

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, April 8, 2013 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Special Olympics Yukon and athlete ambassadors

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It is my honour and privilege to rise today to recognize Special Olympics Yukon athlete ambassadors and to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of Special Olympics Yukon, including executive director Serge Michaud, president James Tucker and program director Karen Zgeb.

The ambassador program is one of those great programs that I don't think we spend enough time talking about, yet it's a program that has a huge impact on Special Olympic athletes and the audiences that have the opportunity to hear an ambassador speak. In 2011, Special Olympics Yukon launched the athlete ambassador program. Over a two-year period of time, the ambassadors attend workshops for developing skills in public speaking, and they have the opportunity to practise public speaking at a whole variety of events across the territory.

Special Olympics Yukon, in turn, connects the ambassadors with venues and events that help to build confidence on the stage, which indeed lends itself to being confident on the field of play. Ambassadors learn new skills, build self-confidence and grow self-esteem, and the program is what I would call a source of "athlete empowerment".

As Minister of Community Services, I've had the opportunity to see this program in action a number of times. I can tell you that it is indeed working. Last June, for example, Sidney Stewart, a Special Olympics athlete and athlete ambassador, spoke at a Sport and Recreation event that we happened to be hosting at the baseball field.

He spoke about his joy participating in sports, about the friendships he had formed through sport, his positive experience with Special Olympics Yukon and the importance of sport in his life. Sidney Stewart embodies what I would say is the mission of Special Olympics and that athlete ambassador program by inviting an understanding of Special Olympics and building a community of support for the organization.

I want to congratulate all of the athlete ambassadors because they have been working hard over the past couple of years and they have done a tremendous job on behalf of our Yukon. In particular, I wish to just note each of the athlete ambassadors, some of whom are here today and some of whom could not be here: Garry Chaplin, Haley Halushka, Mallory

Pigage, Colin Steriah, Michael Sumner, Sidney Stewart and, of course, the program leader, Karen Wineberg.

Over the weekend a number of my colleagues and I had the pleasure of attending the annual Special Olympics festival dinner auction. We had the distinct honour of meeting and hearing from two-time Olympic speed skating gold medallist, Catriona Le May Doan regarding her involvement in Special Olympics and her experiences as an honorary coach for Team Canada at the recent 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. In particular, Catriona was touched by Yukon's very own 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games silver medallist, Michael Sumner. She had the opportunity to work with Michael and had the privilege of seeing his winning performance in person. It was through this connection that she was inspired to come to Yukon to participate at this year's Special Olympics dinner and fundraiser.

I might add that it was Michael Sumner who had the privilege of extending the opportunity for Catriona to come to the Yukon, but also had the opportunity to actually say the introductory words for Catriona. During her speech, Catriona touched upon the Special Olympics athletes oath, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

These are words that ought to resonate with each and every one of us. However, these words are the words that individuals such as Michael Sumner put into action each and every day. I want to congratulate Michael Sumner on behalf of the Government of Yukon and on behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, not only for his success on the podium in Korea, which included Yukon's first-ever silver medal in figure skating at the Special Olympics World Winter Games, but for his inspiration and passion for promoting Special Olympics at every turn.

Michael is a role model for all of us, and he makes us so very proud to call Yukon our home. I take great pride in the accomplishments of all Yukon athletes, whether competing in the Arctic Winter Games, the Canada Summer Games, the Special Olympic Games or the Olympic Games. Yukoners chosen to take part in these games are remarkable athletes and ambassadors to our territory, and their hard work, perseverance, and willingness to challenge themselves is indeed inspiration for all of us.

The success of this ambassador program and athletes would not be possible without the support of the Special Olympics Yukon organization. The coaches, the organizers, the huge number of volunteers and supporters provide opportunities to our athletes and a very supportive environment for year-round sports training and athletic competition. Contributions of Special Olympics Yukon to our athletes began back in 1978 and have been growing ever since. Today, Special Olympics Yukon boasts over 90 athletes, as well as dozens and dozens of volunteer sport coaches who, with their expertise and commitment, help and support Special Olympics Yukon athletes achieve their goals.

These athletes participate in swimming, athletics, basketball, snowshoeing, speed skating, cross-country skiing, soccer, curling, figure skating, bocce golf and five-pin bowling — half

of which I've never even tried. They participate in local training and events, including the Special Olympics developmental games, which encourage athletes to try new competitive sports in a fun and supportive environment. Some train to be a member of Team Yukon for the Special Olympics Canada Summer and Winter Games, which are held alternately every two years.

Special Olympics Yukon offers two proven youth development programs: Active Start, which involves children aged 4 to 7, and FUNdamentals, which is geared to kids and youth aged 8 to 12. Both programs are designed to create opportunities for young athletes with an intellectual disability to participate in physical activity and sport.

Participation in sports and recreation activities through organizations like Special Olympics Yukon encourages personal achievement, teamwork, fair play and mutual respect — qualities that help us be better people and help us live, work and play well together.

I am so very proud of the Government of Yukon's support for Special Olympics Yukon and its mandate to enrich the lives of Yukoners.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Special Olympics Yukon organization, its board of directors and the staff. In particular, I would like to recognize the work of the executive director, Serge Michaud, whose steadfast commitment and passion for Special Olympics over many years has lent to the continued growth of the organization since it was first formed.

Likewise, I would like to acknowledge the work of Jim Tucker in his capacity of president of Special Olympics. I was informed on Saturday evening that, after 14 years, Jim has chosen to step down as the president of Special Olympics Yukon — a decision I'm sure was very difficult, at best. On behalf of all members of the Assembly, I want to thank Jim for all his hard work over the years, whether it has been fundraising, soliciting new sponsorships, new support and new partnerships to advance the work of the organization. The work of Mr. Tucker has certainly made a difference in the lives of many Yukoners, for which we can be thankful.

Thanks to the collective efforts of these and many, many other volunteers throughout the territory, and of course the family and friends who continue to cheer on these individuals day in and day out, we have seen Special Olympics rise to new heights.

Joining us in the gallery today are a number of Special Olympic ambassadors, and I would ask them all to stand. We have Hayley Halushka, Mallory Pigage — who, I was just informed, had her birthday on Friday, if I'm not mistaken, April 5 — Sidney Stewart, Michael Sumner. We also have with us Jim Tucker, the president of the organization; Serge Michaud, executive director; Karen Zgeb, program director. We also have Jesse Pratt with us; Deb Sumner, Michael's mom, the proudest individual in the Yukon, I'm sure; Trevor Twardochleb; and we also have April Jones here with us as well.

On behalf of the Government of Yukon and on behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to say thank you for being here today and for doing your part on behalf of Yukon.

In recognition of World Health Day

Hon. Mr. Graham: I rise in the House today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing April 7 as World Health Day. World Health Day is celebrated every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization in 1948.

This year the World Health Organization has chosen to focus its anniversary on high blood pressure. It does this in order to raise awareness about this silent killer and to encourage us to take responsibility for our own health. The World Health Organization is actively encouraging adults to get their blood pressure checked. It's also important to follow the advice of health care professionals to help reduce our risk of high blood pressure or "hypertension" as it is also known.

In Yukon, we had a recent reminder about the risks of hypertension. The chronic conditions unit of Health and Social Services ran a series of free blood pressure clinics in March and April of this year. Their goal was to remind people about the importance of getting their blood pressure checked regularly. The reason it's so important to get our blood pressure checked on a regular basis is because hypertension has no symptoms; it has no warning signs and can lead to kidney damage, stroke and heart attacks. In Canada, 20 percent of Canadian adults have high blood pressure. Of these, 42 percent don't even know they have it. In many cases, we can reduce high blood pressure by cutting down on our salt intake, eating a balanced diet, avoiding over-consumption of alcohol, getting regular exercise, keeping to a healthy body weight and avoiding tobacco use. It's common sense really, Mr. Speaker.

We all have a responsibility to look after ourselves and to stay healthy. Getting our blood pressure checked regularly is a simple, easy way to help ensure greater wellness in our lives. The name of the Yukon campaign, which was recently won, was "Know Your Numbers". This is an excellent piece of advice. During the three-week campaign, almost 900 Yukoners took advantage of the blood pressure clinics. The vast majority of them, almost 90 percent, had normal blood pressure, but 97 people recorded high numbers and three people had extremely high blood pressure. These people were encouraged to follow up and have their blood pressure checked again. To make sure it will be possible, additional follow-up clinics will be held. I'd like to encourage my colleagues in the House and all adult Yukoners to get their blood pressure checked regularly so they know their own numbers, and if those numbers are too high, to do something about it.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: The Member for Takhini-Copper King, on a point of order.

Ms. White: I'd like to take an opportunity to introduce Marney Paradis, who is a strong advocate of the Special Olympics and is here to see us today. Thank you, Marney.

Applause

Ms. Stick: I rise on behalf of the NDP and the Third Party to also pay tribute to World Health Day, which celebrates the founding of the World Health Organization.

As the minister across the way mentioned, the focus is on high blood pressure and its prevention. It's a relevant topic, particularly for Canada. Hypertension Canada just released a report stating that up to half of the baby-boomer population in Canada will develop high blood pressure in the next few years. Seven million Canadians currently suffer from hypertension — an increase of 25 percent from only five years ago. High blood pressure increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes and kidney failure. Often, though, people who suffer from high blood pressure are unaware they have it.

The consequences to our health care system are huge. Currently, treating the condition costs the country's health care system \$2.4 billion annually. As the population ages and risks increase, this epidemic will place an even greater demand on our resources. The irony is that high blood pressure is a preventable and treatable condition. We can all greatly lower the chance of getting high blood pressure through physical activity, making healthier choices in our diets and by reducing our sodium intake.

We need to increase the awareness about this deadly condition and we need to continue to educate people that high blood pressure is preventable and that we can protect ourselves by making smart choices in our lifestyle.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would ask that all Members of the Legislative Assembly join me in welcoming a friend and constituent from Porter Creek South, Tim Green.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

- Are there any reports of committees?
- Are there any petitions to be presented?
- Are there any bills to be introduced?
- Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Ms. Hanson: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that the Government of Yukon has become embroiled in numerous unnecessary, costly and time-consuming legal disputes and that in order to understand the Government of Yukon's recent statements on the fear of legal action from Chevron, that the Government of Yukon release all reports, opinion papers and analyses on the cost of implementing the *Final Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* as written.

Speaker: Are there any other notices of motion?
Is there a statement by a minister?
This brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Ms. Hanson: Late last week, the government released *What We Heard*, a response to the Yukon Party's attempt to rewrite the *Final Recommended Peel Watershed Land Use Plan*. The major themes that emerged are direct rejection of the government's position on the plan. Yukoners said loud and clear that the final recommended plan is fair and that it strikes the right balance by protecting the Peel watershed and fostering economic opportunities. The government even recognized this in their own press release.

Now that the government has told us what they heard, Yukoners want to know: Is the government listening? My question, Mr. Speaker, is simple: Will the Yukon Party finally set aside its agenda on the Peel and listen to Yukon First Nation governments who, along with the majority of Yukoners, clearly want to see the final recommended plan implemented?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is correct. We did release the *What We Heard* document last week as well as the entirety of submissions we received from the public on the Peel watershed land use planning process. That's all available currently on the website. As we said at the outset of this process, we asked Yukoners to provide thoughtful and constructive input into that public consultation process, and many Yukoners did just that.

We are going to take into consideration all the feedback we received. We have provided it now to our First Nation planning partners. The next step in that process is to meet with them and undertake the rounds of final First Nation consultations, which is pursuant to the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. That's the next step in this process and that's exactly what we will do.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, it might be instructive to actually look at what the government heard. So let me quote four major themes from their own press release. One: "... the Government of Yukon must balance development and environmental protection in the Peel region." Two: "... the Peel Final Recommended Plan is fair and balanced because it calls for 55 percent permanent protection, 25 percent interim protection and 20 percent open to development." Three: "... The Government of Yukon is not following the rules as laid out in chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*." Four: "... the Peel watershed is an irreplaceable global asset and the views of all must be considered ..."

Mr. Speaker, one really has to wonder if the government even read its own press release. Now that Yukoners have spoken, when will the government accept the fact that their position on the Peel has been rejected by Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, we heard from thousands of individuals from around the globe on this process, and of course we will take into consideration all the input we received. The vast majority of those who participated in the process — this version of it, at least — were from outside of the territory. We value that input and will consider it as well. But when it comes to our priority, of course, we're concerned with what Yukoners think, and that's who we are here to represent.

In the document referenced by the member opposite, a number of themes emerge. The intent of the *What We Heard* document is to identify some of those general themes. Of course, there was a significant amount of input from individuals. A lot of it was thoughtful and constructive, and it was a lot more nuanced than to simply accept the final recommended plan or not accept it. There was a lot of thoughtful input that we're going to consider, and we're going to take that all into consideration as we move forward with the next steps in this planning process.

As I said before, the next steps include concluding the final round of First Nation consultation, which is pursuant to the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

Ms. Hanson: Yukoners want to know when the Yukon Party will stop trying to push its own agenda on the Peel. The government released a document that clearly shows the disconnect between the Yukon Party and Yukoners on the Peel plan. Hours after that was released, the Environment minister was on CBC still defending the government's opposition to the final recommended plan.

Yukoners have been clear. The final recommended Peel plan is balanced.

Will this government do the right thing and finalize the consultation process with Yukon First Nation governments based on the *Final Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* and not some hybrid of their own making?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, what the Leader of the NDP consistently fails to reflect is that the government has followed and will continue to follow the process laid out, and we will continue to follow through on the commitments and statements made by the Premier at the environmental forum during the 2011 election, that being on September 27.

We were elected by Yukoners on that basis and, while we appreciate the perspective of everyone who commented, as the Environment minister pointed out, 86.5 percent of the people who participated in the form letter and postcard campaigns were non-Yukoners. As I've said before in this House — make no mistake — we were elected by Yukoners for Yukoners. We were not elected to represent the people of Pasadena, Düsseldorf or Toronto. The vast majority of Yukoners, in fact — contrary to the assertions of the Leader of the NDP — did not participate in this recent consultation process.

Question re: Keno air monitoring

Mr. Tredger: Responding to Keno City residents' concerns of proximity to Alexco's mining operations and impacts on their quality of life, the chief medical officer of health ordered a health impact assessment. He released his findings in September 2012.

The assessment reported that, "no air quality analysis has been conducted that assesses exposure to or health impacts associated with current or future exposure to particulate matter (dust)." The assessment went on to say that dust monitoring occurs in too few sites and is not at locations likely to be affected by dust from mining-related activities. Can the minister inform this House of the changes to improve air quality monitoring in Keno since this problem was identified in the health impact assessment?

Hon. Mr. Graham: An interdepartmental group continues to meet. The interdepartmental group includes participants from Health and Social Services, Energy, Mines and Resources, the Environment department, Community Services and Highways and Public Works. They are meeting in an attempt to develop a sound approach to responding to the recommendations of the health impact study, and they're also meeting to try to identify the next steps, where we should go and how we should meet the concerns of the residents of Keno, based on the report that has been received. So that's where we're at.

Mr. Tredger: I would remind the minister that the chief medical officer of health said it was critical for the findings and recommendations of the assessment to be followed in a timely, comprehensive manner to ensure public safety. Water contamination from mining activity was identified as a major concern. The health impact assessment reported that, "A robust groundwater monitoring plan within an adaptive management component and a strong focus on communications is essential both to ensuring the safety of the local drinking water supply and to reducing stress and anxiety."

The assessment also recommended the need for a plan for backup water to ensure that residents and visitors access only safe sources of water. What improvements in water monitoring have taken place in Keno since this problem was identified in the health impact assessment?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: To date no contamination has been found in the community drinking water supply and recently at a Water Board hearing in February about Alexco Resources' mine plans, Environment Yukon's submission made it clear that protecting the community drinking water well is our highest priority, one that we share with the Department of Health and Social Services. That was certainly articulated earlier by the minister. We expect the Water Board will soon issue a water licence that will require several monitoring wells, between the new mining activity and the Keno City fire hall well that supplies drinking water to area residents. It's something that we will continue to work on with the residents of Keno and, of course, as the Minister of Health and Social Services noted, we have an interdepartmental working group that is currently working collaboratively with the departments of Energy, Mines and Resources, Environment, Community Services and Health and Social Services to ensure that healthy drinking water is available to those residents.

Mr. Tredger: The chief medical officer said that the proof would be in the pudding and it was imperative that this be followed up and communicated with the residents of Keno. In the event of a mining disaster or a road accident, the assessment reported concerns with the capacity of local on-site first aid and Mayo ambulance services to provide an effective emergency medical response. The assessment called it essential that emergency and disaster response plans be established, maintained and updated and that these plans be coordinated with local emergency responders.

It has been six long months of industrial activity and the Keno City residents are still waiting. Can the minister inform this House of the changes to improve emergency response in

Keno since this problem was identified in the health impact assessment?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I think the first thing that's important to point out is that when a mine site is permitted, it goes to the Yukon environmental and social-economic assessment process.

Second, I would like to point out to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and remind him that Alexco fills a unique dual role in that they are also — in addition to a mining site — performing work for the federal government to clean up the historic liabilities from over 100 years of mining in the area.

In fact, as far as emergency response, there are requirements in first-aid regulations that apply to mine sites for their workers, and they are required to fulfill those obligations under occupational health and safety regulations. I hope I've provided some clarity for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

Question re: Whistle Bend subdivision

Mr. Silver: I have a question about the Whistle Bend subdivision. During the planning stages of this development, the Liberal caucus offered the government two pieces of advice: make the lots affordable, and don't make them the size of a postage stamp. The government ignored both suggestions.

After an extended period of time — a time when there were no government lots for sale in Whitehorse at all — we are now in a situation where there are lots that clearly missed the market demand. It comes back to poor planning. At the height of demand there were no lots available and now, as demand starts to slip, there are small, overpriced lots that the public doesn't seem to want. It has been more than six months since the lots went up for sale and 75 percent remain unsold.

Why did the government take so long to get these lots on the market, and why are they so overpriced that people can't afford them?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the MLA for Klondike for putting his views on the public record, and that is pointing fingers at the City of Whitehorse for poor planning.

That's not how we on this side of the Legislative Assembly see it. In fact, I believe that the Yukon government has worked very well with the City of Whitehorse and its land development protocol that has been in place for a number of years, which has really led to the design and the planning of the Whistle Bend subdivision. For the very first time in many years, the Yukon government actually has a number of lots that are available over the counter in a number of different communities, of which those particular lots are well worth below the market value.

So just again to correct the record — because I know the MLA for Klondike — we are unfortunately in a bit of a habit of having to correct the record with the member opposite — we are very proud of the government in terms of moving ahead with an adequate supply and range of land options throughout the territory in all communities.

Mr. Silver: I'm merely following the advice from the tribute, and I'm trying to be brave in my attempt to showcase the concerns of Yukoners.

This is what happens when you plan poorly — you end up with lots that are overpriced and too small. I know the minister

is unwilling to admit that these government lots clearly missed the market demands, but that's exactly what happened.

On January 11, a local real estate agent noted that the lot prices are three times higher than lots in Copper Ridge. He told the media, and I quote: "They've overpriced themselves so much that people are looking at it and saying I can't afford that." The result is six months after they went on sale, more than 75 percent of these lots remain unsold.

There are millions of dollars in the recently announced budget for future lot development in Whitehorse and in the communities. Will the minister commit today to doing a better job planning for these developments so we end up with lots that people actually want and can afford?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: The member on this side of the Legislative Assembly will do a good job in clipping out the comments from the MLA for Klondike and distributing it to every municipality in this territory. The Government of Yukon, unlike the interim Leader of the Liberal Party — I think that's what his role is — will be going to work, will continue to work with each of our municipalities on land development protocols like that we have been able to negotiate with the City of Whitehorse and which has been in force and effect for some time.

Again for the member opposite's record, when it comes to Whistle Bend lot prices, they are approximately 6.5 percent below market value. They are at development cost, and they are available over the counter. A number of those lots have sold and a number of those lots remain for sale.

The Government of Yukon is proceeding with phase 2 of that particular subdivision, which happens to be the largest subdivision in Yukon's history, and those too will become available later on this fall.

Yukon government is very much committed to working in partnership with municipal governments to bring new residential lots to the market while striving to keep costs at the lowest possible.

Mr. Silver: Another result of the Yukon Party's poor planning is the building of that subdivision itself. There are numerous problems with the subdivision because the government rushed construction in order to get the lots on the market. Why did they rush? Because they found themselves in a position where there weren't lots available for purchase when you went in and tried to buy them. It was crisis management.

The results so far: The city is still refusing to take ownership of the project until several problems are fixed, a major lawsuit with a contractor is still out, and several disputes between the government and that contractor are still unresolved. That is not a record to be proud of, and it is a result of poor planning.

With regard to the dispute with the contractor — and it is not before the courts, so the minister is free to answer it — the contractor believes that he is still owed \$1.2 million. Is the minister refusing to discuss this matter with the contractor? How does the minister intend to resolve this situation?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I'm not sure where to begin. First off, Whistle Bend is an example of our partnership between the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Yukon. It is a partnership that was made possible through the development and

creation of the land development protocol agreement, which certainly points out the responsibility of land planning, subdivision and consultation all through the City of Whitehorse, at which time the Yukon government then proceeds with development.

Mr. Speaker, we are upholding our end of the bargain, and we certainly are working toward making land available within the City of Whitehorse.

The City of Whitehorse and Community Services have a long history of working cooperatively and working through issues that arise when it comes to construction, particularly turnover and operation of all our municipal infrastructure.

By the way, I will just again remind the member opposite that this is, in fact, the largest subdivision ever to be provided through the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse.

Mr. Speaker, there is no reason to expect that the Whistle Bend subdivision is going to be anything other than like previous projects when it comes to jointly resolving those issues that come up.

Question re: Robert Campbell Highway improvements

Ms. Moorcroft: When heading east down the Campbell Highway, the conditions of the road are generally good, but as soon as you pass the turnoff to Faro and start heading toward Ross River, you drop on to a treacherous, broken chip-seal road, and traffic must slow down to 50 kilometres an hour or less.

The 370 residents of Ross River have seen millions of dollars spent by the Yukon Party government on highway upgrades without a dime to fix the terrible road they have to drive every day.

Why has the Yukon Party, after 10 years in power, done nothing to fix the road to Ross River?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: The Yukon faces significant challenges in developing and maintaining the network of roads that provide the very foundation of our territory. That such huge challenges can be met on a daily basis is a testament to the men and women who have devoted their careers to building, maintaining, monitoring and clearing public roads, highways and bridges in the Yukon.

This year, if you have a chance to look at the budget — we have addressed a lot of concerns in the budget and we're committed to maintaining the road between Ross River and Faro, as with all our other roads. We have tax standards that we follow, and we look at the amount of traffic and we maintain — I have to say, I'm pretty proud of the work our colleagues do.

Ms. Moorcroft: There is absolutely no dispute between me and the minister opposite that the Highways and Public Works crews do a good job. That was not my question for the minister.

The Yukon Party has put a lot of money into the Campbell Highway, but they have never improved the deplorable stretch of highway between Faro and Ross River, and it's been neglected for too long.

There is nearly \$50 million in this year's budget allocated for highway construction and rehabilitation, but the government has not identified the funds to fix the highway to Ross

River. This is a public safety issue for the 370 residents of Ross River and their friends and family who drive up to see them. The terrible condition of the road also doesn't encourage tourists to check out the beautiful corner of the Yukon there and attractions such as Lapie Canyon and the abundant wildlife viewing, so will the Minister of Highways and Public Works commit funds in this fiscal year to fix the road into Ross River, or is he content to continue to neglect the community?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I might remind the member opposite some of the major investments in the Robert Campbell Highway bring a lot of benefits to Ross River — some of the projects that we're doing — the Ross River arena is underway right now. Ross River is a very important community and we at Highways and Public Works treat it as seriously as we do every other community.

Every year these same highways and roads draw thousands of travellers who go there. Last year we had exceptional rain. I'm proud to say we maintain all our highways to the exact same standard that the residents in each community deserve.

Question re: Seniors housing

Ms. Stick: Since 2005, the Yukon Party government has been aware of the problems at the 207 Alexander Street residence in downtown Whitehorse. In February 2011, the minister responsible said, "... we will have somebody in there to evaluate the building and see what needs to be done to bring it up to code, to put it into a more serviceable condition..."

Later in 2011, a plan to renovate the building was announced but less than a year later, the Health minister said, "We are in the process of implementing or building or renovating 207 Alexander Street to make that available for people who are hard to house."

In December 2012, a design contract was awarded and a contract to demolish the old building was tendered. Surprisingly, the demolition tender was cancelled a few weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, what is going on with 207 Alexander Street?

Hon. Mr. Kent: My understanding is that the fencing has gone up around the building as of this weekend to begin the demolition and we'll be replacing that facility with 34 units for seniors housing, maximizing the footprint in the downtown core, looking to density, what we committed to last August — I believe an announcement was made by the Premier and our Member of Parliament that I also attended, along with the chair of the Yukon Housing Corporation. We're looking forward to having the construction tender go out within the next couple of months and moving forward on this project so that we can have seniors in there in 2014 taking advantage of the higher density and maximizing the number of units that we can put in for seniors housing in the downtown area.

Ms. Stick: The demolition contract was cancelled. The fence might be up, but the building is not coming down. Yukoners are getting used to major capital projects being punted around like a political football by this team Yukon Party. We know all too well — what with the F.H. Collins saga — that expediency for election purposes can mess up good planning, project management and fiscal responsibility. 207 Alexander Street has been used as the solution for various social issues. We heard about the hard to house; we heard about

persons with disabilities and now seniors. We all want good, appropriate, affordable housing for our seniors, and we sincerely hope that when the government says 207 Alexander Street will be for seniors, that it is, and we hope they will be working with a good design.

Will the minister release the design of the new seniors complex and provide details about how Yukon seniors have been involved in the discussions on this project to date?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, we're committed to that project. As I said, the demolition will be undertaken shortly. My understanding is design documents are 95 percent complete. They'll of course have to go to the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors for their final approval before we can release them for comment, but we're moving forward. I would expect a construction tender to be put on notice within the next couple of months, as I mentioned, and we look forward to replacing that facility with 34 units for seniors, rent geared to income — another example of providing affordable housing for Yukoners, in this case our seniors. They would pay 25 percent of their gross income. We look forward to having that building ready in 2014 for the seniors who will move in there — again with an eye to maximizing the number of units we can put on that lot, in a crucial area, which is the downtown core of Whitehorse.

Question re: Renewable energy strategy

Ms. White: Why isn't the Yukon Party government showing leadership when it comes to the development of renewable energy? Of the four priorities in the energy strategy, the government appears to be working on only one: oil and gas development. Renewable energy did not even get a nod in this year's Budget Address. The government rationale for LNG is focused on the short-term needs of industry. This government is ready to invest in increased infrastructure and reliance of fossil fuels without proper consideration of other possible solutions.

A fuel's full life cycle should be considered. The cumulative impacts of fossil fuel dependence are clearly pointing us to a different future. A more hopeful energy future with reduced reliance on fossil fuels is one that uses a diversity of local sources to be power independent. A lot of great work and great learning has been done on wind energy in the Yukon, N.W.T., and Alaska. Why has this government been so dismissive about potential wind energy as part of Yukon's renewable and diverse energy future?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It's somewhat surprising to hear this type of rhetoric come out of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. It really doesn't reflect an understanding of the work that has gone on both within government and within the Yukon Energy Corporation, which includes exploring the feasibility of things like biomass and wind energy. At this point, on the basis of work done to date, plus numbers out of other jurisdictions — because, of course, we can avoid spending a lot of money doing work ourselves when there is good information from other jurisdictions that is relevant to us — indicate that wind energy per kilowatt hour is not the most feasible source. Of course, for wind energy — because of the unreliability of

wind — for every megawatt you have of wind energy you need a megawatt of something else to back it up.

Ms. White: Yukon's energy strategy lists priorities for renewable energy, and one of them reads, "Support and demonstrate renewable energy projects in communities off the electrical grid to reduce diesel use".

One exciting energy project is the development in Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay that could be a perfect match for this Yukon energy strategy goal. The Kluane First Nation is getting ready to build three wind turbines this year. They're a local, non-fossil-fuel based alternative to diesel power. Will the minister commit to supporting the Kluane First Nation's Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay wind turbine project?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What I would again remind the NDP member is that when you have a certain type of energy source such as wind, you require a megawatt of something else to backup each megawatt you put in, you have to consider that overall cost. How much per kilowatt hour is the member and her colleagues prepared to see either ratepayers pay or taxpayers subsidize to pay for types of energy sources that they consider more attractive?

If I may quote the former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher — today, of course, being the day of her passing — and in tribute to the Iron Lady, I will borrow a quotation from her: "Pennies don't fall from heaven. They have to be earned here on earth." So what that means is that somebody has to pay for the cost of something if it's a more expensive energy solution.

We are committed to supporting the pursuit of renewable energy solutions, including the long-term development of additional significant hydro capacity. We also have to be realistic when we look at sources such as wind. If it costs a significant amount per megawatt hour that will have an impact either on the rate base or require a significant taxpayer subsidy, that money has to come from somebody's pocket.

Ms. White: If I was given a choice to pay for energy from fossil fuel or from wind, I'd choose wind. Wind is a great complement to Yukon's hydroelectric energy because their supplies are highest at opposite times of the year. Wind supply is high in winter, and that's when diesel-dependent communities need it most. Yukon can benefit from lessons learned from our neighbours. Industry is using wind energy in N.W.T., and the Alaskan government is committing long-term funding for wind projects. It is a question of political will. This government decided to go with LNG, without an analysis for the real potential of renewables. The government's rationale for LNG is to meet the short-term needs of a boom/bust economy. Yukoners are asking the government to look beyond fossil fuels. Once full life-cycle and cumulative impacts are factored in, LNG is simply not a cheaper or greener alternative energy. Where are this government's long-term plans? Lack of leadership on energy affects the economy and the environment. How does the government plan to meet the energy strategy's target of increasing Yukon's renewable energy supply by 20 percent by 2020?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, that's very nice rhetoric coming from the NDP, but it does not reflect the facts. I would point out one thing that the members have missed: In fact, what is being talked about for the LNG role in the Yukon Energy Corporation supply chain is replacement of existing diesel capacity, including Mirrlees engines, which are becoming time expired and will require replacement with something. It makes more sense to replace that with liquefied natural gas based on the cost analysis. The capital expenditures are roughly the same for the equipment. The operations costs are roughly one-third of the cost based on work that has been done jointly by Yukon Energy Corporation working in partnership with Western Copper and Gold.

We remain committed — contrary to what the member has said — to pursuit of renewable energy, including our commitment to pursuing the development of Yukon's hydro resources as well as other resources including biomass and wind. When it comes to those sources, though the member may be prepared to pay more per kilowatt hour for them, to place that burden on the ratepayers, or expect the taxpayers to pick up the tab — again, to quote from Lady Thatcher: “Pennies don't fall from heaven, they have to be earned here on earth.” Someone has to pay for the costs. The member may be willing to, but other Yukoners are also very interested in having cost-effective access to energy.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will proceed with Orders of the Day.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 53, *Act to Amend the Education Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 53: *Act to Amend the Education Act*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 53, *Act to Amend the Education Act*.

Hon. Mr. Kent: First of all, I'd like to thank all members of the House for unanimously supporting these changes at second reading. I think it shows the cooperation that exists among members in the House. I look forward to hopefully getting through these amendments this afternoon rather quickly so that we can get back into debate on the main operation and maintenance estimates.

As mentioned in my second reading speech, I believe these are small amendments, but they are also an important part of what we're doing to help meet this government's commitment to improve student achievement and success in our schools and increase the engagement of parents and school communities as we work toward that goal.

Just to remind members, I'd like to talk about what we're doing to improve achievement and success in our schools. Going back to 2009, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada completed its examination of how Yukon Education delivered educational programs and made some recommendations about how the gaps that were found in student performance could be addressed. There have also been other reviews and consultations over the past several years indicating that Yukon Education needs to address student performance concerns in the territory. As a result, we continue to examine all aspects of our programming to find ways to improve the outcomes.

Educational research has indicated that providing more instructional time for students is an effective strategy for improving student performance when it is also supported by the implementation of sound educational practices. I think this is an important aspect that came up during second reading that I'd like to reiterate for members. More instructional time doesn't necessarily mean more time in the classroom. It could be opportunities on experiential learning outings, which is what we're now calling field trips. There are plenty of opportunities to increase instructional time without going to what would be some of the more traditional methods of instruction where students are in class. This is really about increasing the student-teacher contact time.

Because of this, we're proposing that there be 950 hours of instruction for students in each school year, which is an increase of 15 hours per year. We are also proposing that there be an additional 15 hours per year dedicated to professional development activities for our school-based staff.

By increasing the amount of instructional time, as well as the number of hours for teacher training and development, we intend to increase both the amounts and the quality of instruction delivered in our schools to support student performance and success.

Secondly, I'd like to highlight how the provisions of this bill will help us increase the engagement of our school communities with an eye to help us improve on student achievement and success. Under the *Education Act* as it currently stands, the members of each school council are elected every two years in the fall, usually in early October, about a month after the new school year has started. We've heard on many occasions from school council members and others in the school community that school councils are often not able to begin functioning effectively until well into the school year

because their members do not assume their duties until after the school year has started.

We've also heard that it can be difficult for a school council to function effectively at the beginning of a school year when there has been a significant turnover of school council membership after an election. As a result, under the proposed amendments, the next school council election will take place in May 2014 and then each two years thereafter. This is being done so that, following each election, our school councils will have the opportunity to prepare to function effectively from the beginning of each school year. There is an opportunity to overlap with the existing school council and perhaps attend their June meetings after the swearing-in occurs.

The bill also provides us with the ability to ensure continuity on school councils by extending the term of a member of the previous school council by up to a year when no member of the previous school council has been elected to the new council. This, again, is upon the request of the incoming school council and does give the minister the opportunity to do so.

So, to sum up, the changes we're proposing are an important part of what Yukon Education is doing to provide quality instruction to all of our students and to increase the engagement of our school communities, all for the purpose of improving student achievement and success in Yukon.

We had the opportunity to not only take these proposed amendments out to the school councils and engage them in early December — December 1 and December 8 at two separate workshops — but we also had the opportunity to present to Council of Yukon First Nations, at their leadership table, and other meetings with First Nations as well, to inform them of what changes we are planning. When we initially went out there were four proposed amendments, and we've taken those amendments down to two, plus the option for me, as minister, to extend a school councillor's term up to a year. The two that were dropped after the consultation were with respect to staggered terms, and I believe there was some contemplation of three-year terms as well. After hearing back from individuals, those are the two we moved away from.

I thank everyone for putting in their comments and their submissions to the Department of Education through that time. I should also mention that the timing was close to Christmas because of the provisions that we made within the collective bargaining agreement to compensate our educators for the additional 15 hours of instructional time and the 15 hours of professional development time. In order to respect that process — I don't believe it was ratified until late November — we moved as quickly as possible to get this piece out for consultation. I believe it ran from early December until the end of January, at which time we were able to make the amendments that we wanted to make and look forward to having them passed in this sitting of the Legislative Assembly. I thank members as well for recognizing that it was necessary for me to bring these amendments forward quickly during this sitting because we are waiting to finalize the school calendars. Of course, the additional instructional hours will be part of that school calendar exercise.

I just want to address the proposed amendments by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, the Education critic for the Official Opposition. I received a letter this morning dated April 8. Perhaps I will just read this letter into the record.

“Dear Minister Kent,

“I had committed to providing you with the amendment I intend to table in the Legislative Assembly as part of the amendments to the *Education Act*. I have had discussions with members of the Yukon Teachers Association. I believe this amendment reflects their prerogatives.

“This amendment does two things: (1) changes professional development to in-service” — then there's a highlight of that — and the second one is “gives opportunities to substitute teachers to expand their knowledge of Yukon curriculum, become part of the team and better able to teach our kids.”

I will table this letter, as well, for members, just so that everyone can take a look at the full text of the letter.

Given the late timing of these amendments and the fact that I think we can address them through other means, I won't be supporting the amendments that are being put forward by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

As I mentioned previously — and even a letter I received from the member opposite mentioned concern about the short time frame of the consultation period — this certainly doesn't meet the standards of consultation on legislative changes that Yukoners have come to expect.

First of all, I will address the first one, which is to change the term “professional development” to “in-service”. What we found through the Yukon Teachers Association collective agreement is it provides for a professional development fund that provides funding for training and development activities for YTA members. The fund is administered by the YTA professional development committee. The proposed amendments to the *Education Act* include an additional 15 hours for professional development for school staff. That additional 15 hours is for professional development purposes that will be funded and administered by Yukon Education and will be in addition to and separate from the training and development activities funded by the YTA professional development fund.

The second aspect of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun's amendments are with respect to allowing substitute teachers to participate in the additional professional development activities. Again, those activities are for school staff who are employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*. Substitute teachers are not employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*, but if we choose to invite substitute teachers to participate in the additional professional development activities, we certainly have the ability to do so.

I know members opposite — the Member for Mayo-Tatchun — raised the issue of amending the *Education Labour Relations Act* in the fall sitting of the Legislature. I've mentioned on a number of occasions that there is a process in place that we have to follow. I have had conversations with the Yukon Teachers Association about this specific act. It is the responsibility of the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission and in working with her and hearing feedback

from officials, not only in Education and the Public Service Commission, we look forward to looking at their advice as to how we can make these changes.

I did speak briefly with the Member for Klondike about the amendments prior to the start of sitting today and I think we've come to an understanding on how we can move forward without actually introducing the amendments that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun has put forward. I certainly don't want to put words in the Member for Klondike's mouth, so I'll give him the opportunity, perhaps during Committee of the Whole, to ask those questions. I again thank members for their unanimous support of this bill at second reading and look forward to answering questions in Committee.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Tredger: We did unanimously support this *Act to Amend the Education Act* when it was before the House before. We do have some reservations about it. While what it's trying to accomplish is all well and good, I think it's a lost opportunity for the children of the Yukon and for the teachers of the Yukon. When we increase the hours of instruction, that opens up some opportunities. As I mentioned previously, what we need to focus on is the quality of instruction rather than the quantity of instruction, which would lead us into the professional development or in-servicing aspect of this item.

One of the concerns that I have with the number of hours — and identifying the number of hours — is that, in some ways, it doesn't leave the opportunity for schools or for industry to try different approaches to education.

We talked about skills training. Are people who are apprentices in our dual credit courses limited by their hours? We talked about year-round schooling. What effect does this have on that? Many jurisdictions have gone to year-round schooling and found it very effective.

I think the act of increasing the number of instructional hours is a good thing, and that's why I supported it the first time around. However, in the rush to get this through, we may have lost some opportunities. The 15 hours of in-servicing the minister refers to — I had alerted him last week that I had some concerns.

I offered to meet with him last Friday; he was too busy. This morning I took this stuff up to him — the paper — and offered it to him in good faith. He had time to go and talk to the Leader of the Liberal Party. I brought that amendment forward in good faith because of my experiences when I was with YTA and because of my conversations with members of YTA and the professional development committee. There has been some confusion over what "in-servicing" is and what "professional development" is, and I will go into that later, when we're talking about it.

But I am quite concerned at the tone set by the minister in this, as he's looking for unanimous consent.

I would remind him that he has a department, as well as many researchers, at his disposal to develop education material.

As for substitute teachers, they are an integral part of our system. In the community we have dedicated substitute teachers who are regularly in their community school and who become a part of the community school and dependent upon it.

Madam Chair, this territory and Prince Edward Island are the only two jurisdictions in Canada that do not recognize them as employees. That is not for discussion here now, that's for another time. The minister has been aware of that and the Yukon Party has been aware of that for 10 years. Many of these people are in our schools every day. Many of them take over for teachers; they are thrust into situations where they need to think and act on their feet. To me, it only makes sense that if they're willing to put in the time, that we extend to them the courtesy of the opportunity for in-servicing — whether it be in a new math curriculum, whether it be in resiliency training, or whether it be in literacy.

The members on this side of the House want the best teachers available teaching our children. We want them to be our employees, and we want to be assured that they are trained and involved and know what they're about, and we want to do everything in our power to make sure that happens. In-servicing for substitute teachers will go a long way to achieving that.

While I do agree with the additional 15 hours for in-servicing, I think it's critical that we differentiate between in-servicing and professional development for the sake of clarity. Having talked to various school council members and various school councils and principals, I can agree with having the elections take place in the spring. That may cut out some potential members or it may not; that remains to be seen.

If my child is in grade 7, I may not be thinking about high school and all of the ramifications in May; I'm still trying to get him or her through grade 7. Maybe in September I would be ready to join a school council. That's neither here nor there, Madam Chair, but the minister has decided to go ahead with spring ones and I can agree to that.

More important than when school council elections are is how we ensure that they're contested. How do we ensure that school council members are an integral part of our school community and recognized as such by parents? How do we get them involved and active? This might go a small way; I don't know. The minister seems to think it will. I hope it does, but it's going to take more than that.

It's also important to look at the training opportunities for school councils, and perhaps this will work well. If they're elected in May, that gives us three or four months of opportunities to work with them so that they can learn what potential they have as school council members; what dreams; why they ran and how they can implement some of those dreams; how they can work with the school staff and the school community and the department to fulfill their jobs. What are their roles and responsibilities? That training has at best been haphazard.

I'm hoping that the department and the minister are focusing on that. I'm hoping that the minister recognizes the value of a full and committed and involved school council. I'm hoping that he is listening to their concerns around the school calendar, around sports teams, around school buildings and around potential field trip opportunities. The onus is on the minister now to listen and involve those school councils so that a position on a school council is something that is meaningful and not merely

a rubber stamping of occasional activities, as I've heard from some school council members.

The *Education Act* envisioned that school councils and school boards would play a critical role in the education of our children. This is a small step in that direction, but it's not nearly enough. Again, perhaps in amending the act, we could have looked at some alternatives there.

I was pleased to see that the minister included an option to provide an appointment for an additional member so that there is some transition. I would also encourage that the minister ensure a superintendent has time to visit the schools, spend time with new council members and talk to them about their position, establish a liaison between the school council and the department and establish a liaison between the school council and the school.

Excuse me; I just need to find the material.

It's interesting that we move from 950 to 980 hours of instruction. I know that there are many different models around the world. My question for the minister: Has he looked at and entertained other proposals, in particular from the Nordic countries and northern Europe, to see how they go about schooling — whether it's the amount of time or what activities or other options. What has he looked at?

The bill also will increase the non-instructional time for teachers so that they can improve and be better able to teach our children. I have a few questions about the intent of the amendments. The issue is really about how professional development is defined. The *Education Act* does not define professional development, but the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Teachers Association does define it. It is a contractually based fund, administered and approved by a joint professional development committee and usually driven by teacher request. The term "in-servicing" means non-instructional time for training, et cetera, which the department pays for and administers.

It's my understanding that this is the intent of this change to the act. Thank you to the ministers for their briefing; it was quite clear. My concern with the overlap of the terms "professional development" and "in-servicing" is that it has caused consternation and confusion in the past. One of the things that we decided in Education a number of years ago was that there was a lot of stuff that was done by word of mouth and it was important to get the policies down in a clear and concise manner that meant that people who were not at the table now, but would be in the future, would understand the intent of it.

The amendment reads: "15 hours for professional development for school staff who are employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*." Again, my concern — which will be addressed in the amendment when it's time to bring it forth — is that the funding administration is done by the department and not by the professional development committee. That needs to be clear. I hope that the minister's assertions that it is written into the collective agreement will carry sufficient weight, as it's obvious that he is not intending to support my friendly amendment.

I will be addressing the amendment, which I shared with the minister, and I will introduce it in the clause-by-clause de-

bate. Right now, I would ask that the minister clarify his intent in terms of the amendment. What does "professional development" mean? Is this really "in-servicing", as was the intent of the negotiations? Since substitute teachers are not defined as employees under the *Education Labour Relations Act*, yet are a critical part of the education of our children, we feel substitute teachers should have the right to access non-instructional training. They have been explicitly excluded by this. Will the minister support an amendment to correct that? Thank you for your time.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Just to address some of the concerns — obviously, a very emotional topic for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. I know he is a long-time educator in the territory and certainly has a lot of different ideas and suggestions to improve the educational outcomes for our Yukon students.

Off the top, just to clarify, I know the member opposite, prior to the start of the sitting on Thursday, came and asked for a meeting on Friday. I was unable to accommodate him. Our schedules, as I'm sure most can appreciate, get very busy, and I didn't have an opportunity to accommodate the member on Friday with a meeting. As I mentioned, it was important to bring these amendments to the floor of the House today so that we can finalize the school calendars. The 15 additional instructional hours are an important part of those school calendars. We certainly want to get them out the door as quickly as possible.

With respect to discussions with the Leader of the Third Party — the Member for Klondike — those discussions happened in just some friendly banter that we often engage in prior to the start of the sitting. We normally arrive about 15 minutes early for the afternoon sitting and are able to talk about any number of things. This was one of the discussion points for today.

I'll leave it to the Member for Klondike to bring forward what we talked about, rather than trying to put words in his mouth. It's important that all members recognize that this certainly isn't a full review of the *Education Act*.

These amendments were designed to accommodate additional hours of instruction and professional development that were negotiated during the collective bargaining agreement and shared over a very condensed two-month period with school council members and other interested people — and, of course, our First Nation partners as well.

Again, I couldn't agree more that the substitute teachers are an integral part of our system. When it comes to the amendment the member put forward to allow substitute teachers to participate in additional professional development activities, he did reference the other piece of legislation that speaks to school staff, who are defined as employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*. Substitute teachers, as he mentioned, are not employees within the meaning of that act. While that's a concern that the member opposite brings forward, it certainly isn't anything we deal with in the act that's before the House right now.

Of course, we can choose to invite substitute teachers to participate in the additional professional development activi-

ties. If we do make that choice, we will be able to do so under the way the current system operates.

Just to inform members of the House about the variety of substitute teachers — there are 397 substitutes. Just to give a sense of what their diverse background is, 188 of those teachers have no bachelor's degree; 75 of them have a bachelor's degree of some sort — not necessarily a bachelor's of education; and 134 of them are certified teachers. So there will be very differing needs within that group — as far as professional development activities are concerned.

With respect to the change in the term “professional development” to “in-service”, as I mentioned, the additional 15 hours for professional development purposes will be funded and administered by Yukon Education and will be in addition to and separate from the training and development activities funded by the Yukon Teachers Association professional development fund. If the YTA is concerned about clarification after discussions here in the Legislature, I can have department officials clarify with the YTA in a letter going forward that these are indeed separate to the professional development fund activities — that these are 15 additional hours we're looking to incorporate into a teachers institute that, for two days, will occur prior to the start of the school year. The remaining five hours will be spent as part of the school-based team working in their individual schools immediately prior to the commencement of students coming to class.

When it comes to some of the comments about the school council, I know there is a significant amount of training offered to school councils. There were those two workshops — I guess I should step back.

After the election, there was an evening orientation session held with the council members. That was in October and I was able to attend and actually stay for the entire session, as well as the Deputy Minister of Education. The Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees offers training, some of which will take place at the conclusion of Education Week at the annual spring conference. We also had two full day sessions, as I mentioned earlier, December 1 and 8. While I had the opportunity, along with the deputy minister, to introduce proposed amendments to the *Education Act* and proposed changes to coordinate the school calendar, that was only an hour of the day. There was a full day of other activities scheduled for school councils, and they were all invited to take part in those.

We do have a school council liaison. An individual in the Department of Education works in support of the school councils and liaises with them on any number of issues. When it comes to the number of hours that we chose, adding the 15 instructional hours brought us more in line with Canadian standards. I know that for instance the Stikine school district in British Columbia is proposing for their calendar about 951 or 952 hours of instruction, and that keeps us in line with British Columbia as our students are learning much of the same curriculum as the students who exist there.

When it comes to the professional development activities, we are doubling them. Fifteen hours will be incorporated into the teacher institute and the one day prior to the start of class,

and the remaining 15 hours are allocated by the school councils. We work closely with the councils, with AYSCBC and of course the Catholic Education Association of Yukon, or CEAY.

As I mentioned, I can appreciate the passion that the member opposite shows toward education, and I respect that passion and his drive; but with respect to the amendments that were sent up or forwarded to me under today's date, April 8, I think we can accomplish both of these activities without amending the legislation. It's for that reason that we won't be supporting the amendments. As members know, any of these types of amendments require a broader review by the school community.

It's unfortunate that these weren't brought forward during the two-month consultation phase, but again I recognize that as Members of the Legislative Assembly, we can often become very busy and requirements of our time are pulled in many different directions while we are in here and often while we are not in here.

I thank the member opposite for his questions and reiterate that we won't be supporting the amendments that he has proposed, but we do look forward to continuing to support Yukon students. When it comes to one of his earlier comments about quality versus quantity, again, as I mentioned, this certainly isn't a full review, but I think there are a number of different aspects of school programming and curriculum development. Last Wednesday we focused on trades training. We've talked extensively about First Nations' education opportunities here in the Legislature which are emerging, such as dual credit opportunities for students, not only on the academic side, but also on the trades side. Yukon Education has been doing a number of exciting things in partnership with our school communities, and there are some more things that we can do.

I look forward to having these amendments to the *Education Act* as an enabler to allow us to increase the student-teacher contact time and increase the instructional hours. I have to again emphasize that increasing those instructional hours doesn't mean increasing class time. It's about student-teacher contact and finding different ways to deliver education. This is one of those enabling pieces that will allow us to increase the student-teacher contact time and provide more professional development opportunities for our educators.

Mr. Silver: I'd like to thank the minister for not speaking on my behalf about our conversations, and also the department representatives. Some of the conversations we do have are based upon mutual directions we think the Education department should be going in. I know we sat here and also spoke with a whole bunch of other members about the rural action plan moving forward. That was definitely one of the things that we hope will involve both parties to help with this moving forward.

We also talk about statistics. I did receive a sheet in the Legislative Assembly here from the minister and from his department. Being a math teacher, I can tell you a lot about statistics. I don't mean that in a negative connotation at all — I really don't. However, statistics that we were talking about recently are on the averages for attendance. As a teacher in the

system, I have to say that attendance is not an issue. I know that sounds ridiculous, but hear me out.

I taught a lot of courses at Robert Service School and, according to the stats I was provided by the minister, I believe 26 or 28 was the average amount of time that a student missed a class. I've taught a lot of classes. I've taught planning 10, health and careers 7 to 8; almost every grade of phys ed, computers, ITC 7 to 9 and, of course, the math curriculum across the gamut from grade 7 to grade 12. I have to say the numbers can be misleading. These numbers include field trips. I'm going to make sure — and I'll give you an opportunity to respond to this. When we're talking about the 28 days, it's my understanding that this includes field trips. We have some very highly academic students in Dawson who went to France this year — that's 10 days of school missed.

Now that is an excusable absence, but I do want to ask that question to the minister and his officials: Is that an absence? Is that part of that 26 or 28? If you add up playing volleyball or basketball — that's at least seven more days. If you go to First Hunt or to First Fish or Young Women Exploring Trades — basically, a lot of the department-sanctioned activities that are instrumental to a student's development — may be included in those numbers. I can't see how they aren't because attendance is not necessarily a problem to those students who are at the school. What else are you going to do in the wintertime, other than hang out with your friends? And where are they hanging out? Inside a classroom.

Now, are they engaged? Now that's a whole other question. That depends on the student, and that depends on the teacher, and that depends on the curriculum. I know it's a much different attitude, and I imagine we can ask the pages about this too — whether or not they're engaged in healthy careers compared to if you're engaged in maybe another excellent course, like mathematics, for example.

These events and these days out cause us to lose time. We had an Atom hockey team that went to the finals last night and the last game was at 8:00 p.m. I think the organizer of that schedule didn't think that Dawson was going to do so well, but here we have another day where our students are going to be out, and that adds to the absenteeism.

So that's one side of this attendance — once again, I would like to hear from the department whether or not I'm correct in these assumptions — because I really don't understand that number. Teaching all these courses — students — they come to school. Attendance isn't the problem if they're already engaged. There is that other side of the students who don't come to school. They just don't. They're not coming at all. They miss every single one of those 170 days, and they're still in the system. They're still registered as students, and that's going to really skew those numbers as well.

Now, the reason I bring this up — I have no problems with the *Act to Amend the Education Act* that we're looking at today. I think most of these items are excellent. All of the commitments to change based on school councils — all those initiatives — I think they're excellent. I think they're based upon a lot of consultation and listening to what the concerns are — basically, a real common-sense approach to working on those

things that everybody kind of agrees are small things that cause big problems. If we could just change these small things, then we're going to see a lot of good things out of it.

When it comes to attendance and when it comes to those numbers, and whether or not more hours of instruction or more professional development days — this is the minister's chance to do something on this, and he has decided that specifically 15 hours of professional development and specifically 15 hours non-instructional.

This is an attempt to deal with that issue. It's hard for me to really wrap my head around this amendment because, once again, this is the minister deciding that this is the direction that he wants to go. We'll see if it works out. I will support it. With the amendment? Well, we'll wait until the amendment actually comes forward before we give any positions on that. But there are other places — I will just say that.

In closing, and to make my point here: I'm in support of the changes to this act; however, I really believe that the goal here as far as attendance and missed days is that you need to increase that inclusion factor to all of our students. I encourage the minister to sign off on 17.7 of the *Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Self-Government Agreement*. Once again, I believe a focus here is going to be — and I know that it's not necessarily in his office and it has other offices to go through and other signatures to go through. Maybe this isn't the one they want to wrap themselves around. I don't know what the holdup is on it, but I know for a fact that if we go in this direction, if we support the Independent Learning Centre at Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, if we support these types of initiatives where you have a grassroots attempt to deal with not the by-product of a situation, or not the affects — in this case, attendance and graduation rates — but the real issues of inclusion of these students, I think we'll have guaranteed results.

I think that these numbers that are so important and these statistics that we get thrown at us — we'll see an upper mobility as far as graduation rates and student participation and inclusion. With that, I'm sure I'm going to have some questions as far as those numbers — whether or not I'm right on my numbers — but I just can't wrap my head around my students missing almost 30 days of classes unless you include all of those issues. With that, thank you for your time, Madam Chair.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Indeed, the numbers that were provided to the Member for Klondike and the Member for Mayo-Tatchun last week included all of the absences. I will get numbers that speak strictly to unexcused absences. For instance, a field trip or a school-sanctioned sports trip or coming in for Yukon Women in Trades and Technology — when the forms are completed, they are considered excused absences.

The atom hockey tournament last night, an outside-of-school initiative is certainly one of those ones that would be considered unexcused. I certainly recognize what the member opposite is talking about, but again, I think that obviously some are excused such as those who are involved in the school itself. There are those who are unexcused such as the atom hockey trip, as well as vacations, for instance. That's why we've seen some numbers in January as far as total number of days absent in the month. For 15 of our schools that is the highest month

for them and it looks like there were about 23,567 student days absent across the territory during the month of January, so I'm sure extended Christmas vacation would be a part of that.

I spoke last week about the second highest month — for 11 schools, May is the highest. This is for the 2011-12 school year, although for 11 schools that's an overall perspective when it comes to total number of days of absence.

It is the highest month for student days at 26,678. Whether they're unexcused or excused or whatever we're talking about as far as field trips or vacations, I think we need to address those numbers.

I mentioned last week the total number of student days absent across the territory for 2011-12. Again, this is September to May, recognizing the shorter months of August and June aren't in here. From September to May there were 175,896 student days absent over the course of the 2011-12 school. That's certainly one of the reasons I've put an emphasis on this as something that we need to address.

Everyone knows that regular attendance is important for the development of academic, social and emotional skills. Attendance continues to be a challenge for many Yukon students. Our plan to improve the attendance is to reduce the number of students missing more than 20 days of school each year. Education, Health and Social Services and other partners such as First Nations are working as a group to review current research and conduct their own research to find reasons for the poor attendance of some students in the territory.

We've seen the private sector step up with the Victoria Gold Student Encouragement Society that has been established to provide a source of funding for school-based projects aimed at improving student attendance. Schools, school councils, First Nations and communities can submit applications. Last week was the deadline — April 5. We're looking forward to announcing some of our successful projects during Education Week at the event that's being sponsored by Victoria Gold at MacBride Museum, taking place one week from Wednesday. I'm hoping members from all sides of the House are able to attend that event; I think it'll be great.

With respect to some of the outstanding invitations to members opposite, I'm still committed to providing meaningful input to both parties across the way with respect to the rural action plan. There have been some delays in getting to where I want to be, but I can certainly make that commitment again on the floor of the House with respect to involving the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and the Member for Klondike in some of those discussions as we move forward.

Finally, with respect to the Member for Klondike, my understanding is that 17.7 — I've had the opportunity to address it with the Premier. It is in Executive Council Office, and we're looking forward to getting it forward and done as soon as possible.

I did speak with the Premier and his staff about that following debate last week, so I can make that commitment to the member opposite.

To clarify one thing that I mentioned in my response to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, the 15 hours that school councils allocate — not all of that is to professional development activi-

ties; it's more of the non-instructional side of things. Some of it is done for professional development, but there is not a requirement that it be done that way — so just to clarify the record for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun when I was speaking about that earlier today.

Mr. Silver: I appreciate the minister's answers. Just one closing comment — there was a time in school within the last 10 to 15 years that if a student missed 20 classes, that student was kicked out. I'm glad to hear there's a change here. When the minister talks about those students who miss 20 days — "How do we get them back?" as opposed to "How do we kick them out?" So that's an excellent way of looking at attendance, and I commend him for looking into this file for sure.

I want to talk a little bit about those students who take those extra weeks off and the stats the minister talks about.

Once again, attendance isn't an issue in these particular students. I don't remember very many of these students who didn't get the work done beforehand or didn't make an excellent effort afterwards to get caught up 90 percent of the time — there's a stat for you. About 90 percent of those students who took those holidays off, they usually do make up the time. I mentioned last week in this House that Robert Service is going back to a one-week March break from two weeks before. I don't really think that's going to change parents' plans, as far as whether they're going on holidays or not. That is an issue, but, once again, I really believe — and I've seen it because of what the teachers will allow as far as after school programming or a tutorial, or just being able and available to allow that student to either go ahead and work on the work beforehand, or an opportunity to catch up on it at a later time. These aren't the students who are necessarily the issue.

I did some work as the principal. Every once in awhile you'd get an opportunity to go in and be the acting principal, and I had one kid come in once, and his story would break your heart. And not really to get into it too much, but he was having a particularly bad day in grade 4, and this kid came in to the principal's office, and I said, "Okay, what seems to be the problem?" He talked to me as if he was 25 years old and he said, "What seems to be the problem?" and he went on to tell me all of the social problems in his life and, I tell you, it would break your heart. Then he just said, "All I want are three square meals a day, and I just want to be prepared for school." I think that's where we have to focus our attentions. When we're talking about days missed, well, why are they missed? Are they missed because you're going to Disneyland with your family or are they missed because you can't get to bed at night because people are partying in your house all night long? Our key is making the school a safe zone for these students. Our priorities should be enabling other professionals in education, other agencies, listening to people on the ground floor.

Once again, in my town — and I can only speak on behalf of my town and what I've seen in the last 15 years there — Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is doing an excellent job with education. It's a perfect storm of opportunity right now — from the CELCs, to the director, to the chief, to the community members who come in to volunteer and every single person in between, it's all functioning with all cylinders firing right now.

So use this opportunity and reach out to those kids who are falling between the cracks, because if we do this the proper way and if we allow them to be in the school from 8:00 in the morning until 8:00 at night, getting their homework done — even washing their clothes — you could have home ec programs that allow them to have their own clean clothes — these are just little things but they all add up to meaning that anything you want to accomplish by changing the instructional hours and the PD days, and a focus on these things, will actually achieve those as well.

Once again, I appreciate all the answers that I got from the minister and from his department officials. I am looking forward to some more questions and some amendments on the amendment.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I would certainly agree with the member opposite when it comes to some of those students. I'm not as concerned about the students who are off in Hawaii or in Mexico with their parents, because those are the students who are able to get that work done and do commit to getting it done while they're away, or commit to extra hours prior to them leaving or upon their return. It is those students who are having difficulty and are struggling. The member opposite relayed a story and I can certainly relay a similar story from a recent visit I made to Watson Lake. The time was about 9:00 and we were coming to the elementary school to visit and a number of young students were just making their way to school. They had to get themselves up and out of bed. They were trying to get them a bite to eat as they came into the classroom. I'm sure those exist in every school. I'm sure the Member for Mayo-Tatchun can share some of his experiences working in rural Yukon as well.

With respect to what the Member for Klondike said about the attendance initiatives, I think it's being different and that he is only being able to speak for Robert Service School. That's what we're recognizing with the Victoria Gold society funding in that it is driven by school-based projects. So what works in Dawson City isn't necessarily going to be what works in Watson Lake or what works at Jack Hulland or what works at Christ the King Elementary School. Each school has different aspects and issues they need to deal with and that's why I think it's important to recognize the individuality when it comes to defining how to better improve student attendance at each school.

As I mentioned, the schools and school councils, First Nations and the communities were asked to submit their applications for monies to support their various attendance projects. I look forward to announcing with Victoria Gold some of the recipients next week.

The attendance issue is a big one. I think we need to find ways to address it to support those students who are struggling. As I've said before in this House, addressing attendance is the responsibility of not only Yukon Education and our teachers in the schools delivering the program, but the entire community has to get involved.

We need the parents to get the students up and out of bed and off to school. As the department, we need to find meaningful ways to engage them while they're at the school and we

continue to look to innovative programming and a different curriculum to engage our students when they arrive at school.

This is going to be a community effort. I applaud everyone who did submit applications. I look forward to reviewing them and the schools and those partner groups receiving the funding to address the attendance issues that exist in our schools.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

We will move into clause-by-clause review.

On Clause 1

Clause 1 agreed to

On Clause 2

Mr. Tredger: I would like to introduce an amendment regarding clause 2. I have it for distribution here — once everybody has had a chance to see it, I will speak to it then, or shall I speak now, Madam Chair?

Chair: I need to ensure it's in order.

Mr. Tredger: Okay, you see if it's in order, then I'll speak.

Chair: You may read the amendment into the record at this time.

Amendment proposed

Mr. Tredger: I move

THAT Bill No. 53, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Act*, be amended in clause 2 at page 1 by:

(1) deleting the phrase "professional development" in clause 2(1) and replacing it with the phrase "in-service", and
(2) replacing clause 2(2) with the following:

"(2) Subsection 46(6) is replaced with the following:

"(6) Persons on the substitute teachers list shall be eligible for, but not required to attend, in-service as per subsections 46(2)(b)".

I am introducing two amendments, and I believe they will help improve education in the Yukon. I provided the amendment earlier today to the minister and my colleagues in the Third Party and the Independent member. I've had discussions with some members of the Yukon Teachers Association, and many substitute teachers, and I believe this amendment reflects their prerogatives.

The amendment does two things. It would change "professional development" to "in-service". This change would clarify and place responsibilities for funding and administration, et cetera, for these days with the Department of Education. Professional development is contractually part of the collective agreement and is driven by teacher request and approved by the joint professional development committee.

The *Education Act* does not define "professional development", but the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Teachers Association does. It is contractually-based funds, administered and approved by a joint professional development committee and driven by teacher request.

The term "in-servicing" means non-instructional time for training — for development, which the department pays for and administers. I know there have been concerns in the past. I have heard concerns that, with the bill, the funding administration is being foisted upon the joint professional development

committee. After talking with officials and with the minister, I don't believe that is true, but this change would clarify that this is not the intent, and the amendment then addresses that concern so that professional development and in-servicing remain separate roles.

The amendment would also provide substitute teachers with the opportunity to receive in-servicing — to give our substitute teachers opportunities to expand their knowledge of Yukon curriculum to become part of the team and be better able to teach our kids. As the minister knows, casual on-call or substitute teachers are not considered teachers under the *Education Labour Relations Act*. They also aren't considered government employees under the *Public Service Act*. They have no job security. They don't get employee benefits. They aren't covered by insurance. Their pay scale is at the bottom of the barrel, but they are expected to be available whenever they are needed. They are also expected to fill in for fully qualified and trained professionals.

One of the consequences of that is, because they are not recognized as employees, they are not able to unionize or become part of the Yukon Teachers Association. That means they then do not have access to the professional development fund. That has been denied to them. Under these amendments, they are specifically excluded from activities.

In other words, clause (b) says: "15 hours for professional development for school staff who are employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*;"

Substitute teachers do not qualify. The minister has said earlier today that if they saw fit, they would ensure that substitute teachers could attend. That is true. For 10 years the minister has not seen fit; the Department of Education has not seen fit. The minister says he is concerned by the situation substitute teachers find themselves in. It has been brought to the attention of the minister responsible for Education over a period of 10 years. If the minister is concerned about education and about the education of our children, what guidelines are in place to develop a stable, certified and qualified casual on-call or substitute teacher workforce? Can the minister say whether or not priorities are in place so that every attempt is being made to develop a casual on-call or substitute workforce so that they will be our next teachers and so our students have the opportunity to avail themselves of the best instruction possible?

There is a gap in our system. Substitute teachers are not treated as employees, yet every day they are employed in our schools. Every day they are responsible for our children. Every day they take them to phys ed, they teach them math, they cover out on the playground, yet they don't have the right of association. This would go some way in helping us to establish some training — some in-servicing — for our substitute teachers. Having been a teacher and having been a principal, I know how essential they are to the education of our children.

As I said earlier, they come in the morning with little or no warning. They spend the day with our children. One would think that the minister would be doing everything he can to ensure that those teachers have the support of the Yukon Teachers Association, to ensure that those teachers have the support of the department, to ensure that those substitute teach-

ers — those teachers casual on-call — have the training and prerequisites necessary. He alluded to the fact that many of them are coming from diverse backgrounds; that is true. It would then be incumbent upon a responsible minister to ensure that those substitute teachers have the opportunity for training, have the opportunity to become part of the team, have the opportunity to develop so they can better serve our children. This will not resolve the whole issue but it will take us partway. Therefore, I commend to you my amendments.

Chair: Does any member wish to speak to the amendment?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I thank the member opposite for bringing these amendments forward. As I previously mentioned, we will not be supporting them for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the late arrival of them.

As I mentioned, April 8, 2013 — today's date — was when they were received by my office. As I mentioned, we feel that there are a number of different ways that we can accomplish the intent of these amendments without actually amending the bill that is before Committee right now. As mentioned with respect to changing the term "professional development" to "in-service", the Yukon Teachers Association collective agreement provides for a professional development fund that provides funding for training and development activities for YTA members. That fund is administered by the YTA Professional Development Committee. The proposed amendments to the *Education Act* include an additional 15 hours for professional development for school staff. Those additional 15 hours for professional development purposes will be funded and administered by Yukon Education and will be in addition to and separate from the training and development activities funded by the YTA professional development fund.

As I mentioned earlier, if the Yukon Teachers Association is concerned after they read the clarifications that have been discussed here in the Legislature today, we can certainly take action to clarify them further with the YTA in a mutually agreed upon letter to the collective agreement, if that will satisfy the separation of what we are talking about here today.

With respect to substitute teachers and allowing substitute teachers to participate in the additional professional development activities — the additional professional development activities as mentioned by the member opposite are for school staff who are employees within the meaning of the *Education Labour Relations Act*. Substitute teachers are not employees within the meaning of the ELRA, but if we choose to invite substitute teachers to participate in the additional professional development activities, we'll be able to do so. As I mentioned, of the 397 teachers — this is a snapshot; it's one of those numbers and things that changes on a day-to-day basis — 188 of those individuals have no bachelor degree; 75 have a bachelor degree of some sort, not a bachelor of education, and 134 of those individuals are certified teachers.

As you can see, Madam Chair, training for substitute teachers would be vastly different from training for regular classroom teachers, but where we see opportunities to involve them, we certainly will.

With respect to including substitutes under the YTA collective agreement, the member opposite knows that will require changes to the *Education Labour Relations Act*. I can only speak for the last 18 months as minister, but that has been brought to my attention through a letter from the YTA, a question by the member opposite in the fall sitting and brought forward again at a subsequent meeting within the last couple of months by the YTA.

So as I've mentioned, substitutes are a very important part of the public school system in the Yukon, but with respect to this request, it does require a good deal of consideration before the final decision can be made. I've asked Yukon Education staff to bring forward a recommendation for not only my review, but for my colleagues to review, and we'll look forward to acting on that in the near future.

I know members recognize that we have a very lengthy legislative calendar. There are six acts, I believe, plus various money bills that are before the House in the spring sitting, and then of course for the fall sitting, which is more traditionally referred to as the legislative sitting, there will be additional bills there. So getting it into the queue is another important aspect that we have to look at. That will be something that's discussed over the next while.

One of the things that we're hoping to accomplish with respect to substitute teachers by moving the 15 hours of professional development to the front-end of the school year is to lessen the amount of time that our regular classroom teachers have to spend out of the schools.

I think I've spoken previously in this House about a trip I made to Dawson City last year and visiting Robert Service School and the former principal. This was in February, and he had mentioned at the time that there had only been a handful of days when his full staff complement was in the school, and that's given various meetings and being pulled out for different activities and professional development activities. So we need to find a better way to deliver those activities from Whitehorse, especially to our rural communities, so that those teachers can be where they need to be, which is in front of their classrooms instructing their students as best they can. That's another aspect we're looking to deal with as well.

While I appreciate the member opposite bringing forward the amendments, we won't be supporting them and perhaps as we move forward in future — those amendments had they surfaced during the actual consultation phase may have proven to have been dealt with differently, but certainly we can't — amendments that are made and delivered to my office on the morning when the bill is discussed in the afternoon have not been given full and fair consideration by our education partners or given the public consultation aspects that they deserve. Again, with that, we will not be supporting the amendments put forward by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

Mr. Silver: Not having a lot of time to look at these, I am in support of the first amendment. There definitely does need to be more clarity in terms of responsibility of professional development as it pertains to which purse these funds are coming from, whether that be YTA or the department. I see no problem in actually making a little more clear what "profes-

sional development" actually means and whether that's an in-service or not. I don't have any issue with the first amendment.

However, with the second amendment, I do feel there are a lot of issues here. For one, I feel that this is a separate issue. I think allowing substitute teachers access to in-service is an excellent initiative. However, there are so many issues here to think about this in one day. Is this the correct way to introduce such an initiative? That's my biggest issue with this. This is the beginning of a very complex issue that involves many issues as it relates to substitute teaching. I was on the sub list for two years. I've seen people have the opportunity on the sub list to at least get their feet wet. As long as you get your criminal record check, you don't need to have a degree.

I've seen a lot of people use this as an opportunity to test the waters to see if they can be a teacher or not — if they can hack it. I've seen a lot of people go on into YNTEP through that ability. I believe that we're one of the only districts left in Canada where you can actually substitute without having a degree. Now that's really important and I would hate to lose that. As the member talks about these numbers — the numbers who do and the numbers who don't — I worry about the conversation and where this goes.

I think that this is a huge issue. I think that to throw it in today — like I say, I just received this, this morning — I think we're not doing justice to the topic to begin with.

I guess that's pretty much all I really need to say about that. Once again, I'm torn; they're both great ideas. It's a great idea to allow for substitutes to have that in-service training because, looking at the substitutes I've seen over the years, yes, they need it. It would be an excellent opportunity for them to, once again, hone their skills or to make those decisions as to whether or not they want to be teachers. I'm also looking at the logistics. I mean, who's going to pay for this? Where is the money going to come from? There are a lot of people on the sub lists. Would this open up the door for people to just put their names on the sub lists so that they go for in-servicing?

Where do you draw the line? More importantly, if there was a fund for this, if money was found by the department for something like this, is this the best use of that money? I don't know. Once again, I've only thought about this particular amendment since this morning. I would encourage the Member for Mayo-Tatchun to continue to pursue this, perhaps giving us a little more notification and also maybe starting a discussion. I would definitely help him to any extent as far as maybe drafting a new motion on his behalf or on behalf of the substitute teachers.

Chair: Does any other member wish to be heard on the amendment?

Mr. Tredger: Am I allowed to speak again to close debate?

Chair: Mr. Tredger, as we are in Committee of the Whole, you may speak again on the amendment.

Mr. Tredger: I think it's important, number one, the first part of my amendment, that we do get the clarity and that we make a differentiation. As I said, it has caused trouble in the past, and I'm sure it will again in the future, but I thank the minister and his staff for being very clear that the intent is not

to use these days — in-servicing days — to access professional development funds.

As far as substitute teachers go, I really believe that if we do not support this amendment we are missing an opportunity to help our substitute teachers and our casual teachers on call develop and take part in our education system. The minister mentioned, earlier in the debate, how often substitute teachers or casual teachers on call are in our schools. There are some schools that employ casual teachers or substitute teachers on call every day of the year. In a community, these are people who are working their way into the system, and I've been there when they want to take part in an in-service and don't have the opportunity.

When we're talking about in-servicing for our teaching force — the minister mentions the diversity of the substitute teachers. Our teaching force is diverse — some are teaching math exclusively, some are teaching three grade levels and all subjects therein. In-servicing is geared to the recipient.

I would ask the minister how often substitute teachers, or teachers on call, have been included in the last 10 years. I referenced earlier that because they're not association members, they're not able to access the professional development fund. Again, I cannot stress enough the development of a workforce. We can see, throughout the territory, how important that development is, and access to training and professional development is critical for our students, for our children and for the future development of our workforce. This is one option to pursue that.

Certainly we will continue to request that the minister treat substitute teachers as employees and do all in his power to ensure that they are recognized and gain status as employees under the *Education Labour Relations Act* and the *Education Act*.

That should have been done a long time ago but this would be an interim measure to ensure that they have access to quality in-service training. It's an opportunity and I hope by voting against this — by not supporting this amendment — we're not sending a pretty deplorable message to our substitute teachers. As I said, they are an integral part of our school system and they deserve these opportunities. Thank you.

Chair: Does any other member wish to be heard on the amendment?

It has been moved by Mr. Tredger

THAT Bill No. 53, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Act*, be amended in clause 2 at page 1 by:

(1) deleting the phrase "professional development" in clause 2(1) and replacing it with the phrase "in-service"; and

(2) replacing the clause 2(2) with the following:

"(2) Subsection 46(6) is replaced with the following:

"(6) Persons on the substitute teachers list shall be eligible for, but not required to attend, in-service as per subsections 46(2)(b)".

Shall the amendment carry?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Count

Chair: Count has been called.

Bells

Chair: Would all those in favour of the amendment please rise?

Members rise

Chair: Would all those opposed to the amendment please rise?

Members rise

Chair: The results are five yea, 10 nay. I declare the amendment defeated.

Amendment to Bill No. 53 negatived

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Hanson: I'd like to ask the House to join me in welcoming one of our hard-working community nurses, Lynne Harris from Ross River.

Applause

Chair: We are going to continue debate on clause 2. Is there any other member who wishes to speak to clause 2?

Clause 2 agreed to

On Clause 3

Clause 3 agreed to

On Clause 4

Clause 4 agreed to

On Clause 5

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Clause 6 agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 53, *Act to Amend the Education Act*, be reported without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent that Bill No. 53 be reported without amendment.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It gives me great honour to stand and introduce to the House today Ione Christensen. I think all of us know Ione, former Mayor of Whitehorse, former Commissioner and former Senator representing Yukon in the Senate in Ottawa. We ask everybody to join with me to greet her.

Applause

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 53, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Act*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

GOVERNMENT BILLS**Bill No. 53: Act to Amend the Education Act — Third Reading**

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 53, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Kent.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 53, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 53, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I'll be brief in my remarks. I would like to thank all members of the House for unanimously supporting this bill at second reading, and I look forward to possible unanimous support as well at third reading.

As members know, and in discussion during second reading in Committee of the Whole, it seeks to accomplish two different things: first, to increase the instructional time for our students — to add an additional 15 hours — bringing us closer to what students in most other jurisdictions in Canada receive as far as instructional time with teachers. We're also looking to double the amount of non-instructional hours and really focus on the professional development aspects for our teachers. We've scheduled those additional hours to occur before the school year begins to be the least disruptive possible to the students in the school year and give teachers an opportunity to participate in teacher institutes.

With that, the second aspect is moving the student council elections from their current traditional timing in October to May, which will allow for us to have a full council in place and ready to be active at the start of each school year. Even this year, it was December before many councils received the required number of members to perform their business. They're a very integral part of our school system and our school community, and I believe this is an opportunity for us to ensure they're fully functioning at the start of the school year.

Those are the two main issues with this bill. I thank members opposite for engaging in construction discussion and debate throughout second reading and into Committee, and I look forward to their support at third reading.

Speaker: Does any other member wish to be heard?

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 53 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 53 has passed this House.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services in Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 10: First Appropriation Act, 2013-14 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services, in Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*.

Department of Health and Social Services — continued

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'll just continue for a little while from where I ended on Thursday of last week, where I, first of all, introduced the budget and then said there were a few topics that seemed to be of some interest and I'd run through those topics. I gave a quick update on Dawson City and Watson Lake health care facilities, and I said I would do a couple of others.

One of the issues that has come up recently in the department is — in November 2010 and then once again in February 2011, Aboriginal Affairs Northern Development Canada — which is the federal government — informed my department that they would no longer provide reimbursement for personal care services through the home care program to all self-governing First Nations. Their position is that we should be billing self-governing First Nations for that service. Billing was adjusted for the 2010-11 subsequent fiscal years, and it has resulted in a loss of revenue to the government of \$125,000.

I'll just take the opportunity to introduce Paddy Meade, my new Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, and Birgitte Hunter, who is the director of Finance, Health and Social Services, both of whom are here to assist me today. As members know, I do need a lot of assistance.

What has since transpired is that, as members know, anyone in a home care facility is charged the first \$18.60 or \$21 a day and then the government absorbs the remaining \$300-plus for the expense of home care. First Nation people have never

paid that \$18 or \$21 up until this year. As of April 1, 2013, the Government of Canada is no longer absorbing that cost, so the cost will be passed along to First Nation residents in long-term care facilities in the territory, but it won't be passed along until September 1. We're giving six months' of transition time. We've made sure that everyone in the various long-term care facilities is aware of the change in the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada's policy and how it will impact these people. We've also done some further study to make sure that the money is available. If a person is on social assistance, for instance, that fee will be picked up by the social assistance payments.

One other thing that I was going to speak on is the actual home care service as opposed to long-term care service in the territory. Home care services are an integral part — and it's probably one of the more important things — of the larger health care system in that it keeps many people out of the very expensive long-term care facilities that we run. Home Care is continuing at all times to look at new and cost-effective delivery models that can support the needs of both patients and home care workers in the system. As you are aware, we recently received accreditation at a very high standard from Accreditation Canada. We are very proud of that, but we're still looking for new and innovative ways to handle home care to keep the costs down as well as to provide better service to our customers.

I'll give you just a little background first of all. Home care is part of a continuum of care for all ages. It doesn't include only senior citizens. It is provided according to an assessed need.

The philosophy of the service is the least amount of service to support safety and health needs of the client. Service includes therapies, nursing, social work and home support. I can speak from personal experience that, when home care visited my father-in-law, they would even drop in one day a week and cook lunch for him so he had a hot lunch prepared in his home. It was one of the things he looked forward to every week, having the young folk from Home Care Services cooking lunch for him. It gave him an opportunity to talk to other people as well. It also includes personal care, respite and home-making for the folks.

For statistics, just to give you an idea of how it has expanded over the last few years: in 2009-10, the average number of clients was 339; in 2010-11, 413; in 2011-12, the average number of clients was 530; and even as we speak, it's going up more and more on a daily basis.

I have a lot more information I could go through but, in the interest of time, if there's any interest on the opposite side, I would be happy to provide you with more information on home care.

I just have a quick update on the multiple sclerosis trials. As you're probably aware, we have an agreement with Saskatchewan where our 10 clients from the Yukon with MS will travel to Albany, New York as part of a greater trial to either undergo the operation — the so-called "liberation therapy" — for MS or be part of the group that doesn't receive it. It's a double-blind test. So our MS patients won't be sure if they

have received the treatment or not. We thought that our folks would all actually be participating in the treatment at this stage, but there have been some delays in Saskatchewan. We know for a fact now that all of our clients have been selected here. I think one was forced to drop out, so we went from 10 down to nine, but we have nine clients here. We've been assured by the coordinators of the group that our clients will be travelling to New York for this therapy in the very near future.

We have made a commitment that we will cover all of the costs of patients from the Yukon travelling to New York for the service. As we receive more information, I'll be only too happy to provide it to members opposite.

I think that is probably all I will bring folks up to date on. We had a small problem with medevac fees for physicians in the territory. It was negotiated out of the last physician agreement that was concluded last year. Then, through some oversight, there wasn't really good coordination of information within the territorial government and it became a problem just recently. What we have decided to do is that we are going to be doing some more work with both the physicians and the Department of Community Services. To that end, we have said that everything will remain the same as it was in the past for at least one more month until we get the problem sorted out. Other than that, I don't think there is much else of urgent and pressing need that I need to talk about.

As I said, we are requesting \$325,199,000 in this budget year. The funding represents a projected increase of \$45.29 million in operation and maintenance funding, or approximately 16 percent over the 2012-13 year main estimates. Funding increases to the Yukon Hospital Corporation account for 85 percent of the total increase. That 85 percent includes the \$27 million being utilized as partial payment of the loan for the construction projects associated with the Crocus Ridge residence, the Thomson Centre and the Watson Lake and Dawson City health facilities.

Expected recoveries this year, including revenues for both operation and maintenance and capital, are projected at approximately \$31 million, or 9.2 percent of the total department budget.

I'd like to draw everyone's attention to a few of the highlights contained in the budget. With respect to our anticipated operation and maintenance costs, I'm pleased to highlight some of the increased contributions we are making to our NGO partners in the community that deliver high quality and valuable services on our behalf. It was nice to see former Commissioner Ione Christensen here, because I know Ione has a deep and abiding interest in the FASSY organization. I'm sure she was here to find out what we were doing for them.

One of the things is we've given them an annual increase, but what we also did was, when federal funding was dropped for FASSY in one of their areas, we picked up the cost of that funding. So we've added not only to their normal operating grant, but we actually provided a new source of funding for FASSY that they didn't have previous to this time — or it was done by the federal government.

The Dawson City shelter will see an increase of \$40,000. The shelter has acquired the other half of the Yukon Housing

Corporation duplex, which allows for an increase of three to five beds, plus the ability to accommodate larger family units and space for scheduled and drop-in group programming in that community.

As people are aware, the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre has also seen an increase of \$491,000 to operate the new youth shelter. The shelter opened in January and has a six-bed capacity. This replaces the four emergency spaces that were available at the Sarah Steele Building but proved to be not too popular for young people looking for a place to stay. So we're really happy to have this agreement with the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, and we look forward to seeing what the usage is of that shelter and how we can improve that service in years to come.

As a side comment, the budget also includes the \$900,000 required to fund the conceptual and schematic design for replacement of the Sarah Steele Building.

My department has also been working closely in partnership with the Salvation Army to look at a facility replacement of their shelter program. This would include enhanced programming and support for some of the most vulnerable members of our society. \$100,000 has been included in this budget to support functional programming and space planning. I'm pleased to inform you also that the Premier and I just recently had the opportunity to meet with the Salvation Army officers from Edmonton. During that meeting we were really pleased to see the enthusiasm and the opportunity they see to provide this service in the territory. I think that our agreement to provide \$100,000 to support functional programming and space planning was very well accepted by the Salvation Army as well.

We are also pleased to have entered into a five-year agreement with the Rendezvous Rotary Club for the operation of the Imagination Library. The budget contains \$50,000 for the first year of that agreement. This was part of our campaign — it was one of our campaign promises because we feel that learning and development is a key wellness domain and reading is essential to success in life. Funding for this program will match dollars raised by the Rotary Club to a maximum of \$50,000 a year. Even though we budgeted \$50,000, we may not spend \$50,000. To date, the Rendezvous Rotary Club has had absolutely no difficulty raising \$50,000 a year. So we will match that amount. The funding will allow expansion of the program so that all children in the Yukon can be enrolled at any time before their fifth birthday.

I would like to draw attention to increases that specifically support people with disabilities, but I think my time has almost completely run out. I'll put that off for a little while and continue with my highlights in answers to questions that I may receive from members opposite.

Ms. Stick: The member across the way can be assured that I have one or two questions for him. I do want to take this opportunity to thank department officials here for their work and for the briefings that they provided. I appreciate the way the information was provided and some questions that I've had already answered.

I look forward to going through the budget for this department. This is the one department that will affect every single Yukoner. It covers services from birth to death and impacts

on our ability to live independent and healthy lives. Often when people come to these various units within this department, whether it is family and children's services, social assistance, continuing care, or health services, they are in crisis and it is the front-line staff who work hard to provide services.

On the health side of the department, there are many concerns that should not be a surprise for the minister to hear questions on. There are too many Yukoners without access to a family doctor and costs are going out of control on the O&M and capital sides of this budget. There are concerns about the completion of the two new hospitals. The contractor is going to court around unpaid bills. There are concerns about recruitment for these hospitals and the O&M costs that are predicted to triple.

On March 21 on the opening day of this sitting, the minister said, "The Government of Yukon was not responsible for building those two hospitals."

At the end of the day, the government is indeed responsible for the political decisions it makes. The Minister of Health and Social Services is responsible for both the *Health Act* and the *Hospital Act*, among others.

The Yukon NDP Official Opposition is very pleased that the minister is agreeing with what we as the Official Opposition have been recommending for years, and that is, in his words, "increasing our collaborative-care approach, which offers us a unique approach to using our health-care providers in a real team to improve patient care." That is good news. The minister can count on us to continue to champion and to support team-based patient- and family-centred care.

As the minister directs his department to increase the collaborative approach, we will be watching to see that it includes not only doctors and nurses, but therapists, dietitians, mental health workers and other health professionals. We will be watching to ensure that it is patient- and family-centred.

The minister has discussed some serious issues around both the purchase and distribution of prescription drugs. These issues are about patient safety, professional scope of practice, and affordability. From the minister, we will be looking for timelines. We are interested in who is participating in consultation about both the *Pharmacy Act* and the pharmacy purchasing agreement. Regarding the pharmacy purchasing agreement, the Yukon government has ignored for years the recommendations of its own internal audits. Yukon remains one of the top paying jurisdictions for prescription drugs. Why? This sort of inaction threatens the sustainability of our health care system.

Separate from the pharmacy purchasing agreement, the minister has agreed with the Yukon NDP Official Opposition that indeed the *Pharmacy Act* needs updating. Yukoners are waiting for a more clear commitment, a timeline, and specifics about the changes being considered.

Severe constraints on patient safety and professional practice are imposed by this very dated legislation. Scope of practice cannot be expanded or standardized, nor can it include new processes and technologies. So much has changed with the practice of pharmacy since this legislation was written.

Pharmacists could be lessening the burden on hospitals in times of increased demand. They can provide some of those

preventive services at lower costs. With respect to helping people living with chronic conditions, pharmacists are well-suited to judge the appropriateness of a drug therapy and to monitor treatment. The government says new hospitals will attract new doctors. We will wait and see, but what about the recruitment of pharmacists? Our dated legislation is not inviting to those professionals. We will be looking forward to more detailed information from the minister and we'll be asking for those specific targets and timelines.

On the Social Services side of this department, there are kudos and there are concerns. We in the Official Opposition offices hear from many constituents who are in crisis. Most individuals are there because they are facing homelessness or struggling to find services to meet their health or social needs. They are there because they have slipped through the cracks and have nowhere else to turn. I do want to thank the minister and the staff from his department who have found solutions or ways to help on some of these files.

But still, the minister will continue to hear from the Official Opposition about families and individuals who are struggling with poverty, people unable to make ends meet with high rents and increasing food costs even when they are receiving social assistance. Too many people and families depend on soup kitchens, the Whitehorse Food Bank and the Salvation Army to get them from paycheque to paycheque from month to month. These are the working poor: hard-working individuals who just can't make ends meet and who are not eligible for social assistance.

Families caring for their children with disabilities will be pleased to hear of an increase in funding for the parents of children with disabilities. We need to support families with those costs of equipment and therapies. We also need to look at those families trying to support their adult children with disabilities. Their needs also include equipment and therapies, but go beyond that: appropriate day programming and respite are ongoing needs. Some parents are finding that the care needs are becoming too much and are looking for residential options for their adult children. Whether we are talking about group homes, approved homes or supported independent living, there is an ever-increasing need for these resources.

Along the same line, I am concerned when I see the numbers of children requiring support and services, and do not see a plan to accommodate them in adult services when they reach their 18th or 19th birthdays.

In order to plan appropriate resources, we need to be looking at the big picture. How many individuals with disabilities will be entering the adult system? What will their needs be? Who is planning for them? Will we need new group homes or approved homes? Will there be more day programs or other alternatives for these individuals? What about the individuals with disabilities who are now becoming seniors? Will we be able to accommodate them in our continuing care facilities? What is the planning for those individuals?

Looking at resources and services needed, this needs to include the individuals and their families. Like health care services, they need to be client-centred. Decisions need to be made with the clients' needs first and foremost.

We continue to hear about our aging population and increasing needs and the direction to keep people living in their homes. It's good to see an increase for home care. I'm hoping this will extend to communities and not just Whitehorse.

Supports need to be in place for individuals to continue to stay in their homes and in their communities. Housing and apartments are great, but I do hear from seniors that they want to look at other options between that independence and moving perhaps to a continuing care facility. Groups have been looking at different options, but they never quite seem to make it off the ground. I would like to hear from the minister of any new plans in the works. We did hear mention last week of Abbeyfield, but I understand that project has been dropped.

We also know that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Nowhere is this more obvious to us than in early childhood education. Developmentally the first six years of human life are critical to the lifelong health and socio-economic well-being of each Canadian. The return on investment in early childhood development exceeds investment in any other stage of human development. The future performance of our economy is closely tied to the quality of our early childhood development and daycare. In the absence of adequate care — included, but not limited to, adequate housing and food security — children can develop health problems.

A 2007 Canadian study associated the following health challenges with negative early childhood experience: coronary health problems, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, mental illness and an increased risk of substance abuse. Literacy may be impacted by the types of nutrition and stimulation a child receives.

Strategies to improve Yukon's early childhood education have been proposed to this government. These strategies included the circle of care around Yukon children, both rural and Whitehorse-based. The Yukon NDP Official Opposition is talking about early childhood development because of the alarming early development index results — the EDI. The early development index reveals that Yukon children are vulnerable. Over one-third of them are not ready for school when they arrive on their first day. The results speak to serious and systemic issues that need to be comprehensively addressed. Piecemeal projects often do not achieve the intended impact simply because they treat the symptoms and not the root causes. Early child development is a specialty and it is different from education. It starts prenatally and includes the family and the community.

The minister has said the wellness strategy is something he really believes will have a tremendous impact on our health care costs 10, 15 or even 20 years down the road. For long-term and lasting improvement of wellness for all Yukoners, we respectfully recommend the inclusion of Yukon-based expertise in early childhood education in the department's wellness strategy.

I could go on. This is a big budget and a big department. As I said earlier, every Yukoner will be involved in Health and Social Services in one way or another — some will require more, others less, but all will be involved.

I have not even touched yet on Alcohol and Drug Services, social assistance rates, Yukon supplementary allowances or

other areas, but I do have questions and will be asking them. I will ask many questions of this minister and his department, and I look forward to those answers.

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'll run through a few of the other highlights of the budget, and then I'll try to answer a couple of questions raised — especially with pharmacare and early childhood education.

When we talk about early childhood education — some of the funding that will go out to other NGOs — the Child Development Centre will see an increase of \$90,000 this year to hire an additional speech and language pathologist, as well as a normal cost of living increase. The Teegatha' Oh Zheh will also see an additional \$79,000. FASSY, as I said before, will receive some additional funding as well and, as promised when I was a city councillor, I will be adding another \$50,000 to the Handy Bus budget as well because I believe strongly in that service. Within the department, this budget also contains a \$200,000 increase for family supports to children with disabilities. This funding will purchase additional therapies, as well as specialized equipment not available through other programs. As we've said previously, the department is working with the Yukon Housing Corporation to coordinate services provided, or funding provided, by both of our departments to not only families with children with disabilities, but also to adults living on their own with disabilities. So we are working on that one as well.

\$364,000 will be added to our Community Adult Services unit for programming, which will increase access today and residential programming for adults with various cognitive disabilities.

When we talk about keeping seniors at home, not only are we talking about home care, but there are a number of other things in the budget as well that will assist seniors to stay in their own homes. One of those things is an increase of \$257,000 to the pioneer utility grant. It's due to both a volume increase — more people are staying in their own homes — but it also includes CPI increase to the pioneer utility grant itself.

We feel it is very important to support seniors and elders who have chosen the Yukon as their home and continue to live in their own residence during their retirement years. We're committed to three very fundamental principles: ensuring that our seniors and elders are able to age in place, which means supporting them in the most independent environment possible for as long as possible; we are also ensuring our income support programs protect our lowest income seniors and elders; and ensuring the sustainability of our programs and services to seniors and elders as more and more choose to remain in the territory for their golden years.

You mentioned the Abbeyfield development which you thought was cancelled. My understanding and the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation's understanding is that it has not yet. When we get to his budget, I'm sure he'll be able to bring you up to date on that project as well.

This budget also sees increases to the Yukon seniors income supplement that helps to protect our lowest income seniors. We have already talked about the replacement that many seniors lost. When the increase to the federal supplement went

up, they lost the Yukon supplement, so we've taken steps to address that anomaly as well.

If we're going to be able to sustain all of the many social, continuing care and health care services that we do provide to our seniors and elder population both now and well into the future, then we need to be thinking and planning for that demographic bulge at the present time. This challenge is compounded by the pressures that we're experiencing in many of our high-volume, high-cost health expenditure areas. For example, in this budget alone, we've increased medical travel by over \$1 million.

The O&M expenditures, as mentioned by the member opposite, for the health care facilities in both Watson Lake and Dawson have increased by \$900,000 in Watson Lake and \$1.9 million for the base operations in the Dawson City health facilities.

Those are some of the major capital program investments that we need to improve our critical infrastructure and to improve access and integration of all of our citizens. The home care program that we have expanded continually for the last couple of years — the member opposite talked about how she hoped it would increase in the communities — increases in the communities as demand requires. This isn't a program that we have restricted to Whitehorse and surrounding areas at all; in fact, we're very interested in ensuring that the home care program is available to people in the communities to enable them, not only to stay in their own homes, but to stay in their own communities. In the past, so many had to move to Whitehorse if they wanted any kind of extended care. We think it's much more economical as well as much better for the people themselves to live in their home communities.

Our community health centres will require about \$1.5 million this year to support repairs and changes in Carmacks, Carcross, Mayo and Destruction Bay. The majority of planned capital expenditures are already related to the mentioned replacement of McDonald Lodge in Dawson City. The member opposite talked about other uses for the current building. We are requesting that Highways and Public Works — who will take over the building — take a look at it, but preliminary investigations show that it would cost more to renovate the building up to current standards than the building would possibly be worth. We're taking a look at it again and we'll have the information available for the member hopefully before this budget discussion is over.

I guess that's some of the highlights. One of the comments the member opposite made was about pharmacare. We've been looking at it. We've spent a great deal of time looking at options and possibilities and we will be negotiating with the pharmacists over the fees and the markups allowed for fees in the territory. As part of the changing act and regulations, we're looking at expanded scope, as appropriate, for pharmacists. We will be working with Community Services on that, because the legislation does belong in Community Services, even though it's of great interest to us and we will take a very active role in any of the changes in that area.

As for the early childhood debate, the Yukon government is committed to addressing matters for children and families.

We had a long discussion the other day about options on what we should be doing and where we should be going. One of the difficulties is the philosophy that the government should provide higher direct operating grants for all daycares in the territory, and that's just not something that we are philosophically in agreement with. We believe that people who desire daycare should be funded appropriately to be able to afford daycare. If we're talking about lower income people, we want to make sure that those lower income people are funded appropriately so they can afford daycare, whatever that cost may be.

By paying into each of the daycares through the direct operating grants, we find that we're subsidizing higher income earners who really don't need the subsidy and we would sooner see that money go to people who really need it. Over the past four or five years, we have also invested an additional \$4 million to address wage concerns, training, subsidies for these programs and operating expenses for many of the daycare programs that we're doing now. We also believe that the licensed childcare system is a good one and we're working to address the training and retention needs of daycares in the territory.

But when we take a look at the salary differential between the lower and higher daycares and what seems to be how some daycares are able to afford things that others aren't, we constantly ask ourselves if direct operating grants are a really good thing or if daycares should be in a position to charge what is necessary and we fund the people who use those daycares. To us, it's a philosophical difference, but it's something that we believe in. We're working hard to address this problem.

One of the other things I mentioned many times here is working with children with disabilities. We've established advisory groups for children with disabilities. A parents group was established with the help of Autism Yukon. We're also working with the Department of Education on a program for early childhood, preschool-aged children, and how we can work with the Department of Education to utilize the services we currently provide, as well as take advantage of established institutions the Department of Education already has, and how we can work together to better accommodate the needs of children in the age group that seems to be having difficulties at the present time.

I think that's just about all I have. I look forward to going through the budget in more detail and answering any concerns or questions the Opposition may have.

Ms. Stick: I look forward to the ongoing discussion with questions. I have lots and I've appreciated in the past when the minister has provided the answers. I know he won't have all of them with him today, but he has been very good at sending them afterwards if he doesn't. I think I'm going to start at the beginning and go on through.

In the first area, I'm just looking at the general budget. One of the concerns we've been hearing from employees and other individuals in the community is the number of auxiliary on-call employees that the department is continuing to hire. This would include workers like nurses, health practitioners, youth workers, group home staff, support workers, and on and on. That number seems to be increasing. What I would like to hear from the minister is what those numbers are — the FTEs,

permanent versus auxiliary on-call. I know I asked this question last year: What are the plans to ensure that more individuals — many who work full-time, year-round on an auxiliary on-call basis — have the opportunity to become permanent employees and receive the same benefits as the person who may be doing the exact same job right next to them, but who has different benefits, a different pay scale and different security than the individual who is an auxiliary on-call?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I think we provided information to the member last year about the total number of people in the 2012-13 mains. In fact, I have the numbers here. Last year, the total Health and Social Services FTEs were 822.6 permanent, 28.7 term and then about another 70 FTEs who were auxiliary on-call. This year, it's slightly higher. It's 831 permanent, 31 term and 77 auxiliary on-call FTEs.

One of the problems we face is that from day to day, you're never quite sure of how many people you need in many of these communities. All it takes is one family to move away from a smaller community, and if they had a number of children or people in a program, the program collapses.

So that is one of the reasons we are forced to use auxiliary on-calls — because they are just that. They are on call and when the program doesn't have the required number of people, then we don't have to go through a lay-off process or something else in order to decrease the costs of the program. Auxiliary on-calls are really common in almost any residential or health care facility. I guess it's the nature of the beast — because they are operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if a person is ill or goes on holidays, you need somebody to replace them and you can't guarantee how many permanent staff — and let's face it, part of the reason is cost too. Once you hire those permanent staff, they are there. If there is nothing for them to do, you are still paying them because they are still there. You and I both know that the lay-off process in Government of Yukon is almost non-existent. So it's one of the reasons for the high use of auxiliary on-call. It does give us flexibility. There is no doubt about it. It gives us a lot of mobility too, when we are doing training or educational activities or anything of that nature.

The number is growing slightly, but I don't think it's out of hand. Unless I'm convinced otherwise, I think the split here between permanent, term and auxiliary on-call is pretty reasonable.

Ms. Stick: The minister can believe that and think that's reasonable, but there are a lot of individuals who are auxiliary on-call and have been for one year, two years, three years, or longer, and in the same job. That job hasn't disappeared; the numbers haven't changed; numbers have gone up. We know we're going to need nurses in communities — we know that. We know we need people to staff group homes, whether it be for children or adults. Those numbers aren't going to decrease; they are only going to continue to increase. Those individuals, by virtue of being auxiliary on-call, do not have the same rights, even though they're working with the same person or working with a person next to them, even supervising.

I know of instances where individuals are auxiliary on-calls and they are supervising people who are permanent employees and to me that doesn't seem fair. I understand that we need to save money, but I also think we need to treat all our employees the same way — equitably and fairly. I'm just wondering if there is a consideration of putting a timeline on auxiliary on-calls where they are only required to work so long before you become permanent and not to go back to a system where a person would be laid off for a day and then rehired, because that certainly was not fair and it was just a way around that.

Hon. Mr. Graham: I had notes from both of my staff members here to tell me that some people actually prefer auxiliary on-call because then they don't have a definite time that they have to be somewhere and they can accept or reject a request to come in and work as they see fit. I think the simple fact of life is that we need auxiliary on-calls. There will always be people who are sick and whose job has to be filled at a continuing care home or a facility of some kind, so we need those people. There is no doubt about it. We are looking at stabilizing some of the auxiliary on-calls where possible, but that's not something that I see as working in the long term.

At the college, we attempted to do exactly what the member opposite said. After someone had worked as a term instructor for a period of time they were considered a permanent instructor. Madam Chair, speaking from long experience at the college, it was wonderful, except from a financial viewpoint — it didn't work. It's as simple as that.

We'll continue to look at this. As I said, we like the flexibility. Some auxiliary on-call folks also appreciate it. They will continue to enjoy that kind of work. What can I say? Where possible, we hire permanent staff. Where we know we need permanent staff, we hire permanent staff. We only hire auxiliaries on-call when no other alternative is available to us.

Ms. Stick: Before I move on from that, I want to say that I think there is a systemic overuse of auxiliary on-calls. Yes, we need them when people are sick, or away, or on holidays, but there are just too many individuals who have worked too many years, full-time, without their jobs changing and who have remained auxiliary on-call and would prefer not to be auxiliary on-call. Even though they may be compensated for sick time or vacation time, if for some reason you're sick, you do not get paid. Taking a holiday, taking a week off work — you are not paid for that. It may be covered in other ways in your pay, but for many, it's not an ideal way of working.

I was interested — and I'm going to move on from that — in some of the capital costs. I was looking at the Canada Health Infoway. Last year, it had been estimated at \$3.9 million and this year, it's down to \$275,000. What I'm interested in is: Are we nearing completion on this project? Has the department spoken or consulted with the Information and Privacy Commissioner about the protection of personal privacy and information through these new electronic health record programs?

Hon. Mr. Graham: The money for Infoway is a definite fund we receive from the federal government, through what we called the THSSI funding — I'll try one more time. I went down to a Canada Health Infoway meeting — \$6 million

was earmarked for the Yukon electronic health records project. Phase 1 of the project, which is now completed, was a recommendation to determine which projects we'll implement and in what order. I just received that last week — phase 1 — that makes certain recommendations about which electronic systems should be implemented first. Projects considered under the electronic health records system include point of service systems, both within Yukon and with B.C., including existing point of service systems, such as Meditech, GoldCare, physician EMRs, pharmacy systems, Panorama, et cetera.

Some of the others: planning for a drug information system and lab information system; registries, both client and provider; and viewer and health information access layers.

I believe that we've also just recently met with the Information and Privacy Commissioner's office to discuss certain aspects of what information systems we will be proceeding with and what we should be looking out for. Does that answer your questions?

Ms. Stick: I did note in the budget briefing notes that the government is looking at an alternative to the — and I can't find my notes — but it is with the computer system over at social assistance, known or referred to as LISA. I was just wondering if I could have an idea of what that alternative program is going to be. I'm really glad to see that LISA is actually — or, hopefully disappearing, since when I started back in the 1980s, that was the program in effect and there were problems with it then, and it has not kept up with current day.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Madam Chair, I'm sorry to report that it's going to be in use for a little while longer yet because it's much too early in the investigation stage to determine what priority it has. Two of our real priorities — based on not only the initial phase of the reports but that were priorities of ours as well — were the pharmacy system, because we know that is probably the most ancient and unproductive system that we currently operate, and the medical information system. Of course, that's a priority across the country. Because of the fact that we have so many residents of the Yukon travelling for service or for medical care outside of the territory, it's really important that we have something in place that allows us to electronically communicate with these other systems. We're looking at all systems — which includes the one with social assistance; it includes the pharmacy system; it includes medical records and information systems — to determine which ones we should go ahead with. We're also looking at the long-term cost because there is a huge capital cost and quite an operating and maintenance cost as well, none of which will be supported by the federal government or by Infoway because they're supporting only the upfront and capital costs. After that, they will walk away and we'll be forced to support it.

When we talk about sustainability — and I know the member opposite talked about the difficulty of sustaining a medical system such as this — one of the things we're trying to look at is long-term cost. So you'll see that as a theme that goes through many of the things we're looking at now.

Evidently there is an analysis looking at the LISA system as we speak, just to make recommendations on what can be done to improve that system.

Ms. Stick: The low-income support application program, or LISA, as I mentioned has been in place since the 1980s. I believe it was a program we actually obtained in cooperation with Alberta at the time, and that's where it came from. I'm just wondering, is there a timeline for looking at this program? Are we looking at other jurisdictions and just purchasing a program that's already created and ready to go, instead of trying to reinvent the wheel?

Hon. Mr. Graham: That's one of the reasons I said we do look at what's going on in other provinces because we have such an interrelationship with these provinces. There is \$250,000 in this budget to start work on developing options for the LISA system. So we're working on developing a workplan on where we're headed from here.

In all cases if we have an alternative, such as purchasing a system from another province or territory that is working well and allows us to communicate outside of the territory, we usually attempt to do that because there is absolutely no point in trying to reinvent the wheel here in the Yukon and having a system that either won't communicate with other jurisdictions or that we have to go through a long period of testing and working with it before we work out all the kinks. So if we have the option of — and we do — we work with other provinces and territories as much as possible to enable us to provide new systems.

Ms. Stick: I thank the minister for that response. Looking at other corporate costs, there was an increase of \$57,000 for the social inclusion and poverty reduction program that was to increase a 0.25 FTE to that program. I was just wondering if the minister could tell me, please, what that would bring to this program as total staffing under Health and Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Graham: The \$57,000 allows us to provide funding to move a part of a PY into the program to work with the *Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy*. I'm not sure if the members opposite realize that this was a program begun with THSSI funding, and under the THSSI funding we had approved funding for a certain number of years and, after that point, as is normal with many of these federal government programs, the funding runs out and that means we have to fund from within. This \$57,000 is part of the funding that we will use to move the cost of that program internally to Health and Social Services. This is something that we will look at on an annual basis to determine exactly what the funding requirements will be and if the program is meeting the needs of the territory.

Ms. Stick: I was just looking for notes on this.

It was my understanding that this was to increase the staffing by 0.25. That was what I heard: a one-time increase of \$57,000 to support the development of the social inclusion program. The funding increase includes an increase of \$32,000 for a 0.25 full-time equivalent for that executive director and another \$25,000 for contracts. I just wanted to be clear. Could I have the FTEs for that program? Is it one full-time? Is it more? That's the other part of the question I was looking for.

Hon. Mr. Graham: There has been one PY with that program since its inception. The difference will be now that 75

percent of the PY will be funded by federal and 25 percent by territorial funding. That will change as time goes on.

Ms. Stick: To be clear then, it has not changed the FTEs involved; it's just a different way of funding the same position that has been there in the past?

Hon. Mr. Graham: That's correct, Madam Chair.

Ms. Stick: Moving on, I noticed in Family and Children's Services, under the O&M, that we're seeing a decrease in child placement services and a decrease in youth justice, but I did not see numbers changing that much. I'm just wondering if there's a reason for those decreases in funding for those two program areas.

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'm not sure if I have the right one, but the one decrease that I see is the \$243,000. That's a result of the end of the SNAP program, which was the Stop Now and Plan program, for the under-12 kids. The National Crime Prevention Strategy's three-year project funding ends in June of 2013.

The program is being reduced by \$243,000 as per the agreement and an application is being submitted for an extension of the funding for an additional two years to 2014-15, but we have not yet received any information with respect to the funding of that program.

Ms. Stick: I see that on my briefing notes of the decrease because of the SNAP program, but I was looking at the overall program of youth justice — the \$4,784,000 last year; \$4,621,000 this year — so maybe that's a part of that.

Under Family and Children's Services, we were given quite a bit of information and statistics, but I noticed that there were some things that we were provided with last year that we didn't receive this year in the mains. I do have some questions for that. Under Family and Children's Services, last year we were given a median length of time that a family service case might be open and we didn't get that last year. I'm just wondering. We see that this year there has been an increase in the number of families served and under child protection services there is also an increase in the number of families with protection concerns. What I'd like to know is, can you give us an idea of the median length of time that families are involved in those services and has it increased?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'm sorry, I don't have that information readily available, but we will get back to the member and provide her with the information. I guess if last year's was good, we will try and provide it to all members of the Legislature in the same format as last year, or a similar format to last year.

Ms. Stick: When I was looking under child placement services and adoption services, we've seen that the numbers are going down there also. Last year the estimate was 60, down to 40 this year, and I wondered if the minister would have an explanation of why these numbers would go down. I was wondering if that possibly has to do with international adoptions and the greater difficulty people have with those — to bring those numbers down.

Hon. Mr. Graham: The number isn't really indicative, because last year's actual and the actual for this year — so we're talking about the last couple of years — 2011-12 and

2012-13 — were both around 38 to 40. So we adjusted the number this year to reflect what has actually happened.

I know in conversations with a First Nation worker in the community — who informed me that some of the now-cooperative child placement services that happened in the communities are not only much better, but they find that because children are not being taken out of their homes — other alternative arrangements are being done within the communities itself — that the number of children not only put up for care but the children leaving the community is much, much lower. In fact, in two particular First Nation communities, there was not a single adoption outside of the community in over a year, and they were really happy to see that. That could also be reflected in the numbers of placements that are down.

Ms. Stick: I'm not quite sure where this fits, so I have kind of put it under family and children's services and adoption and protective services, and that is the question of kinship care and the tracking of those numbers. We know that the Yukon has the highest numbers in terms of grandparents and family members taking care of children who belong to other family members. Often it is grandparents taking care of their grandkids. I want to know if there is a way that this department is tracking those numbers and if it is aware, because I know the minister has had meetings with concerned individuals about this before. This group is looking for more supports for grandparents. Some grandparents have had to go back to work to be able to afford to raise their grandkids because their pension does not cover it. They do not have permanent care. They do not have a legal form saying that they are the legal guardian for this child.

Often, the reason for that is because they don't want to put themselves in conflict with their own children about the parenting of the grandchildren. To have to go to court, for one, is costly; and second, it can create further rifts within the family — and often puts the children at risk that the original parents say, "Well, if you're going for permanent care, then I'm taking them back and I'm leaving."

So grandparents find themselves in a really difficult situation. I know they've been asking for different ways of finding support, whether it's through counselling, parenting skills and financial support also. I just wondered if the minister has made any movement or has looked at any new options for kinship care, especially in light of us having some of the highest numbers in Canada for grandparents taking care of their grandkids.

Hon. Mr. Graham: When this subject first came up some time ago with a person who works as a researcher for the party opposite, we tried to compile some statistics, and we found that it was virtually impossible to get the kinds of statistics you need, because so many of the arrangements were of an informal nature. We know what the statistics are if a grandparent assumes responsibility for their grandchild in a legally binding way, but some of the arrangements are exactly as the member opposite said — they're not legally binding; they're very informal; they're kind of discussed around the meeting table, and they're sometimes temporary and sometimes not so temporary. The unfortunate part is that it's very difficult for the department to know what those family relationships are and

what has actually happened until a request comes to us for assistance. We are working with First Nations, especially because this is more of a traditional type of arrangement than — shall we say — a non-First Nation society. The difficulty is where we get the funding from. If the grandparents, while looking after the children, find themselves in financial difficulties, one of the things of course is always social assistance. So we encourage them to look at social assistance. But we realize too that doesn't cover — especially if there is no legally binding agreement in place, or enforceable agreement in place. It's very difficult.

If the parents are not providing the support they should be, that's a difficulty as well. I think the other thing is that there is a two-year limit on extended-family care agreements. Some of the problems that the member opposite talks about happen after that two-year time limit has passed. I know, in several instances, where there have been informal extended-family care arrangements, where the child is in and out of home placement and the grandparents have come for assistance, but the two years have lapsed and the child should technically have been returned to their permanent home. So there are difficulties here. It's something we're working on because we realize it's happening on an informal basis, and we'll continue to work on it, but it's difficult to fund.

Ms. Stick: I would suggest that the numbers are increasing. The minister didn't say this, but I think the balance between First Nation and non-First Nation families providing this care is actually equalling out.

I know more and more non-First Nation grandparents who are taking on this responsibility. I know there is an organization for kinship care and grandparents and they certainly had lots of information from other provinces and tried to help grandparents when they could. Some of it was through a phone line. They had an emergency number or a number they could call and talk to someone who had some background and experience. That person is no longer able to pay for that themselves and so even that little bit of resource has gone. I'm sure that person still gets calls, but it's not advertised any more.

I was really hoping that we would see a bit more in this budget for kinship care because it is increasingly difficult for many grandparents to carry on without supports and know they're not able to go to social assistance because they do not have that document that says this child is in their care. So all they can do is represent themselves at a social assistance office and not the one or two or more children who might also be living in their home.

I just wondered if the minister has any more to say on that.

Hon. Mr. Graham: It's something that we're working with. I'm a great believer in extended family care. My kids lived with me until well past the normal age, and my mother still lives with me — I live with her, probably. So I really believe in it. I think extended family care is a really good thing. I don't know how we deal with this. It's something that could change from week to week or month to month. So unless somebody within the department or Outside comes up with a really good solution, it's a difficult problem. It's one that I can sympathize with, because I know if I was in difficulty for fund-

ing, then I'd be looking for it too, because I really believe that this is the way we should be proceeding.

Ms. Stick: I would hope that the minister would also agree to continue to meet with parents or grandparents or an organization that looks at kinship care and seek their input, and perhaps even their assistance, in coming up with ideas of how to meet these needs.

Moving on to child placement services, is "continuous care" what we used to know as "permanent care" for children?

Hon. Mr. Graham: It would appear that it's a change in terminology, but the change in number is an indicator of the change in age. We now go up to 24 years old, so that would account for some of the increase in the last couple of years.

Ms. Stick: We see numbers have gone up, and the minister just explained that that's because it includes young adults — I guess, at that point — up to the age of 24, when looking at continuous care. Does that hold true for young adults in care in our youth group homes — that they might be in permanent care? Are they able to stay in those group homes if they're under permanent care to the age of 24?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'll have to get back to the member on that. We have some ideas, but we'll get back with an answer on that one.

Ms. Stick: Along these same lines of children and youth in continuous care — a lot of research has been done recently about youth aging out of the child and family services programs and not being caught up by the adult programs or services and how increasing numbers of youth that we might see as homeless or couch surfing or ending up in the justice system are those youth we've had in foster care or have had in group homes who, at a certain age, on a birthday, are told that services end. Those are the ones we see are having the most difficulties, because there is not someone there to support them or to give them advice or to provide what you and I might provide to our kids as they grow older, which is helping them to make decisions for further education or employment or work and giving them the support they need. These youth — young adults — actually find themselves with nothing. I am just wondering: what are we doing around transitional planning for many of these youth?

Hon. Mr. Graham: This is an interesting question because, as I said just previously, we've extended the age to 24.

One of the reasons the age was extended to 24 was to allow a transitional phase so that during those additional few years, a young adult — they're not children any more by that stage — can take advantage of services provided by the department. I think it's also important to note that family services don't end at a certain age and you're cut off. The department attempts to ensure that people are prepared for the various transitions that occur during their lifetime, be it 16 years old, 18 years old or 21 years old. They attempt to provide that transitional planning throughout. But one of the reasons that the age was increased to 24 years is to provide that additional three years, where a young adult can transition into being a fully self-supporting, independent adult.

Ms. Stick: I understand increasing the age and the hope for transitional planning, but I also imagine it would be

difficult if an individual is in a group home for children or youth to be able to stay in there until the age of 24, when there would be younger individuals living there, and that could prove to be a problem. They might not fit under a program, such as supported independent living in the adult program, because they may not have a disability.

It might be other reasons why they've ended up in these group homes. I'd like to hear from the minister about different ways that support might be provided to those individuals.

Hon. Mr. Graham: When we're talking about these continuous care people, we're talking about people with disabilities who transition, and that's the extra three years. It's actually for people with disabilities who transition — but we're also saying that when these people make the transition, they transition to adult care. They're not automatically dropped by childcare and then have to fend for themselves until they realize that there is another unit there that they can deal with. They're actually transitioned by the childcare unit over to adult services, and adult services can continue on for some of these people for the rest of their lives.

I guess what I'm trying to say is the people who need it — the ones with disabilities, be they physical or cognitive — work with child services, transition through to adult services, so it should be seamless. They also get voluntary support agreements that are not under order by the director, as they would many times when they are in the child services unit, where the director has a certain amount of control over their actions. When they transition to the adult unit, it's then a voluntary care order or a voluntary support agreement that is negotiated between the young adult and the department.

Seeing the time, Madam Chair, perhaps it is a good place to end. I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Graham that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 10, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker: I declare the motion carried. This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.