the position that the two cannot go hand in hand — that we must choose one or the other. That's simply not a balanced approach.

Our approach on these issues has always been balanced and one of concerted recognition of the importance of both aspects. We understand that economic development can have impacts on our environment, and we need to take those into account and manage and regulate them responsibly. Of course, we believe that the two are not mutually exclusive and that we can protect the environment and promote the development of our economy at the same time.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: Whistle Bend subdivision has a price tag of \$250 million and is still climbing. The government is no doubt setting aside legal fees for the 12 weeks of Yukon Supreme Court time it has set aside in 2014 to resolve contractors' disputes with the government. Two years later, Yukoners are still wondering about affordable housing. To date in the

Whistle Bend subdivision, one multi-family lot out of seven has been sold; 10 out of 90 single-family lots have been sold; and all 60 duplex lots have been sold. Land availability has been an important goal, not only of this government, but also of First Nations, of the City of Whitehorse and of our private sector friends.

But is the government's approach to increasing land availability translating into affordable housing? Mr. Speaker, can the government demonstrate their trickle-down theory of housing has indeed made more affordable rental units available for Yukoners earning around \$15 an hour?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, this government is working hard to make land available in all Yukon communities and has been working to do just that over the last several years.

Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget we are currently debating on the floor of the Legislative Assembly approximately \$30 million is in support of further land development initiatives across the spectrum.

When it comes to land development, again, it is a complex undertaking. We work in collaboration with municipal governments; we work in collaboration with First Nation governments, and we work to ensure that land is affordable and delivered on a timely basis. We also ensure that we have the infrastructure required for each of the subdivisions, whether that includes water storage, asphalt roads, drainage, electrical, landscaping and so forth. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Yukon is working to make land available and affordable on a timely basis.

Ms. White: Of that \$30 million set aside for land development, that's another \$25 million to Whistle Bend.

The hundreds of millions spent on Whistle Bend have not touched the vacancy rate — millions spent and no increased availability of affordable rental housing for newcomers to the territory, for people working at entry-level jobs, for students, for people making \$15 an hour, and for people living independently on fixed incomes.

The government's mantra has been that increased land availability would see current owners of starter homes move up. The government has been targeting the mobility of the middle class.

We have heard the repetition of this theory — is it actually working? We know this government has dismissed viable plans brought forward from non-governmental organizations, and we know the Yukon Party walked away from potential partnerships with local and Outside contractors when they abandoned Lot 262.

What specific and targeted action will this government take to improve the rental vacancy rate that is stalled at 1.5 percent and bring down the rental unit costs that are through the roof?

Hon. Mr. Kent: One of the things we've done is to introduce a program to assist those hard-working Yukon families who are currently renting to get into the home ownership market through down payment assistance. I'd like to speak a little bit about some of the affordable rentals we've created. Nothing is more affordable than the rents geared to income. For our social housing that exists for social housing clients, as well

as seniors, 25 percent of their income is paid for rent, no matter what they make.

So let's talk about the 19 suites that have been put into Dawson City; the 32-suite Whitehorse affordable housing project for single-parent families; the six-unit family townhouses in Ingram; four single-family residences in each of Carmacks and Ross River; six duplex suites in the member's own riding of Takhini North; and six mobile homes — three in Carmacks and three in Ross River. And that's not to mention the innumerable amount of seniors housing we've developed and plans that currently exist for seniors housing in Whitehorse on Alexander Street, designs in cooperation with the Government of Canada for the Mayo housing, as well as partnering with NGOs, such as Options for Independence and Betty's Haven.

There are a number of projects. I could go on and on, and I look forward to answering perhaps in the member's final supplementary.

Ms. White: What about the dozens of families on the Yukon Housing Corporation wait-list? What do they do? What about the single people who won't ever qualify for subsidized housing? The Yukon Party government's approach to land availability has failed to increase the stock of affordable housing. People earning \$15 or even \$25 an hour simply cannot afford an expensive lot, let alone building from scratch.

The NDP Official Opposition wants to know what is stopping the government from making available its land in the downtown core, where citizen charettes have openly discussed this concept. What about partnering with the private sector and offering short-term incentives for developers to reduce their development costs in exchange for a commitment to supply multiple units below medium rent? Will the Yukon Party government make its downtown Whitehorse land available for the development of affordable housing in partnership with private sector and non-governmental organizations?

Hon. Mr. Kent: The member opposite is very quick to predetermine the outcomes of our housing action plan. As I made the announcement last week at the housing conference, we're going to engage First Nation governments, municipal governments, other levels of government — of course the senior government, Government of Canada — working with the private sector and NGOs to look at sensible housing solutions across the housing continuum.

I think that most Yukoners and indeed most Canadians realize that the government can't be the sole provider when it comes to finding solutions for housing for Canadians and for Yukoners. Unfortunately, the NDP does believe the government should be the only one that provides it.

We're looking at partnerships; we're looking at investigating those things. I'm not going to predetermine the outcomes of the housing action plan, other than to say that the hard work will start right away. There are two senior officials from the Housing Corporation travelling to Dawson City later on this week to meet with the Klondike Development Organization to talk about housing opportunities up there, so we're already working on it. We're going to continue to work on it and I look forward to the NGOs and the others that are going to be en-

gaged in developing a housing action plan full of sensible solutions for the housing needs of all Yukoners.

Question re: Dawson City waste-water facility

Mr. Silver: I have a question for the Minister of Highways and Public Works on the Dawson City waste-water treatment plant. The new facility is now operating and due to be turned over to the City of Dawson in August of this year. The city has expressed concerns about this rapidly approaching hand-off for numerous reasons. Frustration with the project reached new levels recently when the plant malfunctioned and sewage spilt into the street.

There have been repeated requests for more training and a longer period of time to ensure that the town has a good handle on what operation and maintenance costs will be before the facility is handed over.

Will the facility be turned over to the municipality as planned in August of this year whether the municipality wants it or not?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Since 2003, when Dawson City pleaded guilty to dumping inadequately treated sewage into the Yukon River, the Yukon government has been working diligently to find a solution — working with them. Through a lot of public consultation, community meetings and finally a referendum, Dawson City residents opted for this type of sewage treatment plant rather than the traditional above-ground sewage lagoon. Through the Building Canada program — thank you to the Building Canada program from our federal counterparts — Dawson City was able to start construction in 2009 with the goal of compliance. Although Yukon government is providing project management and capital financing for the facility, ownership and responsibility for its ongoing operation will be transferred to the City of Dawson after one year of operation on August 22, 2013. The Yukon government and the City of Dawson have a memorandum of understanding in place outlining agreed-upon roles and responsibilities of each government.

Mr. Silver: There needs to be a little bit of room — some wiggle room here.

Officials in the City of Dawson have made it very clear that they are not prepared to accept the facility the way it is working currently. With a deadline of August 2013, the town is rightly concerned about taking on the management of a project with so many unknowns. The Government of Yukon needs to commit to managing this project for an indefinite period of time — certainly for a full year with the plant working as promised. In the short time the facility has been operating, there have been several changes to the original design. It's not a new plant, but the process has actually changed internally.

Will the government delay the hand-off until this facility works properly?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question.

The Dawson City waste-water treatment plant demonstrated the Government of Yukon's commitment to work collaboratively with other governments and organizations to ensure Yukon's communities have solid infrastructure in place and the capacity to operate.

This project is the only project in the Yukon that the Yukon government has committed to operating for a year before transferring the responsibilities of operation over to the local government. We are working with the City of Dawson to develop a transition and training plan to ensure they have employees adequately trained by the time the transfer is to occur. The Government of Yukon is pleased to have partnered with the City of Dawson to address this core infrastructure priority, and the Dawson City waste-water treatment plant is essential to a healthy and sustainable future for that community.

Mr. Silver: I do thank the minister for his answers. One of the items that the City of Dawson was waiting for its reports on was the operation and maintenance of the plant. It's my understanding that it's going to cost more to operate than expected and insurance costs are also going to be higher as well. The minister committed to providing that information to the City of Dawson; however, as of two weeks ago, they had yet to receive it. It's hard to put together a budget when one of the main numbers is missing. The City of Dawson needs certainty about the costs of this facility which, at this time, remain unknown. Transferring this facility with so much uncertainty is not something that a small municipality is interested in taking on and who can blame them?

Has the minister transferred this financial information to the City of Dawson as of yet, and if not, why not?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: My fellow colleague, the Minister of Community Services and I, as well as our deputy ministers and officials have met with the City of Dawson on several occasions over the past few weeks. Discussions on the O&M costs are being shared with Dawson City right now and we continue to provide details as they become available.

This treatment process has lower O&M costs when compared to the other types of mechanical treatment facilities. The Yukon government has invested significant additional capital in the development of the facility in order to minimize the longer term O&M costs for the City of Dawson. This includes the following: installing a second set of all process equipment, a heat recovery pump, extra spare pumps, R-48 walls and an R-60 roof; training in the first year; the biomass-fuelled boiler district heating plant using locally produced wood chips manufactured from waste wood, as opposed to an expensive fuel oil to heat the Dawson waste-water treatment plant and also the Dawson City water supply.

This results in a substantial annual O&M cost savings for the City of Dawson. Like I said many times before, the Yukon government is committed to meeting with the City of Dawson again in August, prior to the transfer of the facility. Both Yukon government and the City of Dawson are pleased that we are keeping the lines of communication open and are working collaboratively to find solutions on our way forward.

Question re: Water resource protection

Mr. Elias: It is always reassuring to see government paying attention to our most important natural resource, water. I was pleased with the release of Environment Yukon's draft water strategy. It's a very readable document, and it clearly identifies the value of water to all Yukon citizens, as well to business and other interests, including industry, and I commend

the minister on its preparation. The strategy states that First Nation government policy staff was engaged via an information sharing and gathering workshop in June 2012. The acknowledgement section identifies four First Nations as having contributed to the document: Champagne and Aishihik, Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Kwanlin Dun and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council. Can the minister confirm that those were the only four First Nations consulted in the preparation of the draft water strategy?

Furthermore, can the minister describe the engagement and information-gathering model that was used in the June 2012 workshop?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I thank the member opposite for his question and his kind words on the approach we've taken with the water strategy.

With regard to the meeting he's inquiring about that was held last June, I do know it did occur. I did the opening remarks at it, but I don't remember the format of the actual daily progression of events, so I can't speak about the details of that. I can say that we invited all First Nations and all communities to participate. The ones that did participate in that particular workshop were the ones that responded positively to the invitation. Others have been engaged by other means, and we welcome input from all First Nations, all levels of government and all Yukoners in the development of our water strategy.

When it comes to the other ways we've engaged with First Nations, I'd have to get back to him on whether or not we've engaged bilaterally. I simply don't know that at this time, but I imagine invitations were sent to First Nations offering them the opportunity to comment.

If that's not the case, I apologize, but I'll have to double-check on the actual details of the consultation process.

Mr. Elias: I'm asking these questions because it's important to be inclusive right from the beginning when developing something as important as a Yukon water strategy. The government invites public consideration and feedback on the draft water strategy, and I also encourage all Yukon citizens to accept that invitation. Read this document and respond to it both with your conscience and your mind.

I would also commend the various settled First Nation final agreement members and the public. In particular I would draw attention to chapter 14, which establishes a clear foundation upon which any water strategy in the Yukon must and should be built. It is encouraging that the government is inviting public feedback on the water strategy, and I'm pleased to see that some First Nations have already been consulted in this preparation.

What about the remaining Yukon First Nations, particularly those with settled final agreements? Does the government have any plans to formally seek their feedback and consult them on the draft water strategy?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: As I indicated in my previous response, all Yukon First Nations were invited to provide comment and participate in the workshop that we suggested. Of course the ones that did actually participate were ones that responded positively to the invitation, and we've reached out to all Yukon First Nations to seek input on this document and on this draft plan.

I would agree wholeheartedly with the member opposite that our consultation process for this needs to be inclusive and needs to include input from all Yukoners and, like him, I would echo that I would encourage all Yukoners to participate in the public consultation process, which is being undertaken presently, and to do so before the deadline of May 31.

Mr. Elias: I can't stress how important this is to the minister because there are already terms set out in chapter 14 of Yukon First Nation final agreements that can set the terms and conditions with regard to water protection in our territory. So considering the universal value of water as a resource, and in light of those final agreements, I am sure the minister has established a well-thought-out process for collecting input, weighing it and then building it into the water strategy, but I'm not hearing that today. I'm also sure that the minister has established a deadline for this process.

Can the minister please describe to the House the process he will take in collecting and considering feedback on the draft water strategy, and can the minister also outline his process for consulting First Nations and provide a deadline to the House today?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course, as I said, we are interested in input from all Yukoners and all First Nation governments as well as other levels of government, including municipalities and other interested stakeholders and the general public. As I've said before, I know that invitations have been sent to First Nation governments inviting them to provide their input through the consultation process that has been going on throughout the past year, including the workshop that was held last June that the member opposite referenced. With regard to the deadline, of course the deadline for public comment is May 31.

If we heard from a particular First Nation that they needed a little bit more time to provide their input, of course we would be willing to consider that. But I believe that my department has reached out to all First Nations and will be soliciting input from them in due course.

Question re: *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* review

Ms. Stick: Freedom of information is the oxygen that democracy breathes. In the last sitting of the Yukon Party government, they used their majority to pass an array of changes to the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* that restricted the public's access to information and increased Cabinet secrecy. In his annual report just tabled, the Information and Privacy Commissioner called these "surprise amendments", and he expressed disappointment that the government chose to prioritize its amendments instead of getting direction from the Yukon public through a review of this important act.

Can the minister tell this House when there will be a comprehensive review of this important legislation so the public will finally get a chance to have a say in what kind of information they should or should not be allowed to see?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I believe the review will be in 2015. I'll get back to the member opposite — but I'm pretty sure that's when it is.

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, the ATIPP legislation is in place for the public, and the NDP Official Opposition places great importance on the public's right to know.

The purpose of the act is to make public bodies more accountable to the public and to protect personal privacy. According to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the recent changes made to this legislation — and I quote: “compromised the spirit of access to information which underpins this Act.” These were pushed through this House in the fall without public consultation. The government received no mandate from the public to restrict information, and the public must be given an opportunity to provide their views.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree to move forward with a full public review of ways to improve the operation of this important legislation instead of waiting until 2015?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Access to information requests in 2011-12 numbered 422. In 2012-13, there were 840 requests. That is up to March 12, 2013.

Access to personal information accounts for over 70 percent of ATIPP requests. Program information accounts for less than 30 percent.

Despite the large increase in the number of requests, the time scales for responding to their requests haven't changed very much — 61 percent of the requests get a response within 30 days, compared to 67 percent last year.

Interesting fact — exemptions for Cabinet confidence and policy advice were used proportionately less often per request this year than the year before, and only two percent of information requested responded to was subject to restrictions under sections 15 and 16 of ATIPP — the stuff that we talked about last year.

In 2015, I'm going to get back to the member opposite. When we review it, we will consult, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Mr. Tredger: Mr. Speaker, in his Budget Address, the Premier revealed his government's true agenda on the Peel watershed. The Premier is promoting the Crest iron ore deposit based on a financially speculative project analysis as the basis for his vision of economic development in the Peel. According to a report by Hatch Associates on the proposed development of the Crest iron ore deposit, the heart of the Peel River watershed would contain one of the world's largest strip mines and a steel mill for the extraction of low-grade iron ore.

The Premier's Budget Address and the planning process his government participated in for over seven years paint very different visions for the Peel watershed. How does the Premier reconcile this contradiction?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What I would point out to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, first of all, is that the Budget Address referenced work that was done jointly by staff of Energy, Mines and Resources and staff of Economic Development in identifying the known ore within the Crest iron ore deposit, identifying the just 15 percent of that that had been best drilled and identified in the conceptual pit design that was done years ago — that is 1.68 billion tonnes. Based on the five-year average price of iron ore, this fraction of the deposit would have a market value of \$139.7 billion and represents only 15 percent

of that total deposit. What the member needs to understand is if the Yukon government were to take action that directly or indirectly expropriated that, we would lose a court case and be faced with paying compensation. It's not all flowers, sunshine, roses, theories, fairies and Marxism. The members need to open up their eyes and realize that economics and case law will define what would occur within litigation, which the Yukon government would lose. Our vision, as we stated very clearly, is in fact to protect the environment within the Peel area, including capping the maximum footprint of all activity to ensure that 99.8 percent of restricted-use wilderness areas remain pristine at all times.

Mr. Tredger: The Crest plan calls for a second strip mine as part of the planned iron ore strip mine project. This second strip mine would be at the Bonnet Plume coal deposits 80 kilometres from the iron ore strip mine. The Premier's economic vision for the Peel includes a coal strip mine for a coal-fired plant that will produce the energy needed for the massive iron ore strip mine and steel mill. Then there are upward of 80 kilometres of transmission lines. Besides reducing another portion of this pristine wilderness watershed into dust, the Premier is touting a coal-burning power plant, one of the world's dirtiest energy sources on the planet.

How does the Premier reconcile the recommended Peel land use plan as developed by the land use planning commission with his support for one of the proposed world's largest industrial developments in the heart of the Peel?

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Quite simply, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun is absolutely, unequivocally wrong. The member has invented and completely mischaracterized what government is actually presenting.

In fact, if the member were to read the energy strategy he would realize that it is this government, and I as then Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that identified that we would not support the development of energy sources, including coal and nuclear power based on what we had heard from Yukon citizens. The member completely and consistently fails to reflect the facts in this manner.

Our vision for the Peel area is taking an approach that protects the environment and respects all sectors of the economy. Our proposed creation of restricted use wilderness areas in the Peel region allows for potential economic activity while capping the maximum footprint of all activity at significantly less than one percent. Doing this would ensure that 99.8 percent of the areas remain pristine wilderness, while allowing for the potential of responsible uses that provide significant economic benefits to Yukoners and preserving both pristine wilderness and economic opportunities for future generations.

We have also — which the member has failed to acknowledge — proposed in all of the concepts put forward by government, the protection of the views from rivers to ensure that there is no staking or surface dispositions within the landscape visible from the rivers in recognition of the importance of those river corridors to wilderness tourism operators.

Mr. Tredger: The feasibility of the project depends on a strip coal mine, according to the Hatch report.

The Hatch report also states that there would be hundreds of kilometres of high-quality all-weather highway from Mayo deep into the heart of the Peel River watershed — a highway. The report projects upward of 100 40-tonne capacity tractor-trailer units per day would travel the highway. That's every day. The impact of the construction of hundreds of kilometres of a new highway and the reconstruction of the existing Wind River winter road is enormous.

The government talks about balance and how its proposed Peel plan would protect the environment. Does the Premier really expect anyone to believe that we can develop one of the world's largest industrial projects in the heart of pristine wilderness and protect the environment, including its tourism, hunting, recreational or —

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Does the NDP really believe that the Crest iron ore deposit, which was staked over 50 years ago and has been kept current — at a cost — by companies since that time, is something they would simply walk away from when case law would demonstrate very clearly that if the Yukon government were to deny access to the even potential development of the Crest iron ore deposit, we would, quite simply, lose in court to Chevron, which has a lot deeper pockets and a lot better lawyers than the Yukon government does?

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the NDP's vision absolutely does not acknowledge the facts. There is a significant economic value to this area. As we have noted, the estimated value of just 15 percent of that deposit is in excess of \$139 billion. If the Yukon government were forced to pay even a small fraction of that in court costs, it would come at a very drastic cost to our territory and future.

What we have proposed is a balanced approach that does not promote any project. What it does is provide for a framework that ensures that the vast majority of the Peel region remains pristine wilderness, including 99.8 percent of all restricted-use wilderness areas, and all areas visible from rivers would be protected from new claim staking and new dispositions.

The members need to realize that they can't just imagine the facts.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Government House Leader's report on length of sitting

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 75(4) to inform the House that House leaders have met for the purpose of achieving agreement on the maximum number of sitting days for the current sitting. House leaders have agreed that the current sitting should be a maximum of 32 sitting days, with the 32nd sitting day being Thursday, May 16, 2013.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare the current sitting shall be a maximum of 32 sitting days with the 32nd sitting day being Thursday, May 16, 2013.

We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 367

Clerk: Motion No. 367, standing in the name of Mr. Hassard.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Government of British Columbia to establish a reciprocal fishing licence agreement for Atlin Lake.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise today and to speak on behalf of Motion No. 367, which urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Government of B.C. to establish a reciprocal fishing licence agreement for Atlin Lake. While some of you may ask why this would be important, I think, Mr. Speaker, that you as an avid fisherman can probably understand the significance of this motion.

On December 13, 2000, there was a joint news release by the Government of Yukon and the Government of B.C. In that news release it said, "Anglers will soon need only one fishing licence to fish both sides of the boundary of five lakes and two rivers that cross the B.C./Yukon border," B.C. Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister Ed Conroy and the Yukon Renewable Resources Minister Dale Eftoda announced today.

"We have had extensive consultation with the local community in Atlin, First Nations and the Yukon and an excellent cooperation between the B.C. and Yukon governments," said Conroy.

"The result will be better monitoring and effective conservation of fish in transborder boundaries."

"This finalizes many years of cooperation between B.C. and the Yukon to treat border lakes, rivers and fish stocks as single stocks and management systems," Eftoda said.

Starting April 1, the B.C.-Yukon reciprocal fishing licence agreement will allow anyone with a basic freshwater fishing licence issued by either B.C. or the Yukon to fish in any part of seven transboundary waters shared by the two jurisdictions: Bennett Lake, Laidlaw Lake, Morley Lake, Tagish Lake, Teslin Lake, the Rancheria River and its tributaries and the Swift River and its tributaries.

The new approach will also establish harmonized catch quotas and size limits on these transboundary waters. "These will be the first transboundary lakes in B.C. to be covered by a reciprocal fishing agreement," said Bill Goodacre, MLA for Bulkley Valley-Stikine and the parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. "This measure is a logical next step in simplifying angling regulations on both bodies of water that cross two jurisdictions."

The agreement is part of a broader transboundary fisheries management agreement to simplify and harmonize regulatory regimes, as well as improve stock assessment, conservation and enforcement.

In 2011, B.C. and Yukon successfully concluded a transboundary water agreement. The agreement required years of background work, negotiations and consultation conducted under the auspices of the B.C.-Yukon accord.

The agreement allowed Yukoners to angle using a Yukon fishing licence in both the Yukon and B.C. portions of these waters. The same applies for B.C. residents under a B.C. fishing licence. The trans-boundary waters have harmonized catch, possession and size limits, but not tackle and bait regulations. Only one limit can be taken regardless of which licence, or both, an angler holds, or what portion of the waters they are angling in. Atlin Lake was initially included as a candidate in the trans-boundary water negotiations even though a very small portion of it — less than one percent — is actually in the Yukon. Just a note, the cost of a B.C. fishing licence for a Yukoner is \$55, whereas the cost of a Yukon fishing licence for a B.C. resident is only \$25. This 2001 agreement was very important to lakes such as Teslin and Morley, both of which I have frequent fishing points on. Atlin, however, was left out of this 2001 agreement. With the newly proposed campground on Atlin Lake, I felt that it would be an important time to put Atlin Lake back on the agenda.

As stated in the budget, this Yukon Party is moving ahead with creating a Yukon campground on the north end of Atlin Lake. To be specific, it's at approximately kilometre 40 of the Atlin Road.

With the population of the City of Whitehorse growing and an increasing number of new Yukoners to the territory, and particularly to Whitehorse, we've seen an increase in demand for campgrounds. The north is an amazing place and campgrounds offer an easy and convenient way for Yukoners and visitors alike to get out and experience the Yukon environment. The Department of Environment has determined that the most utilized campgrounds are the ones that are within a two-hour drive of Whitehorse, so there was talk of expanding the current campgrounds in that area, but many of these were either not feasible or it is just not physically possible to expand them.

Earlier this year, my esteemed colleague, the Minister of Environment next to me here, announced this 112-hectare proposed campground at the north end of Atlin Lake. This is an area that was originally identified in the negotiations of the final agreement with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and was set aside as an area of particular importance for recreation — specifically, in this case, for the development of a campground. While this is still early in the development stages, I believe that preliminary design for the campgrounds show approximately 45 campsites, a boat launch and a boat dock. \$780,000 has been earmarked in this year's budget for this project.

Reports completed in 2002, 2008, and then again in 2012 have examined Yukon campground capacity, conditions and use. In each report, it has been noted that campground use is increasing and that the Yukon Parks campgrounds within two

hours' driving distance of Whitehorse were often at capacity for much of the summer.

Another very important factor in the location of this campground, Mr. Speaker, is how close it is to both Snafu and Tarfu lakes. Both Snafu and Tarfu campgrounds are busy — very busy. In fact it could probably be argued that they are too busy and overused. Hopefully the new Atlin Lake campground will provide relief for both those two campgrounds, as well as other campgrounds in the Yukon. This relief works in two ways: both in infrastructure as well as relieving fishing pressures on other lakes.

As I mentioned earlier, we are early in the planning stages, and we will be seeking input from affected First Nations as well as the public and all stakeholders involved.

I am assuming that this project will have to through the YESAA process, so that will give the public an additional opportunity to have some input.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, with the new proposed campground, a reciprocal agreement would be very beneficial, particularly to the people of the Yukon.

I look forward to hearing what other members of the Assembly have to say regarding this motion. I hope they understand the importance of giving people of the Yukon the extra opportunity to experience another part of the Yukon that they may not otherwise have experienced without this agreement and without this new campground.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to hearing others' comments.

Ms. White: I rise to speak to the motion made by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, Motion No. 367. Reciprocal fishing licence agreements typically exist between adjoining jurisdictions. These agreements allow fishermen to use a valid licence from one jurisdiction to fish in the jurisdiction listed in the agreement. Fishermen must abide by the laws and limits of the jurisdiction where they are fishing — where the fishing is being done.

I think it's safe to say that most Yukoners have fond memories of fishing, whether it is time in boats, or next to streams and rivers, and I'm sure we've all experienced the joys of what fishing brings. I believe it was in the late 1990s and the early 2000s that most of Yukon's reciprocal fishing agreements were made. One exception — and that is the subject of the motion today — is Atlin Lake, and that is shared between British Columbia and the Yukon.

The reason that Atlin Lake is an exception is that around 1999, the community of Atlin and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation established the Taku and Atlin Community Fisheries Working Group under the Fisheries Renewable B.C. initiative. This working group gave the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Atlin a real and meaningful voice and role in determining their community fishing needs. They decided that a reciprocal agreement would not be beneficial to Atlin and would not adequately protect fish stocks, particularly lake trout.

The British Columbia government heard this argument and they agreed. The catch limit in B.C. is three lake trout a day, whereas in Yukon it is only one. There is real concern from the

Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Atlin that the increased pressure from Yukon fishermen will increase pressure on the lake trout stock. In addition, there is a licensed commercial fishing operation at the Yukon end of the lake that has an allowable lake trout catch. Beside being an issue of direct concern to the residents of Atlin and to the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Atlin Lake falls inside the traditional territory of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. I would suggest that they, too, have concerns and issues that should be heard, and that they, too, should also be involved in a meaningful way.

While the Official Opposition supports in principle the concept of reciprocal licensing, there is another set of concerns that this motion should address. Toward that end, I have spoken with the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, the Leader of the Third Party, and with the Independent Member for Vuntut Gwitchin about amendment to the motion. Therefore, I would like to suggest the following amending the motion.

Amendment proposed

Ms. White: I move

THAT Motion No. 367 be amended by

(1) inserting after the words “Government of British Columbia” the following: “, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the residents of Atlin, British Columbia, to discuss the possibility”; and

(2) changing the words “to establish” to “of establishing”.

So this is how it would read: “THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Government of British Columbia, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the residents of Atlin, British Columbia, to discuss the possibility of establishing a reciprocal fishing licence agreement for Atlin Lake.”

This amendment still meets the objective of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, but ensures that this motion reflects the complex set of circumstances —

Speaker: Order please. You’re not speaking to the amendment yet. I need to see it. Does the member have copies for other members?

Ms. White: I am waiting for them to arrive.

Speaker: The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King that Motion No. 367 be amended by

(1) inserting after the words “Government of British Columbia” the following: “, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the residents of Atlin, British Columbia, to discuss the possibility”; and

(2) changing the words “to establish” to “of establishing”.

Ms. White: I thank everyone for their patience in that first kick at the can that produced an origami bird. The proposed motion as amended would read:

“THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Government of British Columbia, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the residents of Atlin, British Columbia, to discuss the possibility

of establishing a reciprocal fishing licence agreement for Atlin Lake.”

This amendment still meets the objective of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, but it ensures that this motion reflects the complex set of circumstances surrounding fishing on Atlin Lake. I think it’s important to note that, as Yukoners, we are much closer to Atlin than their capital of Victoria. My intention behind this amendment is that we are good neighbours with our nearest neighbours in Atlin. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It’s a pleasure again to rise to speak to the proposed amendment from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. We are generally supportive of the intent here. I see what she is trying to propose here, and I would be supportive of it. I did want to make a few comments, though, just to clarify a few things.

In 2000, when the negotiations began between Yukon and British Columbia to develop a transboundary agreement, as the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin mentioned when speaking to the motion, there was a discussion about the lakes to be included. In the original plan, Atlin had been included and then, as the member noted, it was actually removed as a result of concerns raised by the residents of Atlin to their government in British Columbia and, as a result, it was dropped from the list of transboundary lakes in the agreement.

As the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin noted, there was a press release on December 13, 2000, which announced the agreement. Subsequent to that work, there was an MOU established between Yukon and British Columbia outlining the roles and responsibilities and listing the lakes and rivers to be included.

I appreciate that the intent of the amendment is to include a broader group of people, including the folks in northern British Columbia. Originally in the motion, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin sort of implied that by saying we would work with the Government of British Columbia because it is the Government of British Columbia whose duty it is to consult with its citizens. The residents of Atlin are represented by the Government of B.C., as are the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. In practice, the way this will be implemented, it won’t be any different. I would suggest that, as Minister of Environment, I would write a letter to my counterpart in British Columbia and ask him — presently it is a “him” at least — to consider adding this lake to the list, but it would be up to that minister and the Government of British Columbia to engage his citizens in a way that he finds necessary.

I would also note that for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, their ability to fish in Yukon wouldn’t be affected by this either. As an *Indian Act* band, they receive free fishing licences from Yukon government, so if they were fishing on the Yukon side, they wouldn’t be affected by this. As well, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation wouldn’t be affected by this.

While the wording of the amendment perhaps isn’t the best, in the interest of being collaborative and mindful of the time, we will accept the amendment and look forward to speaking to the motion as amended, which will include the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and

the residents of Atlin and British Columbia to discuss the possibility, as the amendment suggests.

The only additional point I would make is that, while Atlin residents, in the first period of negotiations in 2000, were not encouraged or overly excited about the prospect of a transboundary agreement for Atlin, I think there is a possibility that times may have changed, especially with an interest from Atlin residents in fishing for pike in the north part of Atlin Lake, which is the Yukon side. So there may be a possibility for a change in opinion of Atlin residents. However, for the most part, as members probably know, I believe most of the residents from Atlin who were around in 2000 are still in Atlin, so there may be some residual resistance to the notion.

Nonetheless, as I said, while the wording of the amendment probably isn't ideal, we support the intent here and don't see it as being fundamentally problematic for the motion itself, so we'll be supporting the amendment and look forward to carrying on the debate with the motion as amended.

Mr. Silver: I can support both the motion and the amendment. I think that the amendment actually strengthens the motion by including the discussions with local First Nations and governments before moving ahead with this initiative. As the minister described, that would probably be the intent of the original motion, but I regress; I will return to that in a minute. I understand where the mover of the motion is coming from. There is definitely interest from Yukoners who would be saving some money when they head to Atlin. For a B.C. annual licence, there would be a reduction from \$55 to \$36.

Speaker: Order please. Members are just to speak to the amendment.

Mr. Silver: Absolutely.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: The amendment refers to adding the groups of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and residents of Atlin, B.C. Members are not to be speaking to the overall motion.

Mr. Silver: I'll keep it to the amendment. Basically we're happy to see both the original motion and the amendment as such and we will be supporting both.

Speaker: Does any other member wish to speak to the amendment?

Amendment to Motion No. 367 agreed to

Speaker: Minister of Tourism and Culture, on the motion as amended, please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I'd like to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this motion forward. It's a pleasure to be able to speak to the motion as amended. I'd also like to extend my appreciation to the Minister of Environment for his support of a reciprocal fishing agreement between British Columbia and Yukon regarding Atlin Lake.

The reciprocal agreement for fishing licences on Atlin Lake could mirror what we already have in place for other

Yukon-B.C. transboundary waters. Yukon and B.C. angling licences are valid on all parts of the following transboundary waters: Bennett, Laidlaw, Morley, Tagish, and Teslin lakes are the current examples. Atlin Lake is not a designated transboundary water to date. To fish on the B.C. side of the lake, you must have a B.C. angling licence. It's important to know when you are in fact on transboundary waters and you must follow the regulations of the jurisdiction you are in, including tackle restrictions.

As Minister of Tourism and Culture, I see great opportunity with initiatives like reciprocal fishing agreements on lakes such as Atlin Lake. I look forward to the new campground that was announced to be constructed on the Yukon side of Atlin Lake. As someone who camps and fishes regularly in the territory, I can only imagine that other Yukoners will be equally as pleased with the government's approach on this project. I believe that a reciprocal fishing agreement could have a positive impact on tourism as well. What we've seen in past years is our campgrounds filled to capacity, especially on the weekends. Campers usually fish; they fish our lakes and rivers.

I can tell you from our recent trade mission to Quartzite, Arizona, that the Yukon brand is making its mark on one of our biggest jurisdictions, the U.S. I had the opportunity to speak directly with people planning on making the trek up the Alaska Highway in their RVs. It would seem from those conversations our target market in the U.S. for RV travel is the 55-plus crowd.

That didn't particularly surprise me. What surprised me was the number of people I spoke to who were planning on travelling the highway this summer for their fourth, fifth or sixth time. Many of those people, U.S. residents, spoke to the fact that they spend a little more time in Yukon each trip. These visitors, I believe, truly understand Yukon's "Larger than Life" brand and this is a good sign. So let's keep them here an extra day.

Another market that seems to appreciate the Larger than Life Yukon brand and one that utilizes our campgrounds and infamous fishing holes is our English-speaking German and Swiss visitors. It is typical for German and Swiss visitors to fly direct from Frankfurt to Whitehorse on Condor Airlines. From there they will often rent an RV from a local provider and then travel freely throughout the territory. Their average stay in Yukon is approximately 22 days.

I found it quite interesting last year during our trade mission to Germany, when speaking to Canadian experts in Germany, such as Ze or Flex Travel that book travel here in the territory. Or, for that matter, when speaking to the executive from Fulda or Condor, there is a great deal of interest for Yukon travel out of Germany. The staff in the Department of Tourism and Culture has worked very hard to position themselves favourably in the German market — a job very well done.

I recall camping at Kusawa Lake just last summer and feeling fortunate to be able to find a campsite, but I also remember from that same camping trip, there were people driving the 25 kilometres in from the highway, only to find that there were no vacant sites. So having an additional campground

within two hours of Whitehorse will alleviate that pressure on other campgrounds, such as Kusawa, Fox Lake, Wolf Creek, Marsh Lake, Pine Lake and so on.

Another camping trip last summer found me located at Tatchun Lake campground for the family fishing weekend. What a weekend that was, and what a terrific job the staff from Environment did that weekend, assisting campers from all over with fishing and sharing their knowledge of camping and fishing in Yukon. So a thanks to these staff for their good work, but that campground was also bursting at the seams. Perhaps more work can be done to also examine the potential of expanding some of the existing closer campgrounds. I know the Minister of Environment has put some work into this concept, and I predict that he will continue this good work.

Atlin Lake, as many of us know, is primarily located in northwestern British Columbia, but the northern tip of the lake is located in Yukon, just south of Little Atlin Lake. Interestingly enough, the name “Atlin” comes from the Tlingit name meaning “big lake”. There are a few web links that are important to note here today: Environment Yukon’s site for campgrounds is www.env.gov.yk.ca/camping-parks/campgrounds.php.

There are some great links from that site regarding campgrounds, backcountry camping in Tombstone Park and availability of camping and permits. It also has links to fishing licences, wildlife viewing and bear safety.

Another website that has a lot of good information is the www.travel yukon.com site. There are also links to the Tourism and Culture Facebook page at www.facebook.com/travel yukon.com, a link to the Twitter page @travel yukon.com. While you’re on there, check out #yukon. There is also a link to Flickr, which is www.flickr.com/travel and a link to YouTube at www.youtube.com/travel yukon. There are some incredible Yukon videos to watch there. Of course, if anyone would like more information on campgrounds in Yukon, they can e-mail yukon.parks@gov.yk.ca.

Thank you to the Minister of Environment and his staff for their hard work throughout the territory, and a special thanks to my staff in Tourism and Culture for their work on these terrific websites and for doing an exemplary job promoting the Yukon on the global market.

Mr. Speaker, I’m sure that when most of us think of this new Atlin campground or the transboundary fishing agreement, we can’t help but think about the nearby existing Snafu and Tarfu campgrounds. In fact, both Snafu and Tarfu campgrounds lie within the Agay Mene Park. This park is a well-liked recreational area that extends from Jake’s Corner southward to the British Columbia border. Planning for the park is mandated by *The Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement*.

We’re standing in this Assembly today speaking to fishing agreements. When I think about fishing, I think about campgrounds. When I think about campgrounds, I often think of parks such as the Agay Mene Park. But when I think of parks, especially lately, I reflect on the hard work that many other Yukoners, and Yukon organizations for that matter, and I have

put into mitigating the issue pertaining to the guided tours on the *SS Klondike* and Dredge No. 4.

I spoke endlessly with and wrote correspondence to our MP Ryan Leef. I had several phone conversations and met with our federal Minister of Environment —

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: Order. I can’t see how the member is going to be able to tie that in to reciprocal fishing licences.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I’ll tie that in.

Speaker: Carry on please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I’ll tie that in. I wrote and had communication with the Environment Canada minister, the Hon. Peter Kent, and likewise with the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Maxime Bernier. I had communication with the minister, the Hon. James Moore. I tasked department officials to engage with Parks Canada to ascertain the facts. I introduced a government motion on May 8, 2012, specifically addressing the dredge. In fact, it was 170 days later when the Member for Klondike asked his first question on Parks Canada.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Klondike, on a point of order.

Mr. Silver: I have to give the minister credit. It has taken him only a week to get back at me for my budget reply, but he needs to be called back to order based on Standing Order 19(b)(ii), which states: “speaks to matters other than ... a motion or amendment the member intends to move ...”.

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, I believe in the mind of the Minister of Tourism and Culture there is a connection between staying another day to visit attractions and fishing licences, and I’m sure the minister was just about to tie the two together in this debate.

Speaker’s ruling

Speaker: Well, it’s difficult for the Speaker to determine how the member will tie things together until it’s all said and done. I’ll allow the minister to carry on, but please do tie it together in fairly short order because I’m having a hard time seeing how he’s going to do it. Please carry on.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: So, 41 days following that, he asked his second question on Parks. In October 2012, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin and I worked together to bring this motion forward, which all members of this Assembly supported unanimously. I think the point I’m trying to make here — and I will continue on with this — is that there are Yukon solutions for Yukoners, and that does tie in to the Atlin Lake fishing agreements. I met with Yukon stakeholders, and I continued dialogue with the Yukon Party caucus, all to gain the input of people involved in hopes of mitigating the issue at hand, with the expectation that we would come to a solution that would work for the two venues in question.

As I mentioned earlier, it's important to note that the Yukon solution to this issue was to extend the operations of the tours to the private sector. As I noted in my reply to the budget speech, Yukoners are smart people.

Over the last week, the Member for Klondike has taken opportunity to make comments directed at me, personalizing debate and not representing the facts when it comes to the amount of work that I have put into this file.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Mr. Silver: Let's try with 19(a): imputes false or unavowed motives to another member. Will he please get back to fishing?

Speaker: Leader of the Third Party, what unavowed motives did he put toward you or another member?

Mr. Silver: The very last statement.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Standing Order 19(a) speaks to a question twice, or, in the case of a mover, in concluding debate or an explanation of a material part of the speech in which the member may have been misunderstood, in which case, the member shall not introduce a new matter. I don't believe that's the point of order today presently.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Order please. There are some interesting arguments back and forth on this point of order. At the present time I'm going to say there is a point of order and ask the Minister of Tourism and Culture to refrain from comments about the dredge or Parks Canada events and get back to the subject at hand please: reciprocal fishing licences on Atlin Lake.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I appreciate some very cunning remarks from the member opposite.

In fact, 2012 was a good year for tourism in Yukon, with a four-percent increase in visitation compared to 2011 and outperforming the national average for one or more nights visitation by non-residents. In fact, it is these non-residents and residents alike who are fishing and will be able to benefit from the reciprocal fishing agreement we have with British Columbia.

Building on the success of 2012 and reports of a strong winter season, we're forecasting growth in visitation between one percent and two percent in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I'm quite proud of the work that the staff and management are doing in the department. In 2012, we hosted over 320,000 visitors from around the world, including nearly 34,000 overseas visitors. One-quarter of all Yukon businesses generated some of their revenue from tourism, with more than four percent of Yukon's GDP directly attributed to tourism. This is just one thing that the Yukon Party government wants to see more of.

I'm pretty excited about the potential for the increase in numbers from the Japanese and Australian markets as well. Individuals from these markets also —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Pardon me? Did you want to have the floor?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. I remind the minister to address his comments to and through me, please, and to ignore anything he hears outside of that. Carry on.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: So, as I was saying, I'm excited to see the increase in market from the Japan and Australian markets. These individuals too can have the opportunity to take part in fishing within the territory.

Now, we are here today debating a motion on reciprocal fishing agreements. Such an agreement would certainly support the Atlin Lake campground. I am confident that this will be a very popular site for Yukoners and visitors alike, but another component to filling this in other campgrounds is the product development initiatives through the Department of Tourism and Culture. The department provides business counselling services to tourism operators, businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors to support product development. The department also participates on government committees and working groups to ensure that tourism interests are considered in Yukon government planning, resource development and environmental assessments.

Working in consultation with the industry stakeholders, the department is refining its product development strategy and annual plan to —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Mayo-Tatchun, on a point of order.

Mr. Tredger: By his own admission, the member opposite is straying from the topic and from the motion. He says he realized we were speaking to the motion, but he wanted to add this and he's continuing to do so.

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, it's quite common for members, including the Member for Mayo-Tatchun himself, to provide additional context that they believe is relevant, and I think that's what the Minister of Tourism and Culture is doing in this case.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Once again, it is difficult for the Chair to determine where the comments will lead until they've all been heard. I ask the member to try to get his comments to the motion at hand as quickly as possible. The Minister of Tourism and Culture has the floor. Two minutes please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have two minutes left? It seems obvious that campers would most likely be travelling throughout the territory, spending time at places like Big Jonathan Centre with the Selkirk First Nation or the Dä Ku Cultural Centre in Haines Junction.

Our global campers and recreational fishermen will also appreciate contracts that Tourism and Culture have with First Nations, such as VGFN for site enhancements at Rampart House.

I can't recall a better time for the tourism industry in Yukon. *Lonely Planet* has rated Yukon number four in the top destinations in the world for 2012.

I support a reciprocal fishing agreement for Atlin Lake. With construction of a new campground on the lake, the agreement will be timely and will complete the exiting campgrounds and lakes throughout the territory. I believe that projects like this are a true example of the hard work and dedication of this Yukon Party government. It's an honour and a privilege to show up to work each day with a team on this side of the House. There is a true sense of pride and admiration for each other's work, and there is an incredible amount of support from one another to move Yukon forward.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I was excited to see the motion come forward and I support the motion as amended.

I want to talk a little bit about Atlin and the surrounding area — it plays into the motion. The number and sizes of lakes surrounding Atlin make the community a hotspot for fishing. Anglers here are known to catch trout in excess of 40 pounds, or sometimes four to five fish per hour. The best time for fishing is mid-June to mid-September. There are a lot of popular fishing spots, including the gorgeous aqua-coloured Atlin Lake, on which the community of Atlin sits. Probably not many people know that at approximately 900 feet deep, 85 miles long and four miles wide, this body of water is the largest natural lake in B.C. Snowy, dramatic peaks on the lake's western shore add to the brilliance of the experience. It's like being in Kluane.

Other nearby fishing destinations include small lakes in the surrounding area, such as Coma Lake, just off the Atlin Road, on the way into town, and Surprise Lake, which is further north toward Whitehorse. Lake fishing for pike is also popular in the area. Pike are actually known to nibble people's toes in Palmer Lake, just a few minutes' drive out of the town, along the Warm Bay Road.

For those with their own boats, Atlin has two marinas — the public Brewery Bay marina and the private Norseman Adventures marina. Both are close to downtown, and the Norseman also rents boats.

Now, thanks to my esteemed colleague, the Minister of Environment for his hard work, the design of a new campground in the Yukon on Atlin Lake will be the third boat launch. Serious anglers in the Yukon — a little known fact — can also fish other areas accessible through the Yukon via the Haines Road, or by air charter to the Tatshenshini-Atlin Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. To the west of Atlin, Kellsall Lake, Blanchard Lake and smaller feeder streams in my neck of the woods are also in British Columbia.

Right now all fishers 16 years of age and older, residents and non-residents, require licences to fish. Licences are available on the B.C. government website. Some of the species of

fish that you can find around Atlin are lake trout, Arctic grayling, Dolly Varden, whitefish, pike, burbot and rainbow trout.

I want to speak a little bit to what the Yukon has done with Alaska. The Yukon Territory Fisheries regulations are made under the authority of the *Fisheries Act* and control fishing in the waters of the Yukon Territory and in Canadian fishery waters offshore of the Yukon Territory. By agreement with the federal government, the Yukon territorial government manages a territory's non-title fisheries for all species, with the exception of salmon and, as requested, these regulatory amendments.

Since the regulations are made pursuant to federal legislation, amendments must be processed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and approved by the Governor-in-Council. The proposed amendments — when they were looking at the reciprocal fishing licences between Alaska and Yukon — are intended to improve service delivery to the angling public and to aid and improve in the administration and management of the Yukon territorial fisheries, and the proposed changes were as follows: Each year approximately 2,000 Yukon residents purchase Alaska, non-resident sport fishing licences to fish in the state, while Alaska residents purchase 600 to 700 Yukon non-resident sport licences to fish in territorial waters. So, in the spirit of friendship, the Alaska and Yukon fisheries agencies determined that establishing reciprocal sport fishing licence fees would be an appropriate mechanism for allowing state and territorial residents to more easily enjoy and access the neighbouring recreational fisheries.

I can tell you, as an avid fisherman, I sure enjoy this reciprocal fishing arrangement and licence arrangement with the State of Alaska. The arrangement allows Yukon residents to fish in Alaska for the same licence fee paid by the state's residents, \$15 U.S., rather than what used to be \$100 U.S. Similarly, Alaska residents would be permitted to fish in the Yukon for the licence fee paid by the Yukon residents, \$15 CAD, instead of the non-resident licence, \$35 CAD. To qualify for this, a person would have to have been the holder of resident sport fishing licence of their respective state or territory.

A lot of work went into this. There was a lot of public consultation when we went forward with the first reciprocal fishing licence. The Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Yukon First Nations undertook an extensive public consultation on the proposed amendments. The consultations were conducted directly with affected users, organizations, First Nations, resource councils by the publication and distribution of the regulatory proposal document. The proposals were published in newspapers with Yukon-wide distribution. There were radio advertisements and public meetings. I guess what I'm trying to get at is that there was a lot of consultation in the day.

I was very excited when the Minister of Environment came forward with the campground proposal. I'm an avid fisherman. I enjoy fishing on lakes. I enjoy fishing in Alaska, but I also am looking forward to the opportunity to get to know some of our southern lakes, including Atlin Lake. When I think of fishing and opportunities, I think of fishing all day on Aishihik Lake which is a relatively large lake. It's not as deep as Atlin Lake, but spending — in a bit of a wind — the better part of 10 hours out there looking for fish and not having a lot of success.

I decided on my way back into the campground — where, later in the fall, the 10 to 20 feet of water is usually too warm for lake trout — that if your line is not in the water, you're not going to catch a fish. So I left my line in the water and forgot it in the water, and my son shook me and said, "Fish on." So we reeled in a 23-pound trout, which normally is not found there. Of course, it was in the slot limit so I had to release it. We didn't eat fish for supper. That's why we have army rations, I guess — for safety backup.

I'd just like to commend this motion, as amended. If any member of this House would like to sit around sometime by a campfire and talk fishing stories, I'd be more than happy to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's a pleasure for me to rise in support of this motion, as presented originally by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, of course, and amended on the floor by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I'm happy to provide a little bit of context and detail to the impetus behind this motion, as well as some of the detail as to how it will eventually be implemented by our government.

The impetus behind the drive for this extension or addition of the appendix to the transboundary agreement between British Columbia and Yukon with regard to transboundary waters is primarily driven by the proposed creation of a new campground on Atlin Lake. As discussed previously in this House, we've noticed over the past several years that there has been a significantly high demand for camping spots in the Yukon and a particularly high usage of our campgrounds within proximity to Whitehorse.

As I'm sure members are aware, it's very difficult for a Yukoner to track down a camping spot at a campground within a two-hour driving distance from Whitehorse on pretty much any weekend during the summer, so we know there's significant demand. We know that our campgrounds in that area are being well used so we decided to add to our complement of campgrounds, and the budget we're debating this sitting contains some funding for the creation of a campground.

There is, I believe, \$780,000 in the 2013-14 mains, which is also complemented by \$75,000 that was in the 2012-13 supplementary budget. The \$75,000 in that budget was for planning of the campground, and that planning work is underway currently. The \$780,000 that is in the mains for this budget currently is identified to begin construction of that campground this summer.

The process by which that goes forward is particularly relevant for this motion as it involves discussions with some of the groups mentioned in the motion and ultimately will lead to the need for this motion in that it urges the government to extend the reciprocal fishing licence with British Columbia.

The campground will go forward of course. It'll likely require YESAB screening so there will be opportunity for the public, including members of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and other relevant stakeholders in the area to provide comments on the proposed development. A number of stakeholders will be affected, both by the creation of the campground and

potentially by the addition of Atlin Lake to the reciprocal fishing licence agreement between Yukon and British Columbia.

One of those fairly well known to Yukoners and to members of the House is the Atlin Lake Bible camp, which is operated by the Bethany Tabernacle. I had a chance earlier this week to meet with the pastor of that church, who runs the Bible camp, and discussed some of the ways we can work together to ensure the development of the campground doesn't negatively impact the Bible camp.

Also there are a few private cabins in the area. I've had a call from at least one private cabin owner in the vicinity who wishes to have some input into the planning process. I'm happy to facilitate those discussions among my department, those doing the actual planning of the campground and the affected stakeholders.

What we expect from this campground is a medium- to large-sized campground by normal Yukon standards. We expect it to have in the range of 40 to 50 — perhaps 45 — sites. We expect it to have a boat launch and a boat dock, which will be well-used by potential anglers who come to Atlin Lake to fish on the bountiful shores.

Part of the reason why Atlin was chosen as a location for the campground is because it is such a large, beautiful lake. It does happen to have exceptional fishing, as we have heard from a few members here already. We know that Yukoners enjoy fishing it currently — and certainly British Columbians also do — on the British Columbia side. So we expect that the Atlin campground will provide an excellent venue for Yukoners — and perhaps British Columbians alike — to experience the north end of Atlin Lake and experience the environment of which we have such great pride by camping in the campground.

With that additional traffic and additional people coming to the north end of the lake to visit the campground, we do expect additional interest in fishing on Atlin Lake. As the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin alluded to in his comments, only a small portion of Atlin Lake is actually in Yukon. Approximately one percent of the entire lake is north of the Yukon border. So it's a bit of an encumbrance for potential anglers to have to ply the waters and be conscious of the fact that there is a border there and if they cross the border, they need a different licence and have to abide by a different set of rules.

That doesn't bode well for compliance with the rules. Of course we always try our best to have our COs out and about enforcing the rules, but inevitably I'm sure folks have drifted over the border without even meaning to or knowing that they had.

The intention of this motion is to add Atlin to the list of transboundary lakes that fall under the reciprocal agreement between the Yukon and British Columbia. It is to address the potential increase in traffic and usage of Atlin Lake by campers at the new campground.

As members discussed earlier and as the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin mentioned, we do already have a transboundary agreement with British Columbia. It was negotiated early in the year of 2000 and ultimately was announced on December 13, 2000, when the then Minister of Renewable Resources for

Yukon and the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks for British Columbia jointly announced this agreement.

In that agreement, beginning April 1, 2001, the B.C.-Yukon arrangement allowed anyone with a basic freshwater fishing licence issued by either British Columbia or the Yukon to fish in any part of seven transboundary waters shared by the two jurisdictions. Bennett Lake, Laidlaw Lake, Morley Lake, Tagish Lake, Teslin Lake, the Rancheria River and its tributaries and the Swift River and its tributaries were included in that agreement.

As I mentioned earlier, Atlin was originally considered, as was the Liard River, but ultimately there were decisions made at the time by the respective ministers in Yukon and British Columbia to drop those from the list. I believe, in the case of Liard, there was some difficulty defining the actual drainage, and they ended up deciding that they would drop the Liard River. Of course, in the case of Atlin, it was dropped largely as a result of concerns raised by residents of Atlin regarding the potential for increased traffic as a result of Yukoners coming to Atlin to fish.

I think it's worth noting then that we have that agreement in place, that it has been in place for a number of years, and that it contains a number of important aspects, which I think bear discussing today. One of them is that in that agreement there is the provision for the harmonization of catch limits on those lakes between the Government of British Columbia and Government of Yukon. That allows anglers to more easily comply with the regulations when they know that they are synchronized and harmonized and that they don't have to change the rules once they cross the border, if they do so. In Atlin, of course, there are a number of catch limits and possession limits. On the Yukon side — and they're not necessarily the same as on the Atlin side — it would be my expectation that in the process of discussions of this motion with the Government of British Columbia we would subsequently also agree to harmonize our catch limits for Atlin Lake.

I believe that part of the reason for the motion as amended speaks to the residents of Atlin, and I did want to touch on the fact that it's my genuine belief that having a campground at the north end of Atlin Lake and increased fishing opportunities on that lake will indeed be a strong benefit to the community of Atlin.

I think that having folks come camping in Atlin and coming down to Atlin Lake will certainly increase the number of visitors going to Atlin, so I think there will be a real economic benefit for the community of Atlin. There will be additional folks coming to town to perhaps buy meals or buy supplies, fishing gear or simply maybe loading up on fuel for the boat to go fishing — possibly alcohol — folks tend to enjoy a beer when they're fishing sometimes. So I think there will be an economic benefit for the community of Atlin with the intent of this motion going forward and with the conclusion of the action of adding Atlin to the transboundary agreement.

An additional piece I wanted to mention was the fact that in the greater Atlin area there are a number of other campgrounds, as others have mentioned. There are Snafu and Tarfu

campgrounds, which are in the Agay Mene Park. Those are very well-attended and very well-used campgrounds for all the reasons that I have discussed earlier — they're close to town; they're very beautiful areas.

A number of folks enjoy visiting those campgrounds and even fishing. However, being that they are fairly small lakes — both Snafu and Tarfu — with a fairly limited fishery, significant activity from folks visiting there puts a lot of pressure on the fisheries there. I believe the trout population in both Snafu and Tarfu are fairly weak presently and it's very likely that we would probably take some management action on those lakes at some point in the near future to limit the fishing opportunities there because of the fact the fisheries there are fairly weak.

If we consider the region we're talking about today and the fact that we're perhaps limiting possibilities for fishing on one side of the road, it seems likely it would be logical that the folks would be looking for somewhere else to go. I think it would be a great opportunity for residents to visit Atlin Lake.

Another point that I think bears repeating is the fact that the campground on Atlin Lake would provide some relief, not only for the fishery but the infrastructure itself. Given the terrain of the Snafu and Tarfu regions and the number of trucks and boats that drive down there to fish on those lakes, it does create some impact on the infrastructure of the roads and the physical infrastructure at the campgrounds, as well as the terrestrial environment. The plants and wildlife can be negatively affected sometimes by overuse of the campground. It's my hope that Atlin Lake will provide some relief from that pressure.

The way that this will likely be implemented is that correspondence will be continued between me, as the Minister of Environment, and my counterparts in British Columbia. While the motion speaks to the inclusion of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the residents of Atlin, it would certainly be my expectation that the Government of British Columbia would host those discussions between itself and its own citizens. If this was something that was going to impact them, I would expect that those citizens — both Taku River Tlingit and other Atlin residents — would likely pursue their concerns with their government.

While we included the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Atlin residents, I do expect that their concerns will be addressed by the Government of British Columbia.

In the case of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, we will be consulting them both on the development of the campground and the potential inclusion of Atlin Lake in the transboundary agreement. Prior to the announcement of the campground, I gave a telephone call to the Chief of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation to give him a heads-up that the announcement was coming and that we would be more formally discussing the campground project with his government in due course. I believe those planning discussions are beginning very shortly and I would expect that they would proceed without problem.

I did note earlier that the actual impact this would have on both the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, in terms of the applicability of this agreement to them, is actually fairly limited because of the fact that

Carcross-Tagish First Nation citizens don't need a fishing licence from the Yukon government, and when citizens of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation visit Yukon their fishing licences are free.

Any *Indian Act* band or Inuit person visiting Yukon receives their fishing licence for free, whereas others have to pay a fairly small fee. Canadian residents outside of the Yukon pay a season fee of \$25 or \$15 for six days or \$10 for one day. For seniors over the age of 65, those licences are free. So this wouldn't be of tremendous benefit to those people but, of course, the primary target of this motion and this agreement are Yukon anglers — to use the proper term — who want to go to Atlin Lake and angle there without having to worry about crossing the border.

Recognizing that my time is elapsing, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I would say that I am in support of this motion, and I thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing it forward. I look forward to discussions with members about the development of the campground, which will provide the impetus for continued negotiations with the Government of British Columbia around the addition of Atlin Lake to this reciprocal fishing licence agreement.

I do thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for her amendment to the motion, which certainly adds value to the motion and adds a degree of detail around who will be involved and affected. Of course I do need to clarify that we won't be pursuing some of those groups directly. I don't expect that our government will interfere in the relationship between the Government of British Columbia and the citizens of Atlin. We would hope that the government would represent its citizens as the Yukon government represents the citizens of Yukon.

In conclusion, I commend this motion to the House, and I look forward to undertaking the actions to see it implemented. I will report back to the House in due course as to the success or status of this particular motion and on our activities in implementing it. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'll be fairly brief in my comments on the motion today. A number of members have spoken to this. I just want to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this forward.

I think that this motion is very complementary to the announcement made by the Minister of Environment regarding the commitment to develop a campground at Atlin Lake, and I commend the minister and his staff for their work on that initiative. That really is something that is a good step in increasing recreational opportunities for Yukoners and, of course, for many people when they're camping and engaging in recreational pursuits. Their chosen pursuit is often boating and doing a little bit of fishing at the time. I think these two complement each other very well.

I appreciate the supportive comments from other members of this House as well. I want to compliment the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for her origami swan-making ability, which doesn't show up in the *Hansard* record, but is certainly well done. I say that, of course, in good humour.

Really, I think this is an opportunity for the House again to pass unanimously a motion and send a positive message that will hopefully provide further support to the Minister of Environment and his staff when they engage with the Government of British Columbia on this issue, recognizing that the Government of British Columbia, in previous discussions of reciprocal fishing licence agreements, chose not to make that available for Atlin Lake because of concerns of residents.

It's certainly my hope that passage of this motion would add strength to the case presented by our Minister of Environment and his staff when they engage with the Government of British Columbia and seek a reciprocal fishing licence agreement for Atlin Lake.

I notice that two of the campgrounds within my riding, the Lake Laberge and Fox Lake campgrounds, have really seen an evident increase in the number of people using them in recent years. I don't know the exact statistics that the Department of Environment would have with regard to that, but it has appeared to be me that they are often close to capacity during weekends in the summer, so providing another campground that gives Yukoners just one more choice can avoid some of the examples that some of my colleagues have spoken to — of people going to a campground that requires a significant drive and finding that there aren't any campsites available. Adding this additional choice will enhance that opportunity.

With that, I again thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forward this motion. I commend the work of the Minister of Environment and his staff on the Atlin Lake campground development. I would encourage all members of the House to vote in favour of this motion.

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

Mr. Hassard: I'd like to thank everyone for their comments today. They sound quite supportive. I'd like to thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for her amendment and her fascinating origami-making skills.

I'd like to once again thank everyone, and I look forward to, hopefully, unanimous consent when this goes to vote. Thank you very much.

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: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 15 yeas, nil nays.

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

Motion No. 367, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 384

Clerk: Motion No. 384, standing in the name of Mr. Hassard.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin THAT this House urges the Department of Education to explore models for the establishment of a career and technology centre to serve high school students wishing to pursue apprenticeship opportunities in trades.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to once again rise today and to speak to Motion No. 384.

Mr. Speaker, the three successive Yukon Party governments have been educating and training Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. This motion today urging "...the Department of Education to explore models for the establishment of a career and technology centre to serve high school students wishing to pursue apprenticeship opportunities in trades" continues this government's major focus on apprenticeship training. Yukon Party governments have promoted the registration of more apprentices than any previous Yukon government. Currently, the territory has 450 registered apprentices which is a record high.

The Advanced Education branch of the Department of Education has undertaken many successful initiatives, which contribute to the overall prosperity and growth of this territory. The labour market framework is an overarching strategy designed to address the labour market needs in the territory. This labour market framework is made up of four strategies: comprehensive skills and trades training strategy; the immigration strategy; the national recruitment strategy; the employment retention strategy; and the labour market information strategy. The framework engages all stakeholders in working toward building relationships and avenues through which funding partnerships can be set up and priorities identified when it comes to training in Yukon.

Mining provides Yukoners with tremendous training and employment opportunities. Our government has been concentrating on labour market information tools that will help the Yukon to see where the gaps are, enabling a strategic and coordinated approach to offering training for jobs in the mining industry.

One of the main focuses in promoting mine training is forging connections with local communities. The community training funds provide communities with the resources to invest in their own people. When given the opportunity, communities are very enthusiastic about taking the initiative to train mem-

bers from their own communities. An example of this community engagement is Ross River's success in offering — in conjunction with other partners — truck driver training, and more recently, heavy equipment operator training. The Watson Lake community training fund also regularly funds mining-related training for its community members.

As with communities, the Government of Yukon believes that partnering with First Nations in mine training initiatives is key to sustaining growth and promoting success across the territory. Our government supported a partnership between Yukon Learn and the Ta'an Kwäch'an Council in delivering a heavy equipment operator course, which was also incorporated with literacy education. It also supported Kwanlin Dun in offering a skills and trades exploration program, which provides participants with an introduction to various trades over a 12-week period.

Another priority of this Yukon government is the promotion of careers in mining to women and youth. Our government supports Yukon Women in Trades and Technology and Skills Canada Yukon. Both organizations work to create interest in trades and industrial skills training. The Yukon Women in Trades and Technology works to educate, recruit and support women and girls working in trades and technology, including the pursuit of careers in the mining industry. Skills Canada Yukon also works to promote careers in these areas by providing youth with the skill development and training opportunities before they enrol in post-secondary education.

Yukon College remains the main source of training for mine-related trades and occupations in the Yukon. This Yukon Party government supports Yukon College in offering trades and industrial skills training courses on a yearly basis. By working in conjunction with Yukon College, the Department of Education is exploring ways to offer dual credit courses in conjunction with Yukon College to be able to offer trades training to both high school- and college-level students.

In late 2011, Yukon College received funding from the Department of Education to offer a dual-credit pilot program, allowing qualified Yukon high school students to take one of three Yukon College courses for credit. At the time, all three courses were academic in nature. An added advantage for these pilot program students is that Public Schools covers the cost of their tuition, with an average saving of \$324 per student. This is a significant benefit to Yukon families.

The proposed program in Dawson was conceived in Dawson, and the department is working to remove barriers to make this program possible. The Department of Education is in the process of setting timelines for establishing the viability of a successful, dual-credit welding program in Dawson. This includes meeting the following needs: identifying partners and program funding; researching an appropriate venue for the program; and ensuring that dual credits are supported at the public high school and college levels.

Once this program has been determined as viable, the department will be able to proceed to the next stage of planning. Our government supports Yukon College's work toward establishing the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining.

Through the creation of this Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, Yukon College proposes to offer programs directly linked to skilled employment opportunities in the north through the following: delivering high school dual-credit mining occupation programs in Yukon communities and in Whitehorse using Yukon College's successful dual-credit delivery model in creating a venue for Yukon high school students across the Yukon to complete high school while acquiring the credentials for a trade relevant to the mining industry; strengthening partnerships with the Yukon Mine Training Association and Alaska; delivering trades and technology programs at mine sites; combining the use of the college's newly acquired mining simulators and its skilled development instruction using a proposed mobile trades school in authentic industrial environments; and offering innovative apprenticeship programming premised on the successful apprenticeship model used in Ontario that incorporates in-school apprenticeship training coupled with co-op opportunities in a two-year period.

The overarching goal is to increase the number of registered industrial apprentices and red seal journey-level trades people here in the Yukon, providing opportunities for mines to use college resources such as the mining simulators for professional development opportunities, providing a venue for graduate students to engage in research related to mining in the north and providing the territory with 558 trades, mining and apprenticeship program graduates plus up to 710 completing shorter non-credit courses and programs.

Our government, along with the State of Alaska, Yukon College and the University of Alaska recently signed a memorandum of agreement to commit to sharing mine training-related resources. This MOA will enable Yukon mine training learners and educators to take advantage of opportunities such as joint curriculum and optimization of facilities.

Yukon College, in partnership with industry, First Nation governments, and existing training associations is extremely well-positioned to build upon its foundation, infrastructure and programming. Approximately 6,000 individuals participated in continuing education courses at Yukon College in 2010-11, along with highlighting a specific need for further education and training opportunities. With relevant training, education, and certification, the adult population could take greater advantage of skilled employment opportunities and help address the industry's labour market needs.

Yukon College is well-established in all 14 Yukon communities, has the capacity to technologically address distance learning, has strong partnerships with educational institutions in other jurisdictions, has a research base, and already offers numerous relevant programs that could be expanded and adapted to meet industry needs. Yukon College's foundation is firmly in place.

In addition to its vital community relations the CNIM could collaborate with industry to be a leader in northern mining and environmental research and technology innovation; a northern leader in the development of policy that affects the industry, including aboriginal governance, conservation, health and safety, and social sciences; train Yukoners to be able to seize skilled and well-paid industry employment opportunities

and help transfer within the workforce from entry-level and service positions; attract workers already educated, yet not skilled for the industry — once again, transferring from a lower to higher wage environment; research the industry needs of the exploration and placer industries in mining impacts on the service and supply industries; provide the mining-specific trades, such as underground mine training, and programs that are relevant to the industry versus the construction trades; expand programming so that students can complete their industry-related training and education right here in the territory; serve as the vital link between industry employment opportunities and trained students; be the core of industry, First Nation, community and related training associations coordination and engagement.

In conclusion, the Yukon Party's commitment to education and training, our Yukon Party's October 2011 election platform, "Moving Forward Together," indicates its vision for achieving a better quality of life and educating today for jobs tomorrow. The Yukon Party will identify land for additional university initiatives like the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining and a new student residence; continue to expand and support alternative education programs and apprenticeship programs and post-secondary education; develop an inclusive, adaptable and productive workforce that contributes to and strengthens Yukon's economy; encourage the underemployed to pursue vocational and trades training.

These statements affirm the government's interest in cultivating Yukon College's role as a leader in northern mine training and research. Like never before, Yukon youth and other Yukoners will have access to accredited career training opportunities with direct linkages to lucrative jobs in the territory. Building capacity in the territory through training will offer unparalleled opportunities for northern economic and social prosperity.

The creation of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining will directly assist the Yukon government in strengthening two of its four budgetary pillars, including better quality of life and the economy, and good government. Investing in education will only strengthen Yukon's economy. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its recently released report, *Education at a Glance 2012*: "Investments in education also generate public returns from higher income levels in the form of income taxes, increased social insurance payments and lower social transfers."

For Canada and the Yukon, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that the net return to government generated by a public investment in higher education, such as college and university, amounted to almost \$67,000 per capita for a person with a college or university education compared to a net return of \$25,000 per capita for a person with a high school education.

The same public investment resulted in a return on investment of 8.9 percent for an investment in college and university education, compared to a return on investment of 6.5 percent on an investment in high school education.

I'll conclude my remarks by saying it pays for government to invest in education. I look forward to hearing what others have to say with regard to this motion.

Ms. White: I thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this motion forward.

Today my comments are going to be from the basis of me as a journey-level baker. I do have my red seal in the baking field. My first glimpse of the possibility of trades was probably in junior high school. At that point in time, we had grades 7, 8 and 9 in one school. I went through the home ec class where I baked my very first miserable muffins. I kind of learned how to use a sewing machine and I got to experience the wood shop. Those were things I didn't really get to do at home, so that was kind of exciting for me.

In high school, my favourite class was metalwork. I loved the metal shop. I loved the way it smelled. I loved the smell of oil. I loved the smell of molten metal. It was my favourite class in high school, but interestingly enough, during that class there was never the discussion about going on to be a welder or to be a sheet metal worker. We never had that conversation; that wasn't something that happened in that class, but there were probably 22 students who also loved that class. Sometimes I wonder if I missed out on that opportunity.

While I was in grade 11 and I was attending the Music, Art and Drama program, which was also very specialized toward performing arts, I decided I wanted to either be a pastry chef or a set designer. With the help of a friend's dad, I made the decision. So I went to go talk to Mr. Allen, who owned a construction company, and I wasn't sure what I should do. "Should I go and should I study pastry, or should I go somewhere academically?" He put it out this way when he said, "Kate, I have two plumbers and two lawyers. Who makes the most money?" I said, "Oh, the lawyers." He said, "No, Kate. A plumber makes twice as much as the lawyer. Go to trades school." That helped shape that direction very much.

It's too bad that when I was in high school we didn't have the FEAST program that is run by Pat McKenna, because she has given hundreds of students a glimpse into the operation of professional kitchens in a really good way. I went to a professional culinary program in Vancouver and studied there and learned the basics. I came home in 1997 and opened up a catering company. At 21, having a catering company brought good things and bad things. The good thing was that I learned that you didn't have to be a jerk to be the boss; the bad thing was that you didn't need to be a jerk to be a boss. That shaped the rest of my career, which made it really hard to stay in kitchens that were run by unkind people. After opening a catering company I travelled to France. I had the opportunity to work in kitchens in Paris. I started off in a hotel and was doing pastry at a Parisian hotel. I moved on to a restaurant and I learned 10 new things every day in the kitchen. It was an inspiring time of my life. What cooking has given me the ability to do is travel around the world. I started off specializing in pastry and realized that if I didn't want to live in cities, that was probably not going to be my only vein to be able to pursue. I expanded to more industrial baking and then I even started with cooking.

Then I started managing kitchens. I've worked in kitchens in France, in England and Australia and all across western Canada. I've worked in cafes, bakeries, restaurants, ski hills — cat-ski operations and, of course, mining camps.

I have had the ability to take my culinary abilities into government settings. I was a lifeskills coach most recently in Corrections. Had the election gone differently in 2011, I would have owned a bakery at this point in time.

I learned a lot of different things when I travelled around the world, including when I lived in the United Kingdom. In the UK, they have something called O-level exams. Students at 16 years old take these tests. I am not suggesting that this is where we should go, but it is interesting. They take tests and, depending on the results, they get put into two different streams. Either they go toward academics or they go toward trades. That means by the time a young person is 19 years old, they have already done three years of trades training. When they leave school, they are practically journey level at that point in time. I think about the great success that Yukon apprentices and tradespeople have had at Skills Canada competitions, myself included. I know that I have really appreciated being a mentor to aspiring bakers through Pat McKenna's program at F.H. Collins school.

There are questions that I have though. I know that when I came back from France and I wanted to start my apprenticeship, I struggled with the apprenticeship program and the placement. I wanted to be a pastry chef; I didn't want to be an industrial baker. In Canada, we have two titles: cook and baker.

The system was encouraging me to work at Extra Foods, which was the big bakery at the time. I had no interest in making hundreds of loaves of bread at a time. I specialized in fancy desserts and in artisan baking. So I struggled a lot with the apprenticeship program and, in the end, just walked away and kind of threw up my hands. Ten years later, I challenged the exam. I know the program has changed a lot, and they do a lot more to help facilitate apprenticeship placements.

So some of the suggestions I would make are to be sure that whatever model we follow has buy-in from the industry; to make sure that the students who are putting in the time to start off with do actually have apprenticeship placements when they leave; and to make sure that we encourage union involvement as well.

I also guess part of my question would be around the timeline. I realize we're just exploring models right now, but knowing that there are a lot of students like me who, even at 16 and 17, realize they didn't want to work in an office. Having that ability to start concentrating on something trades-oriented would be an incredible opportunity for them. I hope this happens sooner rather than later.

I thank the member for his motion, and I will be supporting it.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I too would like to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this motion forward today. I thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for her comments and sharing her experiences with us. That's exactly what I was hoping to hear from different members and a cross-section of

members today — their experiences. When we build a Yukon model around this, we're fortunate that we can draw on the experiences and the successes from a number of other jurisdictions.

Before I start, I will give an outline of how my remarks will go so that it's easy for members and there is no misunderstanding of how I'm trying to tie things back to the original motion.

I would like to start by referencing a couple of reports. One is the *Yukon Exploration and Mining Labour Market Outlook*, which was a report commissioned by the Department of Education and completed by Derome and Associates Development + Management Inc. — a firm out of Whitehorse — in partnership with the Mining Industry Human Resources Council, which I believe is based in Ottawa. That will give a little bit of a sense for members of some of the labour market requirements for the mining industry going forward.

I want to briefly touch on the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining proposal that was recently brought forward and has received quite a bit of discussion in the Legislature. I'll maybe give members a snapshot, as well, of the current trades and apprenticeship opportunities and some of the numbers associated with that.

I know the motion brought forward by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin referenced a career and technology centre, which is really what the example is out of Alberta. The Lord Shaughnessy High School in Calgary has transitioned into a career and technology centre. I certainly don't want members to get hung up on the name of what this would be. It's really the programming behind it. I'll touch a little bit on the Alberta example, as well as some examples in Ontario that perhaps we might be interested in discussing.

Then a real Yukon success story that obviously doesn't have to do with trades — I want to highlight some of the successes of the Wood Street Centre, what it brings and how we can perhaps emulate that for what a trades school would be.

So with that brief outline, perhaps what I'll start with is just a quick introduction and overview of the first document I referenced, which is the *Yukon Exploration and Mining Labour Market Outlook*.

What this report was designed to do is complement and expand on an initial research report, completed in November 2011. That initial research focused on the hiring needs of the extraction sector of Yukon's mining industry and was extensively used for phase 1 of the *CNIM Feasibility Study*, which was completed in January 2012. The study released in September 2012 was commissioned by Yukon College and funded in part by the Yukon government and CanNor.

The current report available expands on that initial research to include the exploration, service and placer mining sectors of the mining industry. For the first time, a detailed estimation of the mining labour workforce is available for Yukoners. In addition to forecasting the hiring needs for Yukon's industry over the next 10 years, the research also estimates the talent that will become available in that time and provides a gap analysis for 42 occupations that make up more than 95 percent of the Yukon mining labour pool.

Yukon's mining industry employed an estimated 2,675 workers in 2012. That includes 960 mining workers and 1,710 exploration and services workers. As a result of its location, population base and types of industries, the mining labour market in Yukon differs from other parts of Canada and even the other territories.

The labour force in Yukon has a larger cohort of younger and older workers, with a gap in mid-career age groups. It's highly mobile, retires later than the national average in mining, and employs a large proportion of aboriginal Yukoners.

The hiring requirements forecast as part of this are built on three different scenarios — a baseline, a contractionary and an expansionary scenario.

Under the baseline scenario, Yukon-specific commodity prices, mining GDP and labour productivity are aligned to various leading economic forecasts and industry intelligence to arrive at an expected projection of employment. The baseline scenario includes assumptions and industry intelligence on mine construction and advanced development activities. This scenario also takes a somewhat conservative approach, given the current climate of global economic uncertainty, and forecasted commodity price corrections over the short term.

Under the baseline scenario, modest overall growth is expected in the industry. The expansionary scenario assumes greater than expected growth, while the contractionary scenario obviously assumes lower than expected growth.

Both expansionary and contractionary scenarios take into account historical economic trends, consensus forecasts, the future trends and are further supported by intelligence of Yukon's mining industry.

The cumulative hiring requirements over the next 10 years are projected to be 2,900 workers under a baseline scenario; 4,260 workers in an expansionary scenario; and 1,360 workers in a contractionary scenario. As you can see, the hiring requirements in the mining industry are going to be substantial over the next number of years and the greatest number of those requirements by far will be in trades and production occupations, followed by supervisory and foremen, and then technologists and technician occupations.

I know that this is a very extensive report, and I don't want to delve too deeply into it because then I won't get an opportunity to speak to the CNIM options, as well as some of the Alberta and Ontario examples. I know the consultants released this report, I believe, at the 2011 Geoscience Forum, and I'll look to ensure that it's available for members of the House, should they want to read the report in its entirety. I'll find out exactly if it's on a website or perhaps provide the full report to members opposite or all members of the House. Perhaps at some point I could table it.

When it comes to the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, we have obviously spent a lot of time speaking about that particular proposal and some of the aspects of it. I am just going to read briefly from the executive summary. One of the highlights of the Conference Board of Canada's report in September 2012, and I quote: "New mine developments will provide a solid foundation for job creation and income growth over the forecast period. Still, despite the negative headwinds

in the global economy, the outlook remains largely positive, particularly over the longer term. New mine developments will provide a solid foundation for job creation and income growth over the forecast period.” Clearly, the mining industry’s anticipated growth and its role as a significant economic driver in the territory was and is the compelling argument for the creation of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining.

I know that through the creation of that, Yukon College proposes to offer a number of programs directly linked to skilled employment opportunities in the north. I’ve spoken about these previously in the House, but I think it’s important just to touch on them again: delivering high school dual-credit mining occupation programs in Yukon communities and in Whitehorse using the dual-credit delivery model and creating an avenue for Yukon high school students across the territory to complete high school while acquiring the credentials for a trade relevant to the mining industry; strengthening partnerships with the YMTA and Alaska — I know the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin alluded to the Alaska partnership in his opening remarks — delivering trades and technology programs at mine sites combining the use of the college’s new simulators and its skill development instruction using the mobile trades school, which is on order and expected to arrive here in September; offering innovative apprenticeship programming premised on a successful apprenticeship model used in Ontario that incorporates all in-school apprenticeship training, coupled with co-op opportunities over a two-year period.

The overarching goal is to increase the number of registered industrial apprentices and red seal journey-level tradespeople in the territory — providing opportunities for our producing mines, including the placer mines, to use college resources, such as the mining simulators for professional development opportunities and providing a venue for graduate students to engage in research related to mining in the north.

When it comes to those opportunities that exist in the mining industry, they’re not just restricted to the mining industry when it comes to the overall apprenticeship opportunities that could be taught at an apprenticeship high school that would focus on dual credit trades.

As I mentioned in my opening, there are a number of apprenticeship opportunities in the territory, from the baker opportunity — I know the Member for Takhini-Kopper King noted that she was a red seal baker. There are currently three individuals who are registered as apprentices in that. We have a high of 156 registered carpenter apprentices. It goes through, of course, the electricians and gas fitters — 10 registered hair stylists in the territory as apprentices. We have 11 heavy equipment and truck and transport technicians. There are 16 oil-burner mechanics currently registered. Just to clarify, these are the March 2013 statistics — 37 plumbers, 16 sheet-metal workers, eight truck and transport technicians and 14 welders.

A tremendous range of apprenticeship opportunities exists for Yukon residents, and I think it’s incumbent on us — again, building on the Member for Takhini-Kopper King’s comments — to work with industry when we explore these models for a career and technology centre that would give an opportunity to ensure that those high school students who wish are matched

with opportunities that will exist for them in the territory upon their graduation.

When I was doing some research for this, I came across a news program from Calgary that spoke of the career and technology centre at Lord Shaughnessy High School. That centre provides access to rigorous academic industry-standard programs; certified journeyman instructors; facilities and equipment for students seeking industry-standard credentials in high demand; highly skilled occupations while they complete related courses required for the Alberta diploma. Some of the opportunities that they offer in Calgary are autobody technician apprentice; through cosmetology, a hairstylist apprenticeship and/or esthetics certificate; the culinary arts, a cook apprentice — that was highlighted during that television news piece that I watched. There was a great opportunity. One of the students mentioned that it wasn’t his desire to remain in a classroom — or in an office setting — when he embarked on his career. He enjoyed the culinary arts and was working hard in an industry-grade kitchen facility. There are multiple food-service outlets ranging from a marketplace deli, classic dining room, à la carte service, catering and hosting special events.

So again, I think there are some tremendous opportunities looking at the Calgary model. Some of the other opportunities that they offer are in media design and communication, broadcasting, natural resources — which may be one that we might look at here for the territory. It focuses on environmental studies, ecology and conservation — obviously, something that could provide some opportunities with not only governments, but perhaps other organizations such as YESAB and set the stage for that. There is pre-engineering offered in the Calgary career and tech centre.

Welding — there is a welder apprentice course. I know that when we talk about the mobile trades unit, welding is one of the opportunities that we’ll be able to take out to rural Yukon and deliver through that facility, once that trailer arrives here in September.

There’s also some business information technology, management and computer sciences; there’s health care offered in Calgary and medical sciences. One of the things they have at this particular facility is a learning commons, which is an area that is designed to facilitate knowledge construction in a wide variety of courses that include core academics.

I would encourage members to visit <http://www.ct-centre.ca/> to take a look at the opportunities that exist for students at that Calgary facility. I know I have a personal trip planned to Calgary for the summer to visit family and friends, and I will perhaps contact my colleague in Alberta and see if I can have the opportunity to take a look at the Lord Shaughnessy school and get an understanding and first-hand look at what they’re delivering down there and what the facilities look like.

Perhaps I’ll leave the Ontario youth apprenticeship program opportunities for others to explore. What I wanted to make sure I also touched on was the Wood Street Centre. This is obviously a very successful program delivery that is in high demand. I know students from across the territory go there to take many of their courses, such as music, art, drama and

dance, or the MAD program; the ACES, which stands for achievement, challenge, environment, service 10; CHAOS, which is community, heritage, adventure, outdoors and skills; the outdoor pursuit/experiential science; the Plein Air et Sciences Expérientielles program or PACE 9. A number of opportunities are offered there to individual students and I think it's a great model that exists right here in the territory that we can build on when we look to expand or investigate models to expand into more of a career and technology side of things.

I will leave some of the Ontario research for others to explore. I thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this forward. I know that he certainly comes from a family that is not afraid of hard work, a very strong blue-collar work ethic. Anyone in the House or listening who knows his parents would certainly know that the member and his brothers come by that work ethic honestly.

I thank him for bringing this forward, and I look forward to hearing other ideas from members in the House here today and working on coming up with a model that works here based on the best practices that exist in other jurisdictions across Canada and, indeed, some of the jurisdictions mentioned by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Mr. Tredger: I thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forward this motion and I thank the Minister of Education for supporting it and for looking at alternatives and ways that we can involve our students in apprenticeship programs and in skills training.

This is a very enticing idea. Of the need for skills training, there is no doubt. The purpose of the program — and I can read it — is that it's a centre of excellence serving high school students in Calgary, Alberta who want to pursue apprenticeship in the trades.

This is a very ambitious program for our territory. When I look at the number of courses offered — and the minister cited a few of them: autobody, cosmetology, culinary arts, media design, natural resources, pre-engineering, welding, business information technology and health care. Those are nine paths; each one of those courses has approximately 30 to 40 courses embedded within them. That is a lot of course instruction. The scope and scale is quite different. What Calgary can offer when they have a centralized school with a population well over a million and what we can offer here with a smaller population — much smaller — scattered over a vast territory — the scope and scale and the number of courses offered are important. It's important that we offer quality opportunities for our students.

I'm concerned that when we raise something like this and the spectre of it, we raise expectations of students, which is our job and our duty, but it's also important that we then be in a position to deliver on those expectations and on those promises. This program developed over a period of time and it certainly meets a need in our community. I applaud the minister and the Department of Education for looking for alternatives and looking at different ways to meet the needs of our students.

When I was reading through the website, one of the things that struck me was this school was developed in conjunction with a number of other opportunities for the students. It was

developed in an effort to find common ground in a patchwork of ideas. In the Auditor General's report of 2009, she was concerned about the lack of a comprehensive strategy dealing with educating our youngsters in skills. The Department of Education agreed and, in consultation with stakeholders, is developing a 10-year training strategy that will address coordinating training needs and training programs, as well as addressing training gaps for the next 10 years. This strategy, which will include an action plan and evaluation component, will address the shortcomings associated with the current deficiency in the management of the community training funds, including the monitoring process. The Auditor General's report identifies a lack of a comprehensive strategy; it refers to the need for such a strategy that can be evaluated and monitored, that can be revisited, that can access risks involved and come up with a comprehensive plan.

As in Calgary, we need a response to a patchwork of ideas. Education systems across Canada, governments across Canada and industry across Canada are looking for ways to develop skills training programs. That has sometimes resulted in a patchwork of ideas. It's important that we have a comprehensive strategy so that we can take the ideas, plug them in and see what fits and works for us in the Yukon. While I applaud the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for his suggestion, it's important that we find a way to fit that idea and that suggestion into a comprehensive plan.

We're hearing about a mine training centre. We're hearing about the dual credit system. We're hearing about apprenticeship programs. We're hearing about what the Yukon College is doing. We're hearing about a mobile lab.

What we need is a comprehensive strategy and plan to fit this in. Maybe the minister would like to revisit the building and planning for F.H. Collins school — maybe. We have made a decision not to expand the trades wing. An expanded trades wing might fit right into this idea put forward by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin. What about additional space for labs? Several of the options for building at F.H. Collins school didn't include food-preparation stations. If we're going to have a culinary arts program, it's one thing to talk about it, but we need a facility in which to deliver it. This applies to each and every one of those programs. They can be developed in a large city or a single school with many, many students to draw from.

How will rural schools and students access such a program? Can the government identify and advise Yukoners about potential partners in this initiative — the First Nations, industry reps, Yukon Federation of Labour and labour representatives?

As mentioned by several people earlier, it is important that there is a good fit between students and apprenticeship positions. This speaks to the importance of collaborating with representatives of industry and trades and labour when determining models of training centres. There needs to be a good fit in terms of timing, number of positions between students learning and opportunities and timelines of apprenticeship mentors in the industry. If the proposed career technology centre is in Whitehorse, how will the government ensure both rural students and industries equal access to the program?

This motion is about exploring models. Has the government identified what outcomes it hopes for? Has the government identified timelines? Will the process be evaluated and monitored? How will it be integrated with other services, initiatives, other governments and the private sector?

How will it meet the aspirations of rural communities, like Dawson, Watson Lake and Mayo? While I was looking at the website — that the minister conveniently provided this morning, and it was much appreciated — another item caught my eye. One of the things we run into in our high school now is the lack of a foundation for students before they get to high school. I mentioned it yesterday in my talk with the minister — the debate on the Education budget for this year — the need to expose students at grades 5 to 7 to the various trades and technology opportunities afforded to them. I noted with interest when the Member for Takhini-Kopper King talked about her experiences. She mentioned that at a very early age — I believe it was grade 7 — her introduction to baking and the magic muffins, introduction to wood shop, and eventually, when she got to high school, she began to focus more on a particular course.

The course that I saw that caught my eye from the Calgary Board of Education and something that might be very doable in the Yukon is something that's called "Career and Technology Foundations", or CTF. It's for grades 5 to 9. CTF is a transformational approach to competency-based curriculum that engages students in relative learning context, supporting high school completion and pathways into high school to create a collaborative community of learners, teachers, members and partners to create conditions for transformational curriculum to be embraced by all programs of study.

So, what it does, essentially, is expose or give children the opportunity at an earlier age to pursue and to be exposed to different courses — to build the core potential for candidates whose interest and then opportunity might be furthered.

So, in conclusion, while I do support this — and the NDP does support this motion from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin — I would encourage the Minister of Education to follow this up, so it doesn't become another one event in the patchwork of possible solutions.

There is always a need for skills training. It is important that we involve all members in the development of that and that we include industry representatives, labour representatives, Yukon College, community campuses and community businesses in the development of such programs. I would caution that there is a danger in being too industry-specific. Given the cyclical nature of many industries locating in the Yukon, we may be training for jobs that may not exist in five or 10 years. Again, it's important to be in collaboration and, working in partnership with those around.

As I said when I began, this is an enticing and very exciting idea. We do need the skills but, as the Member for Porter Creek South is implying, this isn't a fishing expedition. This is something where we are making promises and we are making commitments to our students and our children.

It's important that we are able to follow up on them — that when we talk of events and projects that they be put into a context of a comprehensive strategy and plan that enables us to

work with industry, government partners, First Nations and all involved to deliver on what we promise. Therefore, we will be supporting it and encourage the minister in his endeavours.

Mr. Silver: I want to say that I can absolutely support this bill, and I will not waste an awful lot of time explaining why. There was a comprehensive Yukon training strategy prepared in 1998. Over 10 years went by before the Auditor General produced a report on education. At the time, the auditor's office reported that a community training fund strategy was still needed, with clear terms and conditions, and should be properly reviewed, managed and monitored.

Interestingly enough, 1998, the year the Yukon training strategy that was prepared, was the same year that Skills Canada Yukon was established. We had talks in the Klondike a couple of years ago.

At that time, present at these talks were representatives from Yukon College, from the mining industry, from the exploration companies who spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year on training and also industrial arts teachers and First Nation representatives. The discussions at that time were about strategic plans — strategic plans that outlined industry, identified trades jobs needed, and the private sector willingness to provide assistance to accomplish local training opportunities with a guarantee for employment; invoking First Nation governments' buy-in by identifying the strengths of its citizens — something that the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin talked about — that are currently not being fostered by the current education system. Robert Service School is a unique situation that we talked about, based on both location and its relative vicinity to the White Gold district and also because of an excellent rapport with the First Nation education department and the local Yukon College campus. Basically, in the school itself, they have worked diligently on grassroots curriculum to advance students' academic pursuits in technologies and trades at Robert Service School and continued to meet with partners in education to develop a modus operandi, if you will, that will provide buy-in to the types of academic students who currently fall between the cracks.

Other notes from that meeting a couple of years ago — programs related to skilled trades and technology career choices that are crucial to the Yukon economy are not necessarily being maximized as far as their promotion in Yukon schools to date and not necessarily as a first choice, or even a second or a third choice. In many cases these existing opportunities are being minimized. It was also noted that it has been demonstrated that when tech and trades streams are incorporated in schools, then attendance is improved. This has been observed in rural schools like Ross River, Pelly Crossing and Dawson City for a number of years. Many students who have been fortunate to have benefited from hands-on engagement have themselves become involved in sharing the skills that they have received through mentoring to other students in their communities.

Then after that there was an 18-month feasibility study that was submitted by the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining. It explained that if just the three producing mines that we

currently have in the Yukon were the only mines to continue forward, there would still be a need — close to 1,700 workers would need to be hired just for those existing mines.

So, yes, there is a need. As a teacher in the education system in the Yukon for over 15 years, I can say that yes, we have the stock. A lot of our tech- and trades-oriented students currently cannot really maximize their potential. I am concerned that it is basically the first time we've been hearing about the specific program mentioned in the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin's motion specifically from the Yukon Party. I trust that the minister and the department will take what works for the Yukon and leave the rest and then consult with educational professionals, students and industry before setting down a road toward implementation.

I hope to see movement on the motion as it pertains to the new F.H. Collins build. What a great opportunity to grab some positive public comments after a rocky road in regard to the rebuild to date. So yes, full support. Now, no more studies, no more reports, let's get going on implementation of a guaranteed success story in allowing students to follow an academic path in technologies and trades.

Hon. Mr. Graham: It's interesting to listen to the variety of opinions there. From one we have, now let's get going on this, and from the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, it's "we need a strategy and we need more strategic planning." We do have a strategic plan: the Department of Education just produced one for 2011-16. It's quite interesting and you should read it.

I've been involved in the education field and the advanced education field in Yukon for 35 years. I've seen the transition over the years from a high school program when I went to high school here in the territory run on what was termed a "general" program and a "university-entry" program — the split in students — to the next generation where we had an academic stream, we had an academic technical stream and then we had a non-academic stream.

In all cases, the obvious and most troubling observation to me was that the academics designing these programs all believed that the students without that interest or possibly — in some cases, very few I find — the ability to complete a university entrance-type program of studies should be siphoned off to what they termed in those days as "the trades" or perhaps "clerical training." Those were the two big things.

If they weren't university bound, you siphoned them off to the trades and clerical training as if they were somehow less important or perhaps less deserving of the time, ability and effort of teachers and in some cases, the Department of Education.

I found over the years, especially working at Yukon College, that the academic requirements, both years ago and now, for many of these programs that were considering trades, technology or skills training — in the past, when I would go to the various high schools and try to attract various students to Yukon College, I was accosted time and time again by teachers in the programs in the various grades at the schools and was told over and over that I shouldn't really be talking to these kids, because these kids were all in the academic program. The

ones I should talk to were the non-academic students and those were the ones I should be attracting to the college, because everyone knows you don't need much of an academic background to get into the trades. How things have changed over the years.

For years, at Yukon College, the largest single group of students entering the college was students who had either graduated from a non-academic program in a high school in Yukon or had dropped out over a period of time. Those students were all coming to the college to upgrade their academic skills in order to meet, in some cases, entry requirements for a trades or technology program. In other cases, they were upgrading grades 11 and 12 to go into university. But the vast majority was upgrading the skills necessary to get into a trades or technology program.

I was very interested listening to Kate, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Graham: I have to apologize, because I still think of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King as this kid who used to come over to my house and play with my daughter. I have to tell you that not all students had the advantages that the member had. The member was a grade 12 graduate — a bilingual student, as she has adequately proven to us over and over again — with a full range of academic subjects. So she was able to enter almost any trade that she would have chosen. In fact, she was probably eligible to enter any trade that she chose. Not all students get that ability, because most of those who are channeled into the trades or the technologies don't have the ability to enter with the academic requirements they come out of high school with.

For years Yukon College fought with models of how we could provide this academic upgrading and still keep students interested, especially in the trades, technology and skills programs. After a great deal of experimentation, we found that the best way to keep them interested was to provide hands-on training, but at the same time provide that academic upgrading that was required for students to get into advanced stages of the trades program. It was good to hear from the Minister of Education that that's one of the concepts that he sees as a reasonable and intelligent thing to do with whatever model is chosen as a result of the studies that will be done by the department. It's very important that students remain involved, remain in the hands-on program in order to upgrade their skills at the same time. Many of the studies that were done by the college over the years found that employers especially wanted students with a better background in mathematics and English.

One of the biggest complaints employers had in all cases was that the students were graduating from trades programs and going on to apprenticeships and didn't have the ability to communicate on a high level with customers or with clients and other businesses, so it was something that they really looked forward to gaining, and I'm really glad to see that that's something that the minister feels is necessary.

They also found that this additional English and math training would really help the students or these tradespeople as they progressed in their field because one of the things that

they found also was that the ongoing professional development and skills updating was vitally important as technology advanced in many of the trades and technologies. So any development of a trade and tech — or a trades and whatever — school that we hope to go ahead with, I hope has learned something from those years that the college fought with the exact same questions.

Having said that, it's also really important to establish a facility that has the capability of running a vast number — maybe not a vast number, but a large number — of different programs that are very flexible in their construction, as well as in the programs, to respond to a large variety of demands and shortages in the skilled trades.

Skills shortages don't occur in only one area at a time. Over the years, we at Yukon College would run a trades program or a skills shortage program for five or six years and find that we had oversupplied that particular skill shortage in the years that we ran the program. It's really important that anything we do has that flexibility and adaptability built right in at the beginning. It's important to see spaces designed for any number of programs — related but different.

In the early days of the trades programs at Yukon College, we had one instructor — it was my dad actually — who was able to teach in any number of different mechanical programs. We found that by shifting from heavy duty equipment mechanics to automotive mechanics to another program over the years, none of the programs were oversold in the community and, more importantly, the number of journeymen available to handle those students as they came out on apprenticeships was not overwhelmed as well.

Those are the kinds of things we have to remain cognizant of.

I was really interested to hear the Member for Mayo-Tatchun as he talked about this school in particular that was mentioned in the motion. Nowhere in that motion did I see that we are particularly welded to that particular institute. In fact, the minister also made sure to say to not get hung up on the naming of the facility. It's important that we look at it as a concept; that's what it is, it's a concept. What we are talking about here is exploring models of this school. I was really disappointed to see you getting hung up on that particular model. We are not trying —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Direct your comments to and through me.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I was really disappointed to see the member get hung up on that particular model and that it was designed for a million people and a vast array of trades and skills. That's not what we are attempting to do with this model, or at least I don't think that that's what the member was attempting to do with this motion.

So I was glad to see that eventually, though, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun is going to support the motion, because I think that's a positive thing.

I guess I could go on about the one particular program mentioned by the member opposite, and that was the culinary

arts program. I'm not sure that he's even aware, but there is a culinary arts program that exists in the territory right now at Yukon College. Again, that's what the minister was trying to outline. There are a number of different options that we have to explore — not only this model — but continuing to partner with Yukon College to do the mobiles — to do all of a number of different issues, all of which, combined, will hopefully resolve the trades and skills shortage that we see coming forward in the Yukon over the next little while.

So I hope I haven't bored you too much. I'll wind up at this point, except to say that I've had a long and abiding interest especially in the trades programs. Although I'm a university-educated person myself, one of the very first things my father did at a very young age was take us into his shop and provide an apprenticeship program, because his attitude always was, "Well, when you get into university and find that you can't do it, it's good to have something to fall back on." When I no longer do this, I still have a trade I can fall back on. Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak in favour of this motion from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin urging the Department of Education to explore models for the establishment of a career and technology centre to serve high school students wishing to pursue apprenticeship opportunities.

I think it's a very positive step forward for us, considering this is a theme that is resonating with a lot of governments across the country and indeed I would say across North America. I think the fact is that our education system and both secondary and post-secondary education systems haven't, over the last several years, linked in very well with the needs of our economy. That's something that has been noted by a number of different governments, including recently the federal government in their most recent budget. I don't want to take away from any of the excellent work that has been done to date. Obviously, the Minister of Health and Social Services had some personal experience with the trades opportunities in the Yukon over the many years.

Not to take away from what currently exists, but what is clear — and I think it's not unique to Yukon, but it's clear that we could be doing more to link together our education system with the needs of our economy and the jobs that will be available in our country.

One reality I think we have to accept in Yukon is that we do have a strong economy and our economy will continue to grow over the next several years. We are anticipating that the continued economic growth in the territory will drive the need for a number of new jobs and, in particular, a number of skilled trades positions, which I think are very relevant to the discussion at hand.

I think it bears some discussion of what the reality is with our economy and what we are facing in the years to come. Statistics Canada has revised their real GDP data released on November 19 last year and estimates real GDP growth in Yukon at 6.5 percent in 2011, which was more than double the national rate of 2.6 percent and the strongest in the country, and represented an eighth consecutive year of growth.

Activity related to Yukon's mining sector has been the primary driver of real GDP growth in recent years with Yukon's benefiting from expenditures related to mineral exploration and development and the addition of mineral production from new mining projects.

The Department of Economic Development's current forecast for 2012 — looking back to 2012 — has real GDP growth in the range of two to three percent and increased mineral production from the Wolverine mine coming into force in 2013. Our preliminary forecast for this year is expected to be very similar to last year. So what we're seeing is continued economic growth and continued growth in the mining sector, which of course is intensive on skilled trades and creates a demand throughout the economy for skilled trades in construction and a number of different facets of our skilled trades system.

Speaking of the mining sector and the fact that it's obviously a sector of our economy that is important in the Yukon and one that requires significant input of skilled labour, Natural Resources Canada's current 2012 mineral exploration expenditures estimate that Yukon is at \$226.7 million and the current estimates for 2012 by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources of exploration expenditures are at about \$150 million, which is a little bit below the previous year.

We anticipate another strong year this year, although it is possible to be down. What the reality is on the bigger scene is that the mining sector continues to be strong and continues to be an important part of our economy. There are a few things that could stand as potential roadblocks to it, though, and of course one of them is a lack of skilled trades. We've acknowledged that, and I know a number of other governments — especially in western Canada — have noticed this as well. In Saskatchewan and Alberta there are a number of unfilled jobs that need skilled labour. Those governments have been very active in terms of promoting training opportunities, apprenticeships like this and in some cases they facilitate immigration programs to bring in skilled workers.

Obviously the priority for any government is to ensure that Yukoners — or a government's own citizens — are receiving the benefits of economic development. That's certainly what we would like here as well. I think that something like the proposal here from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin could feed in quite well with the needs of our economy going forward.

As I mentioned, there has been a fair amount of attention recently to the skills gap or the trades gap that is facing our country and probably in the Yukon as well, pursuant to some of the planning and strategy work around the development of the report for the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, with some work done with the Mining Industry Human Resources Council, which reviewed Yukon's projected — what is the term I'm looking for — skills gap between what we have presently and what we are likely to need in the future.

With highly specialized trades and a number of other specific trades, there is going to be a significant gap. Training and apprenticeship programs like the one being discussed here are certainly one way to address those. We know that there will be a significant gap in the trades and production occupations. Those include machine operators; mineral and metal processing

operators; heavy equipment operators; underground mine service and support workers; underground production and development miners; labourers in mineral and metal processing; construction millwrights and industrial mechanics; industrial electricians; heavy-duty equipment mechanics; carpenters; drillers and blasters; welders and related machine operators; steam fitters, pipe fitters, and sprinkler system installers.

While those are some of the more traditional trades, I think it's important to recognize that there are other important skilled workers who are involved in the mining industry who need to be considered as well, including those at the professional and physical science level. Geologists, geochemists, and geophysicists will all be needed. Metallurgical and materials engineers, mining engineers, other professional engineers, mechanical engineers, electrical and electronics engineers, geological engineers, biologists and related scientists, and of course civil engineers will also be needed.

In addition to those, there are a number of technical occupations that will be facing a gap in the Yukon: chemists and laboratory technicians; geological and mineral technologists and technicians; land survey technologists and technicians; electrical and electronics engineering technologists and technicians; mapping and related technologists and technicians; mechanical engineering technologists and technicians; and of course at the management level, supervisors, coordinators and foremen for all of the facets of those mining industries.

We do know that there is a gap that faces us, in terms of the jobs that are needed in the territory and the availability of skilled labour to fill those jobs. Part of the issue when we consider trades training and the ability of students to get involved in apprenticeships or trade opportunities relates to what has been, I think, over the years somewhat of an unfortunate stigmatization of the trades. I think this is beginning to change, but I think it's still the case a bit — that students are often faced with the prospect of graduating high school and deciding that the best option for them is to go off to an academic institution or university and pursue the higher education.

Of course, what that means is something like what I did, with a very traditional liberal arts sort of education or some sort of other academic training.

What the reality is in the territory and in Canada is that while those skills are important, they aren't necessarily meeting the needs of our economy and the link between the training opportunities and the jobs available in the country aren't necessarily being filled.

I was compelled by an article that I recently read by Mike Holmes of *Holmes on Homes*. He is the construction guy on TV. He had a commentary in a national newspaper recently, discussing the need for a focus on trades training. If I may, I would quote from that article. It is from the *National Post* on the first of this month, April 1. He said that, "Unemployment rates among young Canadians are high, hovering around 14%. That's why the new budget is also dedicating \$19-million over two years to encourage young workers to enter short-staffed fields such as the skilled trades, science, technology, engineering and mathematics." He goes on to pose the question: "Why have skilled trades become a national priority? Because in gen-

eral, there are too many unemployed graduates and too many job vacancies. This is not good for our economy. High unemployment rates plus a shortage of skilled tradespeople equals a huge mess on our hands — and Ottawa knows it. Supply is not meeting demand. We have too much of one thing and not enough of another.”

He goes on in his article — and this is the part I was getting to about the stigmatization — to say, “When I encourage children to consider the trades as a legitimate career, sometimes I get a backlash — yes, I read the comments. Some parents say that tradespeople are rude and don’t care about the quality of their work or the people it affects. Or that working in skilled trades leads to only dead-end jobs. But are these comments based on real facts or stereotypes? Because the truth is that a career in the trades today means a better chance at being employed and earning a living that you can raise a family on.”

Maybe if we didn’t think that only people who aren’t highly educated should work in the trades we wouldn’t have so many problems. If you grew up thinking that a career in the skilled trades is a last resort, bottom of the barrel, how would you feel if that was your career?

You wouldn’t treat it with much respect, I can tell you that much. Why should you if no one else does? And that’s exactly what we’ve seen, but it’s starting to change. I’m starting to see the right people — with the right attitude — coming in.

Politics aside, it’s not about pushing our children to pursue a career we approve of; it’s about having balanced discussions when we speak to our kids about possible careers. It’s about discussing real employment opportunities with real income figures. And not just for now, but for the future — their future.

There’s always a good and bad side to everything. I choose to focus on the good — it’s a big reason why I’ve been so lucky.

Can we argue that there is nothing new about the new federal budget? Sure, but should we? Like I said before, old or new, it’s still putting a focus on skilled trades and getting the word out. I guarantee that it has helped inspire people to seriously consider working in the skilled trades. If it means decreasing unemployment rates and filling jobs that need filling then that’s something I stand behind.

What we see here in that commentary is someone who has pushed, obviously, very firmly for an increased focus on trades and someone who works very publicly in the trades, I guess, is a good way of putting it. Certainly there has been somewhat of a stigmatization of the trades in the past. That is something we need to move past as a society.

The motion speaks to exploring a number of different models for the establishment of a career and technology centre. I think that’s something we can look to other jurisdictions for some guidance about. The Minister of Education earlier spoke of some other opportunities in other jurisdictions. I know that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun mentioned one model in Calgary. I think a few that jump out to me if we look west to our neighbours in Alaska — there are a few fairly progressive and interesting ideas that they have undertaken in Alaska to encourage students to consider the realities of trades and opportu-

nities for skilled jobs in the mining industry and other trade-intensive industries.

For instance, one program that is done in conjunction with the University of Alaska Southeast, along with high school students from a number of high schools in Alaska, is the Hecla Greens Creek Mine Academy, which provides training, course work and mentoring for high school juniors and seniors preparing for a career in the mining industry, which provides a pathway leading directly from high school trades programming to real jobs in the real world.

The first step is taking introduction to mining operations and occupations. That course with the University of Alaska Southeast includes lectures, field trips, guest speakers and hands-on lab experience. The next step in that process is the actual academy, which includes introductory-level training including time on a mine-training simulator and trips to an underground mining lab, getting certification upon the successful completion of the mine safety and health administration program.

They then can transition from those programs to actual job shadowing in the industry and then they have the chance to enter into the University of Alaska Southeast’s school of career education program, which is the mine mechanic operational endorsement or power technology in diesel profession. Then, they are selected and given real jobs with the mine itself. So you see it’s possible to link in the actual high school programming to the professional post-secondary training and then ultimately on to a real job in the real world. So that’s one potential model we can look at. It’s specific to the mining industry. It doesn’t have to be. It could be relevant to any profession or any trade — any of the ones I listed earlier.

Of course, another one that I’d like to mention, but it appears I don’t have the time any more, is the Ontario program, which the Minister of Education mentioned previously. I think he didn’t have time to speak to it either. So perhaps we both went on — we didn’t get to the Ontario program, so hopefully the Ontario program isn’t offended that we left them out. But the point I think I wanted to make is that there are a number of options out there for us to consider and this motion’s intention is to ask us — or the Department of Education, more specifically — to consider those options and to consider improving the way that we provide trades training for our students in high school and in our school system..

It’s certainly an important issue for all Yukoners as it will have a direct impact on the development of our economy and the progression of the economy in the years to come.

With that, I’ll conclude by saying that I commend this motion to the House. I think it’s a great idea and an excellent step toward addressing a critical need for our economy, which is the need for skilled labour. I think that starting with high school students here in Yukon by providing apprenticeship opportunities in the trades is a critical issue and I’m very happy to support it. Thank you.

Speaker: You forgot my trade of photogrammetry. I’m a photogrammetrist — the only one in the territory and it’s a trade. It’s also a science.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This is a timely motion. It's a pleasure to be able to speak to this motion today and I'd like to thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this forward to debate. I'd also like to extend my appreciation to the Minister of Education for his work on initiatives such as this and providing opportunities to our young people.

The demand for skilled workers is growing not only in Canada but in the U.S. as well. Just this weekend I was reading an article on a U.S.-based fine homebuilding blog. To summarize the article, the U.S.-based National Association of Home Builders says that skilled labour is getting hard to find and that's slowing the return of the U.S. housing industry to full health. Their data indicated that since June of 2012, residential construction firms are reporting an increasing number of shortages in all aspects of the industry from carpenters, excavators, framers, roofers and plumbers to bricklayers, HVAC, building maintenance managers and weatherization workers. The collapse of the housing industry during the recession forced more than 1.4 million people to seek jobs elsewhere as builders went out of business or cut back. The National Association of Home Builders said it expects 970,000 housing starts this year and 1.18 million in 2014. The article noted that now that the economy is recovering there is an increasing demand for skilled workers in residential construction.

I mention this article because I think it shows that there is a continent-wide demand for skilled trades. One of the comments that caught my attention was a line to the effect that if one doesn't do well in school, one can become a builder.

I want to address that point: that smart people don't do trades. We all know that every child is unique; every child learns in their own way. Any parent who has two or more children knows that no two children have the same interests or the same goals. Each has his own path. In the past, Yukon students were encouraged to pursue their post-secondary education by attending university and getting a degree. I am told that some students were discouraged from pursuing a trades-based career because it was felt that trades offered limited options for earning potential or for long-term challenges to interest and sustain a worker. However, not everyone who graduates from high school wants to go on to further studies, especially in a setting where an emphasis is placed on theoretical or abstract concepts. Some students prefer to learn and create in a hands-on environment. As I said earlier, each child has his own interests and for many Yukon children a career in the trades or technology sectors would be very rewarding. Not everyone is cut out for a university education and that is no reflection on anyone's intelligence. Growing up on a farm, I quickly learned that what matters is getting the job done.

If you have to focus on finding solutions, then you focus on finding solutions. I believe that that is something that the trades really emphasize. For many of us, a hands-on job is a very appealing career choice.

I want to mention several items in response to this motion. I think one of the solutions is to help students encounter or experience new opportunities that may not have been previously

considered. Growing up on a farm, I got to try my hand at a lot of different things. That was an experience I wouldn't change for the world, but not every student has that chance to try such tasks.

One of my constituents, Ed Sharkey, shared with me his concerns with respect to helping students get into trades. He felt that we could really help a small number of highly motivated school students succeed if we help them acquire useful marketable skills before they entered the workforce. I mentioned that not everyone has a chance to be exposed to the trades. Let me share with this House that Yukon Women in Trades and Technology run a program called "cool tools". These after-school skilled trades workshops are offered to young women in high school who want to learn about a career in the trades while building cool projects that they get to keep.

These free workshops explore career options in trades such as plumbing, multi-media, culinary arts, electrical, carpentry and more. Last night was the final night for this session. It ran every Tuesday, beginning on January 15 to April 2, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Yukon College. It's for high school girls, grades 8 to 12. We are working with Yukon Women in Trades and Technology.

The Yukon Women in Trades and Technology mission statement reads: "As a vibrant, sustainable, non-profit society, in order to increase the number of women in Yukon trades jobs, we Educate — about the viability of trades and technology opportunities for women; Recruit — by finding women and employers who would be successful together; Support — potential and present trades women."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer the following information in response. Yukon 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. The community trades training fund has proven successful at providing for these training opportunities. For 2011-12, the Yukon government provided \$1.5 million to community training funds.

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 discreet funds established either with a committee representative of the community or sector and/or with a sponsoring institution — for example, Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon administers the tourism industry training fund — or with a transfer payment agreement directly with the Department of Education. Project funding is not restricted to a specific region or industry.

I want to mention these funds: project-based funding for 2011-12 — and I've already mentioned the first one — Yukon Women in Trades and Technology; Skills Canada Yukon funding for the operation of skills centres and skills clubs was \$79,243; the Individual Learning Centre hairstyling program for 2011-13 — these funds are for two years to run a pre-apprenticeship hairstyle program for up to eight participants for a value of \$53,120; dual credit programming for academic

courses at Yukon College that will provide Yukon secondary students with the opportunity to enrol in the first year academic college-level courses while completing grade 12, for a value of \$54,851; heavy equipment mechanic pre-employment at the Yukon College will deliver a four-month program consisting of 11 courses that will accommodate up to 12 students, for a value of \$44,958; pre-employment millwright program at Yukon College will deliver a four-month program consisting of 10 courses accommodating up to 12 students for \$41,699.

This motion speaks to working with schools and the college. I'd like to share our progress with respect to the element of the motion. Skills Canada Yukon provides youth in Whitehorse and the communities with hands-on workshops and skills clubs facilitated by volunteer mentors and coaches that aim to provide 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 is a qualifier for the Canadian skills competition. I understand that over 1,000 students from across the Yukon compete or participate in the demonstrations. Yukoners always seem to score very well at the Canadian skills competition, including winning that competition. I had a look at some other Canadian jurisdictions. The high school apprenticeship program in Manitoba, called HSAP, lets you start your apprenticeship training while you are still in high school. It combines regular high school instruction with paid, part-time, on-the-job training. This program provides practical paid work experience and the opportunity to get a hands-on experience using highly specialized technological equipment. Also, students can earn up to eight supplemental academic credits for graduation based on 110 working hours per credit. Students typically get paid more than minimum average. They obtain a financial incentive that covers tuition costs; they can apply their on-the-job training hours to continued full-time apprenticeship training after graduation. Students use the skills they have learned for a career in management or to start their own business.

I support this motion to explore models for establishing a career and technology centre to serve high school students who wish to pursue apprenticeship opportunities in trades. I'd like to thank all members of this Assembly who will be supporting this motion and again thank the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing this motion forward.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would first like to extend my thanks to the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forth this motion, which is very timely and relevant to today's Yukon. It speaks to the importance of education as a lifelong learning initiative, which is so critical to our quality of life and to the economic health of the territory.

There have been a lot of comments on the floor of the Assembly so I will try not to be repetitive; however, I did want to touch upon a few points from a personal perspective and also from my perspective as being part of the government over the last number of years.

When we talk about this motion, which talks about looking at exploring models with respect to a career and technology centre, we can't help but look at the evolution of education over the years. Education has evolved significantly. I was born and raised in Watson Lake — rural Yukon; in fact your hometown, Madam Deputy Speaker. I can say that education has really evolved over the years since the time that I went to grade school and right through high school and so forth. Much has changed from how we teach our children, the tools we use to teach our children through the use of technology and experiential education, and how we partner on co-op programs. All the while, I believe it has been a very good step in the right direction. It's about engaging our student population and making it more pertinent to the needs and the priorities of our student population, which is so very important.

Our economy has flourished over the years. It too has changed; it has evolved. Our population has evolved significantly. The diversity in our population has evolved and so we also have to evolve as a territory. That's what the essence of this motion speaks to — it talks about evolution and speaks to how we can keep up with the changes in our population, our expectations and the way our young generation of today think and the use of technology — all that is so very relevant and important to today's Yukon and to our future. That is what it's all about.

When I look at my own family, my father's father came to the Yukon in the 1950s to the Town of Watson Lake as a building contractor. That's all he ever knew. Unfortunately, I never had the opportunity to meet my grandfather. He had passed well before my time, but he made a living from the trades over the years and he travelled the country and raised his family. My father then joined his dad in 1959, if I'm not mistaken, in Watson Lake. He came up from Alberta and also followed in the footsteps of his father.

I'm very proud of the work of my father and all the landmarks he has left us today. I spent the Easter holiday weekend with my family in Watson Lake and had the opportunity to ski at Watson Lake's Mount Maichen. It is a beautiful facility — the ski chalet. My father built that, I am very proud to say.

I can say that my son, who is eight years old, is now also going through the education system. He is now flourishing in French immersion and has many opportunities that weren't necessarily available to me when I was growing up. He remarked, "Wouldn't it be great to be able to build a building such as this?" I said, "Well, that is available to you." It is a very honourable occupation to enter into, whereas that may not have been the case many years ago, even when I was going to school. But, you know, that too has changed — the way we perceive occupations — and now we're facing a critical shortage of skilled tradespeople across the spectrum, in every community throughout the country and the globe, for various reasons.

That's why it's so very important to reflect upon the importance of the trades and technologies and to talk about this as legislators in this Assembly — to talk about what it is that we can do to help effect change and how we can actually change with the Yukon in our changing priorities.

The one thing about the work my father did — and I think it was also made known by the Minister for Tourism and Culture — is that whether you are an electrician, plumber, carpenter — the list goes on, speaking of trades, and there are a litany of trades to choose from these days. Through all of the work my father ever placed his hands on or initiated, he was really applying those skills of mathematics, proficiency in reading and perfection at every turn. These are all very important trades each and every one of us can carry with us, no matter what we choose to do.

As the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate — the status of women in the territory here — it has been great to see more and more young women getting into trades and technology. There was reference made to organizations such as Yukon Women in Trades and Technology — the Young Women Exploring Trades conference that happens every year — it's amazing. It's actually amazing to see young women get involved in trades and do so well at it. The precision, perfection, the focus on detail — those will serve you well in trades and technology and whatever you may choose to do.

Those are partnerships that we need to continue to invest in and continue to flourish as we speak — and to be creative. I know even when we look to some of what has been coined as the “non-traditional sector trades” — even firefighting — I'm a big advocate of reaching out to women and getting more women involved in firefighting — more women getting involved as emergency responders. These are all discussions that are taking place between our Fire Marshal's Office and Yukon Women in Trades and Technology. How can we actually reach out to more women, and especially at a younger age, to help influence their decisions and their choices in life as they proceed in their profession of choice?

I can't say enough about the importance of investments in institutions such as Yukon College, institutions such as the Individual Learning Centre — another means of reaching out to a sector of our population that perhaps was missed over the years, but is now being grasped and graduating, making their mark on Yukon's economic future. It's great to see more emphasis being placed on experiential learning programs, more emphasis being placed upon the trades and various partnerships that we have with First Nation governments and community organizations and the federal government, such as what was just recently announced in the federal budget, and the list goes on. The Yukon Federation of Labour was another entity that was referenced.

These are all partnerships that we obviously need to carry on and nurture, generating new ideas that are relevant to today's Yukon.

Investments in satellite campuses — when we look at Dawson or when we look at Pelly, for example, they are a couple of examples of newer investments in campuses that will go a long way; investments in video conferencing and satellite technology and reaching out to our student populations that don't necessarily have all that perhaps the capital city has available to it. But through technologies, we are able to make that distance much, much shorter and much more available and relevant to our student population. It's about providing that

choice to our younger generation in high school. What a great opportunity to reach out and take a look at what models have worked and what models are relevant to the Yukon in our particular circumstances. When I look at the Yukon, there is so much potential and we really have been able to invest in significant infrastructure over the last number of years. We talk about that infrastructure deficit. It is alive and well, but it's continued investment, whether it's in buildings, water treatment upgrades, road infrastructure, energy — all of that and more.

It's very important and it will take a very skilled workforce to take us to that and to be able to benefit the Yukon population — for Yukoners who take advantage of those economic opportunities — again, expanding upon the skilled capacity and the ability to establish businesses and grow the workforce. Investing in our families is what it's all about, adding to the quality of life that we as Yukoners have come to grow on and be quite proud about it at the same time.

I also want to say that, in addition to my grandfather and my father, my brother has also been involved. He went to university, but also became a journey-level carpenter. He then got his degree in construction engineering and is now project manager for a major international company. He calls Edmonton, Alberta his home but I still say to him not to count Yukon out because there is so much that we could benefit from in terms of his expertise. Our family still holds out a lot of hope that he will be coming home very soon.

I just want to thank the Assembly for the opportunity to say a few words in support of this motion and in support of continued investments in education in the territory and how we have to continue to keep our eye on the ball in terms of keeping focus and moving these initiatives forward in collaboration with our many partners here throughout the territory.

With that, I look forward to receiving the support of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, and I think we are all on the same page and it's great to see. That doesn't happen very often.

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

Mr. Hassard: It's always a pleasure to hear what other people in the Assembly have to say regarding these motions, and I look forward to seeing this one go to a vote. Hopefully again we get it passed unanimously as it appears that nobody seemed to be slamming it anyway. I hope that all goes well for it.

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: 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: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

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

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

Motion No. 384 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled April 3, 2013:

33-1-77

Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees, Standing Committee on: Sixth Report (dated March 28, 2013) (Hassard)