



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 103

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Monday, November 4, 2013 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. David Laxton, MLA, Porter Creek Centre

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Darrell Pasloski	Mountainview	Premier Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Education; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Community Services; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation; Yukon Lottery Commission Government House Leader
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Yukon Energy Corporation; Yukon Development Corporation
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Environment; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Highways and Public Works
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Justice; Tourism and Culture

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party

Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin
Hon. David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Darius Elias	Vuntut Gwitchin

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

Elizabeth Hanson	Leader of the Official Opposition Whitehorse Centre
Jan Stick	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
Kevin Barr	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
Lois Moorcroft	Copperbelt South
Jim Tredger	Mayo-Tatchun
Kate White	Takhini-Kopper King

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
---------------------	---------------------------------------

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Floyd McCormick
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Doris McLean
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 4, 2013 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

INTRODUCTION OF TABLE OFFICERS

Speaker: On behalf of the House, I would like to welcome Ms. Allison Lloyd to the Legislative Assembly as the Assembly's new Clerk of Committees. Ms. Lloyd, who will also serve as a Clerk-at-the-Table, comes to us from the Senate of Canada where she worked as a procedural clerk with the Committees Directorate. I ask all members to please give her a warm welcome.

Applause

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Movember

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to Movember, which is an annual month-long event involving the growing of moustaches during the month of November to raise awareness of prostate cancer and other male cancer initiatives. I won't go through the history of the event, as we've done that in previous tributes, but I will speak a little bit about the reason behind it and some of the vision behind the Movember movement.

The vision of Movember is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health by encouraging men, known as Mo Bros, to get involved. Movember aims to increase early cancer detection, diagnosis and effective treatments, and ultimately reduce the number of preventable deaths. Besides getting an annual checkup, Movember encourages men to be aware of any family history of cancer and to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

During November each year, Movember is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men's faces in Canada and around the world. These men raise vital funds and awareness for men's health, specifically prostate cancer and men's health initiatives. Mo Bro has effectively become a walking, talking billboard for the 30 days of November. Through their actions and words, they raise awareness by prompting private and public conversation around the often ignored issue of men's health.

The Movember initiative also provides information and support for men and their families affected by prostate cancer. This in turn helps them make informed decisions and improves their quality of life and increases the understanding of the health risks that men face and encourage men to act on

that knowledge. We've seen that prostate cancer is an issue that men typically do not speak about.

Through Movember and the power of the moustache, the hope is to reduce stigma, increase awareness, improve treatment, and expand the understanding of this cause.

It may look like at a trick of the light or the shadows but, in fact, I am in the process of growing a moustache currently, as is the Premier, who will also be participating as a Mo Bro this Movember. The Premier and I have chosen to participate in this year's campaign to again further the cause of awareness here in the territory. In a few more days, hopefully, you'll be able to see some evidence of that, even though some in our office have commented that it looks like there is some dirt on my face. I will endeavour to grow as hard as I can to help raise awareness for this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give a bit of a shout-out to the fine folks at the Barbers II barbershop on Main Street who gave the Premier and me a hot shave on November 1 to launch Movember with us. So I would like to thank Melanie and Kaitlyn and the other staff at the Barbers II barbershop on Main Street for that.

If anyone is interested in assisting with our collective effort to raise money and awareness, they can certainly visit our website, www.moteam.co/team-Yukon.

Whether or not people choose to contribute financially to ours or any other Movember campaign, or to become a Mo Bro themselves, I would encourage all Yukoners to do their part in raising awareness for men's health.

Thank you.

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to Movember — that month where men become walking billboards to raise awareness about men's health.

From its grassroots beginnings in Melbourne, Australia, the Movember movement has become an official global charity with a vision to have an everlasting impact quite literally on the face of men's health. November sees millions of moustaches appear on the upper lips of men worldwide as they face the challenge of fundraising money and, more importantly, awareness of prostate and testicular cancer and men's mental health challenges.

Men face a unique set of challenges when it comes to managing their mental well-being with the associated stigma of shame and embarrassment, often preventing them from seeking help and taking action. Men aren't always good about discussing their feelings, especially when it comes to sadness, depression or stress. Men instead often act out with more work, drinking and risk-taking to numb or avoid the real problems they face. To many men, being manly means not admitting to any vulnerabilities or expressing emotions. It is these same qualities that prevent so many men from seeking help for their depression. Men, if you think you are alone in this, you aren't. Men's depression is currently ranked third in terms of disease burden in high income countries such as ours. Depression affects 840,000 men every year in Canada. One in five men will experience a mental health issue this year. Twenty-eight hundred Canadian men commit suicide each

year. Four out of five suicides among young people in Canada are committed by men, despite men's lower reported rates of depression.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian men, and is the third leading cause of male cancer deaths in Canada. The risk of prostate cancer increases as men grow older. Prostate cancer is not very common in men under 50 years of age. The chance of having prostate cancer increases after 50 and is diagnosed most often in men over the age of 65. One in seven men will develop prostate cancer during his lifetime and one in 28 will die from it. In 2013 alone it is expected that nearly 24,000 new cases of the disease will be diagnosed and 3,900 men will die of prostate cancer. That means that today, statistically, 65 Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 11 men will be dying from it. The number of men who die of prostate cancer every year exceeds the number of women who die from breast cancer annually.

Despite these figures, the level of awareness, understanding and support for prostate cancer lags significantly behind that of women's health causes. Even facing these overwhelming odds, hope is not lost. When prostate cancer is detected and treated early, the chances of successful treatment are better. Recognizing symptoms and getting regular checkups are the best ways to detect prostate cancer early. The sooner the symptoms are reported, the sooner a doctor can diagnose and treat the cancer.

Cancer risks for men don't end with prostate cancer. Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men aged between 15 and 29 years old. The incidence is lowest before puberty, increases significantly after age 14, peaks around age 30 and then declines again by age 60. It is expected that 940 new cases of testicular cancer will be diagnosed in Canada in 2013. The good news is that testicular cancer is a highly treatable cancer and can be effectively treated and potentially cured if diagnosed and treated early. Even advanced testicular cancer can also be cured with treatment. If you are diagnosed, the most important step is to talk at length with your doctor about your treatment choices. You are a major player in your health and when choosing a treatment plan, factors such as your overall health, the type and stage of cancer should be considered.

While Movember may seem lighthearted on the outside, with moustaches appearing like magic on upper lips everywhere, on the inside, the organization works hard to support men and men's health. To all of you growing moustaches, may your moustache grow quick and full, and for all of those on the sidelines, we can offer our support by making a donation at ca.movember.com. Our donations will support world-class health programs that combat prostate and testicular cancer and mental health challenges. These programs directed by the Movember foundation are focused on awareness and education, living with and beyond cancer, staying mentally healthy, living with and beyond mental illness, and on research to achieve their vision of everlasting impact on the face of men's health.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Liberal caucus to also pay tribute to Movember 2013. Movember is a month-long fundraising campaign, as mentioned earlier by the other parties, where men start November with a clean-shaven face and then grow a stylish moustache throughout the month. Movember is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men's faces in Canada and around the world.

This moustache-growing charity event and the men with their mo' will raise vital funds and awareness for men's health, specifically prostate cancer and male mental health initiatives. This year I am pleased once again to be part of the Dawson Dusters. The team includes the Dawson City CAO Jeff Renaud, Mayor of Moosehide Ronald Johnson, myself, Deputy Chief of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Jay Farr, town councillors Steven Johnson and Kyla Macarthur — yes, even women can join the fight — and also Mayor Wayne Potoroka and Chief Eddie Taylor.

We also have a great new addition to the team this year, Mr. Speaker: Elder Victor Henry. That, Mr. Speaker, is a big deal. For many listening today, it's likely that Victor's moustache is older than you are, by a long shot. He has had that moustache since he was 17 years old, shaved this weekend for the cause. Mahsi' cho to Victor Henry. I am very, very pleased to have been part of the Dawson Dusters' Movember team for five years now and we've been able to raise over \$5,000 in support. The moustache is designed to start conversations and raise awareness about prostate cancer and I hope everyone will support this worthy cause.

Speaker: I'd like one of the pages to hand this \$20 over to the Premier toward Movember. I've only got one \$20 bill, sorry. I will get you another one later in the name of my father, who did have prostate cancer — George Laxton — although it was colon cancer that finally took him.

Are there any other tributes?

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise to acknowledge Linda Hillier, a friend of many of us in the Legislative Assembly and a constituent of Mount Lorne and Southern Lakes. I encourage everybody to welcome her.

Applause

Speaker's Statement

Speaker: Prior to tabling returns and documents, the Chair would like to remind members once again — and it's early on, so I'm giving you a heads-up here — of the proper procedure regarding this item on the Daily Routine.

As the Chair has previously informed the House, when members table documents, they are to restrict themselves to informing the House of the title of the document and, if applicable, the authority under which the document is being tabled. If the document has no title, the member may offer a brief, non-political description of its contents.

Members are restricted from making other comments about documents they are tabling because there is no opportunity for other members to respond at that time.

I thank the members for their attention.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Having said that, under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling the *Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office 2013 Annual Report*.

Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 64: *Act to Amend the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 64, entitled *Act to Amend the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 64, entitled *Act to Amend the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 64 agreed to

Bill No. 63: *Court and Regulatory Statutes Amendment Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I move that Bill No. 63, entitled *Court and Regulatory Statutes Amendment Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 63, entitled *Court and Regulatory Statutes Amendment Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 63 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that Yukon has a competitive business tax structure and competitive business tax rates.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to respect the service and sacrifices of our veterans by reversing its decision to shut down nine Veterans Affairs offices across the country.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with other Canadian jurisdictions within the established constitutional framework to abolish the unelected and democratically unaccountable Senate of Canada.

I further give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to build an inclusive, diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all by:

(1) Prioritizing the completion of regional land use planning necessary to create economic certainty;

(2) Partnering with First Nation governments on economic development by fully respecting and honouring our final agreements;

(3) Stimulating green jobs and building a renewable energy future;

(4) Supporting tourism and avoiding decisions that tarnish the Yukon's tourism brand;

(5) Lessening dependence on extractive industries to drive economic growth;

(6) Generating more value from extractive industries by lessening reliance on fly-in/fly-out labour and contractors;

(7) Recognizing the importance of a vibrant arts community for our economy;

(8) Implementing policies to improve access, speed and pricing of telecommunications, including information technology;

(9) Improving management of capital projects so key infrastructure is built on-time, on-budget and maximizes benefits to the local economy;

(10) Increasing small and local business access to capital and government contracts;

(11) Targeting job creation measures for rural Yukon; and

(12) Creating more skills training within our educational system and including incentives for employers to hire apprentices.

Mr. Silver: I give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do order the return of any and all budget estimates for the new F.H. Collins school design.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: **F.H. Collins Secondary School reconstruction**

Ms. Hanson: On Thursday, the Premier stuck to his statement that the low bid on the F.H. Collins project was \$10 million over the two estimates he had. Then in a Friday radio interview, the Premier started changing his tune. He now says he had a third estimate that was never considered by Management Board. He said this estimate put the project cost at \$41.6 million. He now says the low bid was \$9 million overbudget, not \$10 million.

Can the Premier explain why, for months and months, he and the Yukon Party team have denied the existence of a third estimate?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I did articulate over the weekend, it's quite simple. Management Board approved a construction budget for F.H. Collins of \$38.6 million in May. Subsequent to that, we received two estimates. These were independent estimates from professional estimators, who both came in with estimates that were lower than the price that we had approved in our budget, really reaffirming and confirming our budget was accurate. We then issued the tender on November 7 for this project. Forty-one days later, on December 18, we received a third estimate on this project — 41 days after going out to tender.

The bottom line is that when the bids were opened, the lowest bid was almost \$10 million more than what we had budgeted.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, as a result of previous bad decisions and public pressure, the Yukon Party agreed to add a temporary gym and put geothermal heating back into the F.H. Collins project. These added to the cost of the project and the BTY estimate reflected these added costs with an estimate of \$43.7 million, not \$41.6 million as the Premier now says in the media.

But the government decided to stick to its original estimate, which did not include these additions. The government added new costs to the project but said the project should cost the same. This is mismanagement, clear and simple.

If the government found a legitimate reason for why it didn't like the project, it could have told the public its reasons. Instead, it disallowed the bids on dubious grounds.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier take responsibility for this mess, be accountable, apologize to the public and finally commit to full disclosure?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, as I articulated on the weekend as well, if the bids had come in after we opened the bids and were in the range slightly above what Management Board had approved, I'm pretty confident the Minister of Education at the time probably would have brought that back to Management Board to entertain that. But the reality is that the minimum bid — the lowest bid — came in almost \$10 million overbudget.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the NDP talks about financial management and that's exactly what we're talking about — financial management. Our responsibility is to spend taxpayers' money wisely. That's why we did not go forward with that project and now we see that the tender is being issued again and we look forward to the construction of a beautiful new F.H. Collins School.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, we have had the Premier give us lots of analogies here, so let's look at a simple one. Let's take the example, as he does, of a family who wants to build a house. They get an estimate that says it will cost \$500,000. If they are responsible and care about the house actually being built, they are not going to put out a tender with a budget of \$400,000. That's exactly what this government

did. Even worse, they then threw out the design they had paid for, covered up the facts from the Yukon public, and are now putting out a new tender that prevents local contractors from being the general contractor. The bungling of the F.H. Collins project has hit a new low and Yukoners simply don't trust this government any more.

Will the Premier level with the public and admit that their plan was and is to award the F.H. Collins contract to an Alberta builder?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In May of 2012, Management Board approved a construction budget of \$38.6 million. After that, our number was confirmed by two professional independent estimators, who both came in with a number that was lower than we had actually budgeted through Management Board. A tender was issued on November 7, and it was 41 days later, after the tender was issued, on December 18, that the third estimate was presented to the department.

In the end, the answer is simple to Yukoners. We are responsible for spending their money wisely. This project, before putting a shovel in the ground, was almost \$10 million over the budget. We are talking about financial management, and that's why we went back. That's why we are now out to tender again and we are looking forward to building that beautiful school at F.H. Collins. We will continue to remain vigilant when it comes to spending Yukoners' money.

Question re: Medical incident reporting

Ms. Stick: In 2004, the *Canadian Adverse Events Study* revealed that in Canada one out of 13 adult patients admitted to a Canadian hospital encounter an adverse event — in other words, harm from treatment. One out of nine adults will potentially be given the wrong medication or wrong dosage of a medication, and 24 percent of preventable, adverse events are related to medication errors. This study was the first to measure harm from unsafe medication practices.

Across the country, governments are taking steps to prevent these critical incidents. The first step is to know when they occur. Can the minister responsible for Health and Social Services tell Yukoners how and when he learns about critical incidents like Teresa Scheunert's death of mixed-drug toxicity in the Watson Lake hospital?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I learn of these deaths in due course from the independent Yukon Hospital Corporation, which we have set up in this territory — which an NDP government set up in this territory — to operate the hospitals within our boundaries.

Under the legislation, the hospital has a responsibility to report back on incidents that occur within the hospital. They also initiate independent reviews under the auspices of the Yukon *Evidence Act* — section 13, to be more precise — to provide an opportunity for identification of any gaps and what improvement activities should be undertaken by the Hospital Corporation. They also provide that advice to me.

Ms. Stick: Medication error is preventable and it is essential to learn from past mistakes. Ontario committed to a mandatory reporting of critical incidents, and in the first year hospitals disclosed that 36 patients had suffered severe

adverse events — 10 fatal, and mostly because of medication errors. Incident reporting is indicative of a culture committed to safety. In fact, reporting is the key because you can't fix something when you don't know what is happening.

Will the minister responsible for Health and Social Services and for the Hospital Corporation order the corporation to begin mandatory reporting of critical incidents involving medications and make those available?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I have not yet discussed with the Hospital Corporation, or even with my own department, mandatory reporting of incidents that happen within the hospitals in the territory. But the Yukon Hospital Corporation does take health care delivery very seriously within our territory and they investigate not only incidents that prove fatal, but they instigate investigations of any errors within the hospital system that may lead to adverse effects for patients under their control.

I will undertake the conversation with the Hospital Corporation. I'm not promising anything, Mr. Speaker, but I will undertake the conversation with both my department and the Hospital Corporation in due course.

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what "due course" is, but it seems to me that this is something that should be happening sooner rather than later. Yukoners want evidence that the minister understands the systemic failure that resulted in the death in the Watson Lake hospital and they want to hear a commitment to fixing it.

The minister reminds this House that the Yukon Hospital Corporation is independent, or at arm's length, but safe medication practices should not be handled at arm's length or independently. The coroner recommends the Yukon Hospital Corporation work with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada, which sets standards for these safe medication practices.

Is the minister following the coroner's recommendations and will he commit to implementing a system for all stakeholders to report medication incidents?

Hon. Mr. Graham: As a result of a letter that I wrote to the Hospital Corporation on August 28 regarding recent reports from the chief coroner looking into the deaths of two patients at the Watson Lake hospital, the Hospital Corporation undertook action to improve communication and alerts. They have received the coroner's report and the recommendations. They will provide a formal response to the coroner and they will include me in that report. The Hospital Corporation has worked with the coroner and will continue to do so, not only with respect to this file, but in anything that occurs within the Yukon Hospital Corporation. They are trying to improve communication.

They agree that they should contact the coroner in a timely fashion, and they have the director of quality improvement and risk management at the hospital being notified when there is a death that has occurred within the hospital system, and a quality review within the Hospital Corporation itself would take place immediately.

Question re: F.H. Collins Secondary School reconstruction

Mr. Silver: I have a question for the Premier about this government's financial mismanagement of the F.H. Collins project.

In March 2013, the Premier told Yukoners the government had two estimates that told them that the schools could be built for \$38.6 million. In fact, the government had two estimates that told them the opposite. It even had an estimate that told them that it would cost \$43.7 million. Despite knowing this, the government instructed public servants to disregard the higher numbers and kept the budget from contractors bidding on the new school at \$38.6 million. One company alone spent \$500,000 preparing a bid on the project the government knew was going to come in overbudget.

Why did the Premier instruct officials to use a lower number, a number it already knew was unrealistic?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I have articulated the answer to this question twice already. Perhaps the Member for Klondike wasn't listening. In May of 2012, Management Board did approve a construction budget for F.H. Collins of \$38.6 million. We then received two independent estimates that confirmed our number was right. In fact, both of those estimates came in below the amount that we budgeted for that project.

On November 7 the tender was issued for the construction, and 41 days later, on December 18, a third estimate was received. That estimate was not reviewed by Management Board. The tenders were opened at the deadline — at the closure of the tender period — and at that point we found out that the lowest bid was almost \$10 million above our budget, Mr. Speaker. As I have said many times, this government is responsible for the taxpayers' money and we wisely made the decision to relook at this project. This project has now gone out to tender again and we're looking forward to the construction of a beautiful new high school in this community for the students, for the parents, for the teachers and for the administrators.

Mr. Silver: I guess the Premier has been asked this question many a time, but he offers nothing but briefing notes. It wasn't that long ago that the Premier was out in front of F.H. Collins with his golden shovel in hand and now he doesn't want to talk about it anymore.

The government knew that this project was going to cost more than \$38.6 million before the tender closed. Unfortunately, it didn't let contractors know about this inside information. It also instructed officials to judge the bids against the low-balled number. There are many words to describe what the government did in this case, and being fiscally responsible is not among them. Many of these words are also unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker.

Companies that put in money, time and effort to prepare the bids did so in good faith. Unfortunately the government already knew that it was going to reject these bids.

What does the Premier have to say to the companies that wasted their time and money preparing a tender that the government had no intention of awarding?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In May of 2012, Management Board approved the construction budget for F.H. Collins school of \$38.6 million. Subsequent to that, we received estimates done independently by professional estimators, who both came in with estimates below our construction budget approved by the Management Board.

We then issued the tender in November. Forty-one days after the tender had been issued, we received a third estimate. When the tender was closed — the deadline — and we opened up all the tenders, we found that the low bid was almost \$10 million more than what we had budgeted.

I also said that if it had come mildly above our budget with the addition of the geothermal and with the addition of the temporary gym, I'm sure that the Minister of Education would have considered bringing it back to Management Board. The bottom line is that this project came in almost \$10 million overbudget before we even turned a spade.

We will build a school, we will build it with financial prudence and we will build something that will be the pride of all Yukoners.

Mr. Silver: Let's recap what we know about this government's fiscally responsible approach to the building of F.H. Collins: (1) Before the last election, the Premier had a ground-breaking ceremony and promised a new school that would be completed in August of 2013; (2) \$5.5 million was spent on a design and site work that will now have to be redone — that money is lost; (3) the former Minister of Education told Yukoners that the new design was free and then turned around and handed a \$900,000 contract without competition to a company from Alberta to redesign the school; and (4) the government withheld from the public and contractors estimates that told them that the school could not be built for \$38.6 million.

Why did the government withhold the true cost of the building estimates from the contractors? Why didn't they at least negotiate with the low bidder, who did come within 10 percent of the government's best estimate?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I guess the only way we can answer that question is that the member is wrong, the member is wrong, the member is wrong. As I have articulated and repeated many times just today, we had an approved construction budget in May 2012 that was confirmed by two independent professional estimators, who came in with budget numbers — or with estimates — that were lower than our construction budget. We went to tender after that, and 41 days later we received a third estimate that was higher because of the acknowledgement of the geotechnical work and the temporary gym.

I guess what we're hearing from the Member for Klondike really fits in with what he told us in this House almost a year ago to the day. I will quote: "There are many different parts of the truth. I'm merely presenting my version of what Klondikers and Yukoners believe to be the truth ..."

Question re: Legal aid funding

Ms. Moorcroft: Yukon Legal Aid recently had to cut some services it provides to vulnerable Yukoners because its core funding ran out. The suspended program offers important poverty law services, such as helping clients with employment insurance benefits, landlord and tenant disputes and refugee claims. This government recently announced \$200,000 in additional one-time funding, but the government should have seen this coming because Legal Aid notified the department of the need last April when it saw that its 2013-14 fiscal year budget would be inadequate.

Why did this government wait until the much-needed legal aid services had to be suspended to finally announce the last-minute additional funds?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, we enjoy a good relationship with Legal Aid services and continued funding for them.

In 2012-13, Yukon provided Legal Aid with core funding of approximately \$1.6 million, along with almost \$200,000 in additional funding to deal with high-cost criminal cases. This has been a pattern over the last few years and we see that. Moving forward, we are going to sit down with Legal Aid to review their financials and their budgetary constraints and see what the issues are and how we can mitigate their shortcomings in the coming years.

Ms. Moorcroft: Mr. Speaker, the minister has acknowledged that Yukon Legal Aid is efficient and well-run, but despite an excellent track record, Legal Aid's core budget for 2013-14 is much less than the budget for Legal Aid in the other two northern territories and, as the minister said, Yukon government had to provide budget increases to Legal Aid in 2012-13 and 2011-12. We know that Legal Aid services are particularly important for Aboriginal women and children, who will then suffer the consequences of the suspension of some Legal Aid services until 2014.

My question is about fairness and access to justice. Does the minister understand that the inability to obtain Legal Aid services even for a few months is a serious matter for people who need legal aid?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, in comparing Yukon legal aid to Northwest Territories and Nunavut, we're comparing apples to oranges. There are no comparisons. The cost of providing legal aid in the other two territories is quite a bit higher than Yukon and that has to do with a lot of the fly-in/fly-out communities and providing access to justice within those territories. We can't compare Yukon to Northwest Territories and Nunavut when we're talking about legal aid.

We will continue to build upon the relationship that we have with Legal Aid within the Department of Justice. We will sit down with them and review their financials and their budgetary constraints moving forward. We've confirmed with them that we will do that and then we'll have to find out kind of what information we are getting back from those reviews and how we move forward with legal aid in the territory.

Question re: Ross River suspension bridge

Mr. Barr: Since 2009, engineering studies have called for urgent repairs to the 70-year-old heritage Ross River bridge. Last spring I urged the government to get on with the repairs to this important part of Yukon's heritage and the Ross River community. After announcing that the bridge could be fixed last June, now the government tells the public the only solution is to tear the bridge down.

Why did the government wait so long and why weren't urgent repairs done to the bridge when they were brought up over the past four years?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, the member is mistaken. In fact, the reports of the deterioration of the Ross River bridge go back, based on the information that I have in front of me from officials, to the first time that an engineer reported the bridge was nearing the end of its life, which was in 1984 — almost 30 years ago.

In fact, what should be recognized is that the \$1.1 million that was budgeted for repairs to the Ross River suspension bridge. That work was about to commence and it was in fact the engineer and the contractor who were doing a final inspection on the bridge.

They came back with an assessment of the structural condition of the bridge, including — and I'll quote from the engineer's report, which was given to us September 30: "In consideration of the critical condition of the north tower head beam and the poor overall condition of the bridge structure, we believe that it is no longer practical from a structural and construction safety perspective to repair and salvage the bridge. As a result, we recommend the bridge be demolished as soon as possible for safety reasons."

What we're doing right now is arranging for an independent engineering peer review of that engineer's recommendation. We will be considering options, because we do recognize the historical appreciation for this bridge and its value to the people of Ross River.

Mr. Barr: I'm glad to hear they're looking at options. There was an option already before the government. The 2012 report on repair options offered a solution within budget to enable the bridge to remain open for pedestrian access. Just this summer the government put out a tender to, and I quote: "restore safe pedestrian access to the north side of the Pelly River and retain the historic value of the Ross River suspension bridge structure".

If the government had followed through with this work, it would have been completed October 31. It was an important historic bridge to this government just a few months ago and I would really urge the government to consider this report. A structural engineering consultant who has worked on several bridge restorations has said there are options to make the repairs.

Will the minister commit to putting all options on the table and commit to the salvaging of this bridge?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, what needs to be recognized is that the member should understand that in fact up until we received the engineering report in September of this year, we expected that the bridge could be repaired within

the \$1.1 million that had been budgeted. It was not until we received that September 30 report based on the site inspection done by David Nairne and Associates engineering firm as well as a welding contractor that we had this information that the bridge was in worse shape than we had previously believed.

As I noted, we are arranging for peer review. A couple of things I should note is in fact that David Nairne and Associates — the engineering company won this RFP that was put out in the summer of 2013, and in fact, the recommendation that they came back with upon inspection included — I'll read another excerpt: "The north tower head beam is in critical condition and is at the point of failure and can collapse at any time without warning. The collapse of the head beam will result in the collapse of the bridge decks and possibly the collapse of the north and south towers. The north tower head beam is structurally unsafe in its present condition and we recommend that no further inspection or any repairs to the head beam be carried out."

Mr. Speaker, again as I noted, we are arranging for a peer review, but we do have to also take seriously the very serious recommendations that came within that —

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

Mr. Barr: Mr. Speaker, if the Yukon Party demolishes this bridge, it will forever be a textbook example of the gross mismanagement of Yukon's heritage by this government. The Ross River suspension bridge is a vital piece of community infrastructure that connects people living across the Pelly River and provides a link to the North Canol for hunters and other users. It is also a signature tourist attraction.

I have talked to the Chief of the Ross River Dena Council, and he said this: "We absolutely want to see this important historic site repaired and saved." Will the minister listen to the chief, the people of Ross River and the structural engineer who says it can be saved, and commit in good faith to re-evaluate whether tearing down this heritage bridge is the only option?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, I think there are a couple of things that the member is conveniently failing to note because it would be out of step and interfere with his narrative here.

In fact, the engineering company that did the assessment did come up with significant concerns. I have personally met with the Chief of the Ross River Dena Council — in part because of the request made by him, and in part because of the concerns of my colleague, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, representing his constituents. We are undertaking this additional engineering peer review to assess the recommendations received from David Nairne and Associates.

What the member is not acknowledging is that engineering condition assessments conducted in 1984, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 all expressed concern that the bridge is approaching the end of its life. Maintenance and repairs to the bridge were undertaken in 1979, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1990, 2005, 2007 and 2011. If the member wishes to speak to why greater investments weren't made earlier and question whether or not, if investments had been made 20 years ago, it would

have made a difference in the condition of the bridge here today — we can look at the past, but I remind the member that three NDP governments and his leader as Regional Director General for the federal government and Indian and Northern Affairs had the opportunity to put more money into the bridge and they did not.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We'll now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 11: *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 11, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 11, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 11, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise today on behalf of my constituents of the riding of Mountainview. I would again like to acknowledge and thank them for their support. It surely and truly is an honour and a privilege to be able to represent the people of the riding of Mountainview here in this Legislative Assembly.

I tabled two important financial documents on October 31: the 2012-13 Public Accounts, representing the final accounting for the 2012-13 fiscal year; and the first supplementary estimates for 2013-14, providing both an opportunity for the Legislature to consider revisions to the 2013-14 budget and an update on the financial position of the government.

To re-emphasize, the first supplementary estimates of the fiscal year provide us with two opportunities: first, incorporating the results from the 2012-13 fiscal year as reported in the Public Accounts — it provides us the opportunity to present to the Legislature and to the general public an update on the financial position of the government.

It is important for us as legislators to understand the issue of timing. I am confident that the members can appreciate that at the time the 2013-14 budget was prepared and tabled, the audited results for the 2012-13 fiscal year were not finalized and, therefore, the summary projections for 2012-13 may have been subject to change. This is the case in every fiscal year. As a result, and now that the results for the 2012-13 have been finalized, *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* represents the first opportunity to provide the Assembly a financial update for 2013-14, inclusive of the 2012-13 final results.

I pause here as the timing seems apropos to make the following observation and acknowledgments. Members of the Assembly may note that we are not tabling a final appropriation bill and final supplementary estimates for 2012-

13. All departments, again, managed within their approved appropriations.

I know that departments face many challenges. My hat is off and my appreciation goes out for all of their efforts in managing and merging priorities and budget pressures within their approved financial parameters. I know this frequently involves making difficult and unpopular choices. Again, thank you to all the ministers and all the officials who take on this responsibility. And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me this opportunity to acknowledge these ongoing efforts.

Second, and more to the point of seeking required spending authorities, the first supplementary estimates detail the proposed expenditure changes that require legislative appropriation authority in addition to the spending authorities previously granted by the Legislature when the main estimates were approved.

Before I move on to some specific comments and observations about this first supplementary, allow me the opportunity to review our government's financial record. We continue to target balanced budgets in 2013-14, projecting an annual surplus. We continue to maintain a very healthy net financial asset position and avoid net debt. In an environment where many other Canadian jurisdictions are working toward achieving balanced budgets and reducing net debt, Yukon is there.

As we are but one of two jurisdictions that are not in a net debt position, we may even consider Yukon to be a leader in this regard. Having managed the government's finances over a multi-year horizon since 2003-04, in fact — a period of 11 years now — our government has delivered effective, responsible and disciplined spending initiatives and investments on behalf of Yukoners. Midway through our current five-year mandate, we remain committed to pursuing planned, disciplined and affordable expenditure initiatives on behalf of Yukoners. Our financial position provides us with a capacity to be responsive to Yukoners' needs, to be responsive to emerging pressures without breaking the bank as we continue through our mandate. Our successive budgets have built financial capacity and we continue to build on that capacity with our forward-looking financial plan.

Before I delve into some of the expenditure elements of the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14* and the accompanying *Supplementary Estimates No. 1*, allow me to comment on our summary financials reported here on Thursday, October 31.

After incorporating the 2012-13 final audited results and the expenditure and revenue changes identified through the first supplementary estimates for 2013-14, our government continues to be in a very healthy financial position. *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* presents a forecast annual surplus of \$45.363 million, resulting in an estimated accumulated surplus for March 31, 2014, of \$1.274 billion. Continuing to avoid net debt, our year-end net financial position is projected at \$137.388 million. I wish to emphasize for all members the significance of having net financial resources as opposed to net debt.

This is a very significant indicator of our financial health and it means the government is not relying on future revenues

to provide for current services. This is an enviable position for Yukon, as only Alberta is also in this position. My colleagues and I are very proud of this accomplishment.

The 2013-14 mains were tabled back on March 21 with budgeted gross expenditures of \$1.23 billion, of which \$977 million was allocated to the operation and maintenance and just under \$253 million was allocated to capital.

The Yukon government broke the \$1-billion expenditure threshold five years ago. Just think about it: Yukon's annual budget is now greater than \$1 billion. That is a significant annual investment in Yukon. This billion-dollar spending threshold speaks volumes to the programs, the services and the infrastructure delivered by our government on behalf of all Yukoners. Further, it highlights with emphasis the financial demands facing our government on an ongoing basis.

Building on our 2013-14 main estimates, this second appropriation act and accompanying first supplementary estimates for 2013-14 provides for increased spending totalling \$93.084 million. Of this total, \$71.178 million represents an increase to the gross O&M expenditures and \$21.906 million represents an increase to the gross capital expenditures.

As I just noted, this supplementary budget provides for increased O&M and capital expenditures of just over \$93 million. These increases result in total government expenditures of almost \$1.323 billion. Of this, just under \$275 million is allocated to capital for infrastructure improvements throughout Yukon and \$1.048 billion is allocated to O&M in support of the many ongoing programs and services provided to Yukoners.

Individual ministers will be pleased to provide members of the Legislature with the complete details of their respective portfolios when we reconvene to discuss the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, in general debate. However, at this time, I wish to comment on some of the summary expenditure elements identified within the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, and the accompanying *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* for 2013-14.

Allow me to pause here for a moment to comment on planning and budgeting as it pertains to how our government proactively manages to ensure and follow for appropriate legislative consideration our proposed expenditure initiatives. I have provided similar observations previously, but it is such an important principle that it bears repeating. In its basic form, planning and budgeting is about decision-making. It is all about identifying priorities, then considering developing, resourcing and implementing appropriate actions to provide the best services possible to Yukoners.

At its core, Mr. Speaker, planning and budgeting requires decision-makers to make choices. The budget process supports us as decision-makers to consider all issues and identify appropriate solutions. In this regard, the development of a budget serves us both as a planning tool and as a control tool. Decision-making is an ongoing, frequently evolving process. Decision-making is not an isolated event. It remains the prerogative, more so the obligation, of our government to consider emerging issues and priorities and to recommend

effective and appropriately resourced solutions and actions to the Legislative Assembly.

This has resulted in the adopted practice of the Yukon government to have in-year adjustments tabling as supplementary estimates for the Assembly's consideration to the original budget plan. This approach has served the Yukon well, offering significant opportunity within the context of the multi-year fiscal framework to consider resource requirements for competing priorities and make sound recommendations for scrutiny, debate and approval by the Legislative Assembly.

I apologize for taking us on this tangent, but my colleagues and I take very seriously and respect the importance of a strong and effective basis of process and procedure in supporting our decision-making responsibilities. I believe it is important for me to once again confirm with all members of the Legislature our commitment to prudent, responsible and ultimately accountable decision-making. Thank you for your indulgence.

This supplementary budget does recognize our obligation and commitment to our most valuable resource, our employees. As a matter of principle, our government is committed to the due process of collective bargaining negotiations. Therefore, as a matter of practice, this government does not make specific provisions in formal budget documents for potential collective agreement settlements. To do this has the potential to bias the negotiations. Our government continues to allow negotiations to conclude and agreements to be ratified prior to the inclusion in the budget as necessary and appropriate.

At the time the 2013-14 main estimates were tabled, negotiations were underway with the Yukon Employees Union and a final agreement was outstanding. Therefore, in our estimation, the 2013-14 budget appropriately did not include any related costing provisions. An agreement between the government and YEU was reached and ratified in July 2013. With the ratification of a renewed negotiated agreement, appropriate costing and budgetary adjustments are reflected in the supplementary estimates tabled today.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, our government is committed to allowing the due process of collective agreement negotiations to run their course. I am confident that members of the Legislative Assembly, and Yukoners at large, will appreciate the value of allowing these negotiations to proceed without potential bias.

As I have stated in previous comments before the Legislature, and I have repeated here today, my colleagues and I take very seriously and respect the importance of the effective process and procedures in support of our decision-making responsibilities. We prepare and table budgets based on the best and most current information at that time, notwithstanding the best-laid plans are subject to change, Mr. Speaker. Changes to the budget plan through supplementary estimates allow us to be responsive to emerging pressures and priorities of importance to Yukoners. And, Mr. Speaker, changes to the budget plan through supplementary estimates maintains accountability to the Legislative Assembly and to all Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, that brings us up to my next point. Members will recall that a special warrant was issued on July 12 in which a number of expenditure initiatives were identified. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act*, items previously authorized through a special warrant are to be included in an appropriation bill during the next sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14* and the first *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* are prepared inclusive of the amounts identified previously through special warrant. This meets the requirement of the FAA and brings the opportunity for scrutiny, debate and approval of the Legislature.

The special warrant provided for \$8.95 million, the majority of which — \$5 million — was authorized to the Department of Community Services, related to its fire suppression efforts. The remaining balance of approximately \$3.9 million was allocated to a number of important initiatives advanced by our government addressing flood mitigation as well as upgrades and maintenance of Yukon's highways and rural and resource access roads.

Our government continues to be responsive in support of investing and improving Yukon's infrastructure. Speaking of our investment in Yukon's infrastructure, we segue nicely into my next comments.

The Yukon government continues to follow its tried and true practice of revoting funds to ensure that capital projects continue to move forward as appropriate. Approximately \$38.7 million has been identified in this first supplementary for revote. The departments are seeking capital and O&M revote authority of the Legislative Assembly for lapses of the previous year. Much of this represents funding required to continue our investment in infrastructure projects. As I mentioned earlier, individual ministers will be pleased to speak to the details during general debate.

Along the themes of revotes, members will no doubt note that the Department of Community Services has identified a number of changes to specific projects detailed in the supplementary estimates. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Community Services officials for their ongoing efforts in managing the wide range of municipal projects funded through its capital budget. Departmental officials are continually reviewing and adjusting project implementation plans as better information becomes available.

Community Services has determined, for a variety of reasons, that adjustments to the work plans, and therefore cash flows and the budget, should be considered.

Accordingly, for a number of projects, the department has adjusted its project implementation timelines. The results for 2013-14 are reflected in *Supplementary Estimates No. 1, I*, for one, appreciate the excellent work undertaken by Community Services officials in managing this complex portfolio of infrastructure projects delivered on behalf of all Yukoners.

A final general observation about revotes, if I may: the ability to revote funds provides an important tool for government to manage appropriately and practically, not artificially within confines imposed by appropriation time frames. It allows us to be consistent with our overall prudent,

responsive and accountable approach to the management of Yukon's financial resources.

As I wrap up, I advise the Legislature once again that individual ministers will be pleased to provide members of the Legislative Assembly with the complete details of their respective portfolios when we reconvene to discuss the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14* in general debate.

Members will have observed that my focus here has been on our commitment to solid planning, decision-making and budgeting and the strength of our fiscal framework. Our government is in a very strong financial position. We continue to target balanced budgets, with 2013-14 projecting an annual surplus, and we continue to maintain a very healthy net financial asset position and avoid net debt. The strength of our financial position and our government's ongoing commitment to fiscal discipline allows us to continue to make resource allocation decisions, such as those identified in *Supplementary Estimates No. 1*, on behalf of all Yukoners. These are significant expenditures made of the benefit of all Yukoners.

We continue to provide significant investments and expenditure initiatives on behalf of Yukoners while maintaining our commitment to fiscal discipline. We do this through a prudent and practical approach to planning, decision-making, and budgeting. We have a very solid fiscal plan that continues to serve Yukoners well. Yukon is experiencing economic growth — in 2012, a very strong 3.4 percent, which was the third highest in Canada, only behind Nunavut and Alberta.

Yukon's unemployment rate continues to be below the national average. This is the ninth consecutive year that Yukon's rate is below Canada's. Employed workers in Yukon: just over 85 percent — 85.2 percent, I believe — are full-time. In comparison, Canada — the national average — comes in at 81.2 percent. Mr. Speaker, our government is contributing to a healthy, vibrant Yukon economy. I am proud of the programs, services and infrastructure investments that we provide for the benefit of all Yukoners. I am doubly proud that we maintain a strong fiscal position allowing for our government to be responsive to emerging issues and priorities on behalf of Yukoners. I look forward to discussing this supplementary budget in further detail when we reconvene to discuss it in general debate.

In closing, I would like to just put a special acknowledgement to the Executive Council Office for their hard work for me every day and also to the Department of Finance as well for the great work that they do in not only putting together the financial mains in collaboration with the people across all departments, but also the work they do in collaboration with everybody else to put together this appropriation as well.

Ms. Hanson: It's my honour to stand here as the member of the Legislative Assembly for Whitehorse Centre and also in my role as the Leader of the Official Opposition. In our parliamentary democracy, the Official Opposition is charged with the responsibility of holding the government to account and we take that role very seriously.

I will be keeping my remarks relatively short as time spent on this supplementary budget, in our view, would be better spent in Committee of the Whole where we can ask direct questions and hopefully get answers about this government's spending habits and priorities.

I have a couple of comments that I would like to make. The Premier at the outset was making reference to the Public Accounts and I do agree with him that the Public Accounts are an important document in terms of the final accounting after the fact. I will come back to that later. It would normally be the process in terms of the revitalizing of the Public Accounts Committee that the Public Accounts would be dealt with in some depth there. I'm hopeful that the Public Accounts Committee will be maturing to the point where we will actually do that.

The Premier spoke about how impressed he was with the fact of the annual surplus that exists within the budget. I note, however, that there is a decrease of \$27,515,000. That will raise some questions.

I do agree with the Premier that the importance of prudence, probity, effective, accountable decision-making is what government is about. I do also agree that the territorial government has a very skilled, professional public service. It must be a challenge for that public service dealing with a government that changes its mind as often as this one does with respect to what are the priorities, what are the directions, and what decisions are being made.

One of the responsibilities, as I said at the outset, for the Official Opposition is to hold the government to account for the decisions that it said it has made and for the fiscal decisions that are being made with respect to the overall management of the tax dollars that flow within this territory, whether they come directly from each of us as individual taxpayers or they come from Canada via the formula financing arrangements — the citizens of Canada — to support us here.

I remind the members here, and the Premier most directly, that it was he who said in the lead-up to the last election that he was open and embraced the notion of a cooperative and collaborative working relationship. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that would and should extend to the conduct of business with respect to how this Legislative Assembly looks at both the main estimates and the supplementary estimates. If we're going to be serious about that then we should ensure — or he should ensure as the Premier, as the Minister of Finance — that his House Leader conveys to the departments when they're up for briefings. To have briefings scheduled but not tell the officials is unacceptable. It's unacceptable to the Official Opposition and it also puts an undue pressure on our very professional public service, who expect to be able to perform, to be able to represent the interest of their minister and their department to the best of their ability.

I would really recommend that as we go forward — dealing both with the supplementary budget and, in the spring, with the main estimates — that we get some sort of system here in place that we can actually do some briefing before we're talking. That would be very helpful. I know that the

Minister of Justice finds this tedious but that is our job here — to make sure that we are prepared to debate the matters at hand — and not having the information provided makes that very difficult.

I would advise the Minister of Finance that one of the dangers of not providing briefings before we get into a debate on this important issue of the supplementary budget is that, on first glance, there are some very dramatic figures in the supplementary budget. We will be wanting to know from the ministers opposite what comprises them.

So it's one thing to suggest that there are changes that occur over time and that you have to make choices — absolutely. But when I see increases in budget areas from last March until now, November — 13.7 percent, 15 percent, 21.6 percent, 300 percent — I'm talking there about Yukon Development Corporation — and when I see capital increases of 47.8 percent, 26.6 percent, and 74 percent in the case of Justice, there are a number of questions that come to mind. Those don't speak to probity. Those speak to, What were we thinking when it was March last year and the budget was being put forward in terms of main estimates?

That's why I say that I have great empathy for our very diligent public servants who must be saying, "holy cow". This must be very difficult to manage with a political leadership that changes its story constantly. "What's a priority?" would be the question one would ask the Yukon Party. What are their priorities and how do they know that they're their priorities?

So it's easy enough to say, as the Premier has, that we're talking overall and that there's not a huge increase. The overall is because we have some very large departments. When you're talking about a \$1.2-billion budget, overall, the fiscal increase is about eight percent, but there are hidden within there some gems.

We will want to hear about the decisions and how those decisions were taken to warrant the kinds of increases that are there, because so far we haven't had any of the briefings that would allow us to address this, other than just saying that there are some serious issues with ministerial accountability and responsibility on the opposite side.

Some departments clearly got very large increases. Take the \$14-million increase in operation and maintenance for Oil and Gas Resources and Mining. What's this for? Is it for more resources to prepare the Yukon for oil and gas — something that we haven't agreed to in this Legislative Assembly, that is still the subject of study by this Legislative Assembly? Is it to implement the Yukon Party's plan to have water management of mining projects done by Energy, Mines and Resources, the department that permits mining projects? The Official Opposition doesn't know what this expenditure is for because we haven't been briefed, so we can only ask the question. It is a major part of every MLA's job, not just the Official Opposition's. Every MLA has been elected to ensure that the public's money is spent in a responsible and accountable fashion.

It's my experience that this government wants to stymie participation in the budget debate process. Last sitting, the Official Opposition put forward a proposal to give legislators

— that's all of us in this Assembly — a greater role in scrutinizing capital projects. The government said no. I would suggest that the ongoing F.H. Collins scandal demonstrates that the public needs more eyes keeping tabs on how this government spends their money.

I've given the Premier suggestions in writing, borrowed from the Parliamentary Budget Officer in Ottawa, about how we could increase transparency and illuminate the debate about the territory's finances. He didn't want to engage in this conversation.

We have raised the issue of departments not being thoroughly debated and I will admit and say that there have been some slight improvements in this 33rd Legislative session. Over times past with the government, this same Yukon Party government would really deliberately and utterly waste time. I can recall the former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources reading the entire drivers handbook into the legislative record, so there have been improvements. It's modest, but we haven't had that happen recently. Pretty close, but not quite. Still, there are departments that haven't been debated for years.

The Premier mentioned, and I think he's absolutely correct when he speaks about the importance of respecting the collective agreement and the fact that there are increases that one would anticipate, but not knowing the exact amounts with respect to what the collective agreements will mean with respect to the bottom line for the government. I would note, however, that the Public Service Commission has still to be debated in this legislative session. That's a critical department with respect to some very, very key demographic changes that are occurring in the public service and some key issues that we need as legislators to be addressing.

We have no idea what the cumulative impact of the collective agreement is with respect to the supplementary budget and the additional funds that are being sought — the approval that is being sought by the government. I would hazard a guess they are not \$93 million.

One of the things we have suggested in the past, and we will continue to suggest to the government — to the Finance minister, to the House Leader — is that because there have been some departments that haven't been debated for years — and the consequence of that is that this legislative sitting ends without those departments having been properly scrutinized, which means that we, as members of the Legislative Assembly, have not done our job.

We can do some process improvements, Mr. Speaker. We could change it up a bit, rather than telling the Opposition in the morning what will be debated in the afternoon. If the government was serious about productive debate, they would give a little notice. We can do better than the status quo or what has become the status quo in this Legislative Assembly, and we can increase financial oversight to the way we spend the public money.

Unfortunately, it appears that so far the government has shown no interest in any of our proposals to increase the probity, prudence, responsibility and accountability, the

oversight that all of us are charged with as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

As I said, we do want to move forward with general debate, but as I said, not having had the opportunity to be briefed, the Official Opposition finds itself just looking at these numbers and saying, yet again — in every budget, in every supplementary — there are a thousand stories represented by that number. This supplementary looks like it has some big stories in it.

For example, take the Department of Education capital budget. In the spring, when the Yukon Party tabled the 2013-14 main estimates, they told MLAs and the public that they planned on spending \$27 million for the F.H. Collins replacement project. Now, the supplementary reflects that that's not the case anymore. We can make decisions but I guess we can change them — like a flip-flop — quite quickly.

It was during the spring sitting that the Premier and the Minister of Education announced that they were throwing out the Stantec plans they had spent taxpayers' money on. In news releases and in the House, they repeatedly — the Premier and the minister — said how the low bid is \$10 million over the two estimates the government got. As we've heard, access to information — as difficult and as flawed as that process is and as redacted as it is — reveals something very different from the assertions of the Premier and the minister. It shows the estimate the government paid for the projected F.H. Collins replacement project, with the temporary gym built and geothermal heating added back into the project — because this House will recall that the geothermal heating has been in, out, in, and now it's out again — was nearly \$44 million, only \$4 million off the low bid.

You know, the difference between \$4 million and \$10 million is significant, but \$4 million means the government would be obliged to enter into a contract with the low bidder, and it must be said that the government could negotiate some cost-savings. There were a number of easily achieved cost-savings, some of which have been implemented after the tender was kiboshed.

So, Mr. Speaker, at \$10 overbudget, the government was able to use the price difference to disqualify the bids, buy the Alberta plans, sole-source the contract to Barr Ryder and retender. You know, the project was cancelled. This was a weak construction season and tradespeople don't have the work that would see them buying homes, purchasing goods and spending their wages in the local economy. Mr. Speaker, these are real situations for real people.

This weekend I talked to tradespeople who are facing the challenge — and I have heard the Premier and the Minister of Finance stand there and repeatedly talk about the number of people leaving this territory. Well, I can tell you that's happening right now, Mr. Speaker. Skilled tradespeople are being forced to leave the territory because there are no jobs because this government has not been able to follow through with a decision on the capital project for F.H. Collins. We hope that during budget debate we will get more answers than in Question Period to what has been going on around the F.H. Collins project.

This supplementary sees the Yukon Development Corporation receiving an additional loan of \$18 million, taking the load given to Yukon Development Corporation to \$24 million in the 2013-14 year. That's a significant increase from \$5,975,000 to \$18 million. Questions will be asked; we will be asking them. Is this for the LNG replacement generators? We haven't received the briefing. I would imagine this is what this loan is about.

We've heard throughout the territory that the Yukon public is still apprehensive. There is no indication that they have provided social licence for this replacement, which was at one point, if you'll recall, sold as a transitional energy source until the then Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources reframed it as replacement. There are serious concerns that global LNG prices will rise. That is what the market is hoping for.

Without domestic price protection, what is the government opposite getting us into? One of the things that has been suggested by members opposite is that the Yukon Energy Corporation will have to look closer to home for resources for LNG to access Yukon's sources of natural gas. To do so, given our geology, would require fracking. Some have suggested that the huge cost of replacing diesel generators with LNG generators necessitates fracking in the Yukon. That could be worrisome, given that the select committee hasn't completed its work. Tabling this without doing briefings raises these kinds of questions. We look forward to engaging in debate, to hearing from the ministers opposite what in fact the \$18 million is for.

The Official Opposition looks forward to debate on the supplementary estimates and the opportunity to scrutinize this government's choices — how they have chosen to utilize the public purse because, again, this is the public purse. This is not in the purview of individual ministers to make a decision and say, "Well, that's a good idea. I just want to increase it here or there." This comes from you and I, and we have an obligation and a responsibility to ensure that when we make those decisions, we're doing it with the best interests of all citizens of the Yukon.

So, Mr. Speaker, you can expect — and the ministers opposite can expect — us to be curious about the increases in each of those departments. We're very curious as to where in the supplementary estimates — with the 26-percent increase there in Highways and Public Works — the renovations to this building factor in there. How much is it? Who is it being contracted to? When will it commence — other than the jackhammering at the front of the building in early fall? Progress has been made but when will it be completed and what's the cost? When will the iconic aluminum siding be removed? Surely it won't be in the middle of the winter but then, given this government's track record of capital projects, that could happen.

We'd be interested to know about the capital increases — the projected increase of another 47 percent for Health and Social Services in capital projects, that \$5,941,000 — what will that be spent on? And how was the decision made?

The Official Opposition believes that the increases coming with the supplementary budget, net of \$93 million, is a significant increase and it warrants a full briefing by each of the departments and their very competent public servants to provide that briefing. We would urge the House Leader to ensure that those officials are notified of briefing times, that there is adequate notice given so that the briefing can occur before the budget for that department is called for debate. Then we will get down to business and move on with it, get it done and move on to the other business — the legislative business that the government intends to bring forward.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my remarks.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just to clear the air, this morning Justice officials were delayed for the opposition supplementary budget briefing, so it's unfortunate that the Leader of the Official Opposition made an issue of that delay. The briefing was completed this morning. I thank the officials for their good work.

This supplementary budget is part of —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Nixon: — pardon? Maybe the member opposite wants the floor again? I don't know.

This supplementary budget is part of a larger package that delivers on our commitments to Yukoners. My plan for today is to start by updating this House on what we have accomplished with our previous budgets for both Tourism and Culture and for Justice. I would then like to talk about what's in this year's supplementary and then conclude by reflecting on where we're headed as a territory as we move forward together.

This budget, like the ones before it, is an important building block in our territory's development. We know that one of the areas of growth for our economy is the cultural economy. In 2012, the arts fund contributed a total of just over a half million dollars to 45 recipients, representing a wide variety of activities and disciplines. This fund offers support to artist collectives, non-profit societies, communities and First Nations for group projects that foster developing arts in Yukon. I know the arts fund is very important to several of my constituents in Porter Creek South, and I am pleased to see this Yukon Party government continue to support it.

In May 2012, the arts operating fund provided \$665,990 to support Yukon's music, theatre, dance, visual art and film sectors, as well as community festival productions. Since November 2011, 22 literary and performing artists were awarded a total of just over \$75,000 through Yukon's Advanced Artist Award to further their personal artistic development and create new work.

The Touring Artist Fund created in 2007 continues to provide support for professional Yukon artists to travel and present their work outside of Yukon. In 2012, 23 artists shared just over \$120,000 in funding. Clearly this is an important sector in the economy. In 2012 Yukon Archives celebrated its 40th anniversary with the publication of a commemorative book, *For the Record*, as well as the launch of a new book, *Herschel Island/Qikiqtaryuk*, which coincided with the

opening of a Herschel Island exhibit at MacBride Museum. I have found these books to be very, very popular.

The third and largest international glacial archeology symposium, "Frozen Pasts", was held in Whitehorse in June. International researchers from over 10 countries gathered to share expertise and knowledge in the field of ice patch research. The symposium was hosted by the Yukon government and Kwanlin Dun First Nation and held in the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre. Yukon has been at the forefront of glacial archeology research and some of the oldest and the best preserved organic artifacts in North America have been found in the receding ice patches in the Southern Lakes region.

The Government of Yukon received recognition for its publication, *The Frozen Past*, an outstanding contribution in communications. *The Frozen Past* reflects on 15 years of research conducted in 24 ice patches located in the Southern Lakes region and the traditional territory of six Yukon First Nations: Champagne and Aishihik, Carcross-Tagish, Kwanlin Dun, Kluane, Ta'an Kwäch'än and Teslin Tlingit Council.

Our friends in the tourism sector have shared with me many times that our culture is an important reason why tourists visit Yukon. Art and craft work by Yukon artists was highlighted at the Haines Junction visitor information centre in the Dä Ku Cultural Centre, where Doug Smarch Jr.'s monumental "Ice and Flowers" was unveiled for the facility's opening. The work of 40 other artists was also acquired for the visitor information centre for permanent and rotating displays.

The Yukon Party government continues to encourage Yukoners to buy locally and support the territory's cultural industries through the "created in the Yukon" program. The program includes a snowflake logo printed on the price tags as well as shopping bags and stickers to promote authentic Yukon-made items.

The Yukon government provided \$150,000 through a cooperative marketing agreement with Fulda to support media relations and other activities to promote the Fulda Extreme Arctic Challenge winter adventure event and Yukon as a destination for Europeans. I've spoken before to the economic impact that this challenge has to our economy.

Yukon government has also announced a two-year comprehensive study to learn more about visitors to the territory. Visitors are being asked questions on areas including spending, activities, modes of transportation, accommodation, demographics and decision-making — all part of the Yukon visitor tracking program.

The \$585,000 study is being funded with \$262,500 from the Tourism and Culture department, \$30,000 from Economic Development, along with \$292,500 from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's strategic investments in northern economic development program.

As a result of the work of Yukon government and industry, Yukon benefited from a dramatic increase in the number of Japanese travellers visiting the territory in the winter of 2011 and 2012 to experience the aurora borealis. Efforts by the Tourism and Culture department to target Japanese tour operators, combined with increased investment

by Yukon tourism suppliers and improved air connections with Japan, has resulted in double-digit growth of Japanese visitors to Yukon. This had a positive impact on Yukon's economy through increased revenues for our Yukon businesses.

There are so many examples of how this Yukon Party government supports tourism in Yukon, I could literally speak for hours and hours about our accomplishments. Another fine example would be the more than 140 travel media and 150 delegates from around the world who came to Whitehorse to take part in the Canadian Tourism Commission's annual GoMedia Canada Marketplace, the first time the event had been held north of 60. The high-profile three-day marketing event was hosted by the Yukon government and its tourism industry partners. As well as attending the event, travel media and delegates learned about Whitehorse and Yukon and had opportunities to network with local tourism operators.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I led a delegation of Yukon government officials to Germany and Switzerland at the end of August 2012, where the group discussed strategic tourism initiatives with partners in the territory's largest and most significant overseas tourism market. The tour included meeting with a number of tourism wholesalers, meetings with Condor Airlines, the Fulda tire company, organizers of the Fulda Extreme Arctic winter adventure, and visiting the Hanover Zoo's Yukon Bay for Gold Rush Days celebrations where an unveiling of a Keith Smarch carving took place. We would build on that trip with a Premier-led trade mission to Germany and the United Kingdom this fall. I think it was an outstanding success, in large part due to the strong work done by private sector participants and by government officials prior to us going. I understand that one of the members opposite expressed frustration that we did our homework before getting on the plane. We make no apologies for our planning and preparation.

Following media familiarization trips led by the department, both *Reader's Digest* and *Outside* magazine have highlighted Yukon as a must-visit Canadian destination for 2013, highlighting some of the exciting new visitor experiences Yukon has to offer. The department entered into a three-year marketing project with Holland America Line for \$50,000 per year, supporting joint efforts to promote cruise tour product that provides significant revenues and benefits to Yukon's tourism industry. The relationship that we have with Holland America is one that we will continue to pay close attention to.

This list of accomplishments goes on and on and on. Another fine example of the good work being done in the Department of Tourism and Culture is the \$345,000 we provided to the Northern Cultural Expressions Society to support its carving programs that help emerging artists develop the artistic, social and business skills required for personal success.

Moving forward to the Department of Justice — the land titles modernization project completed phase 1 in 2012. The project is now in phase 2 development, including new legislation, identifying options for an appropriate computer

platform, and Land Titles Office business processes. Drafting of an updated *Condominium Act* is also underway.

Mr. Speaker, 31 students completed the Child Welfare Institute's 12-day FASD certificate training program offered in February to May 2013. In September, the students participated in a follow-up course, and an evaluation of data from the students was conducted by the Child Welfare Institute to analyze what was learned and their experiences applying the knowledge in work settings. The methodology for FASD and the Yukon corrections population has been completed. The goals are to measure the prevalence of FASD and other neurocognitive disorders in the adult correctional population, identifying mental health and substance abuse problems, test adult screening tools and ensure the work can be adapted in other Canadian jurisdictions.

The study will take place over 18 months, and it will assess approximately 150 offenders. We committed \$643,000 to this study. Justice is collaborating with Health and Social Services and other partners to implement the three-year study. I thank the Minister of Health and Social Services at this time for his work on this file.

A prevalent partners board is guiding the project through representation from the Yukon government, Justice Canada, Correctional Services Canada, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, Yukon College, and the First Nations Health and Social Development Commission.

The Victim Services and Community Justice branch are developing the justice access community knowledge database to consolidate independent and collective inputs and outputs from staff travelling to Yukon communities. The database will consolidate the information collected by staff from interactions with partners, stakeholders and allied professionals working in Yukon communities to deliver effective public service support.

In fall of 2013, the new Yukon Police Council sought public input into their recommendations on policing priorities. The council also hosted a session where First Nations, stakeholders and service providers were invited to provide their insights and recommendations on policing priorities. The priorities are: reducing the victimization of children and youth; improving the response to sexualized assault and family violence; addressing community safety issues; building relationships with First Nations; and improving the response to vulnerable populations. I am very pleased with the work that the Police Council has done to date and look forward to working with them over this next year.

The Department of Justice has also partnered with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection to sponsor the Cybertip.ca campaign. During the two-month Cybertip advertising campaign, more than 2,000 Yukoners visited the website, representing a 1,200-percent increase in average monthly visitation from Yukon.

The new Whitehorse Correctional Centre opened in Whitehorse in March 2012. WCC represents a new philosophy of corrections that emphasizes the protection of public, holds offenders accountable and provides appropriate

opportunities for rehabilitation. Mr. Speaker, I visit the Correctional Centre a few times a year and I have to say how pleased I am with the entire team there. The staff work extremely hard and are incredibly professional in their approach with the inmates. I am sincerely grateful for their hard work and their dedication at WCC.

My colleagues will know that a new community safety award was created in July 2012 to recognize citizens who make significant contributions to community safety in the territory. The creation of the award was the recommendation of the 2010 *Sharing Common Ground* report. I'm looking forward to the next awards ceremony to be held later this year.

Mr. Speaker, the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods unit of the Department of Justice took action in June 2013 to stop illegal activity in Whitehorse. Having received complaints, the SCAN unit conducted extensive investigations on two properties — one in Riverdale and one in downtown Whitehorse. Evidence from both investigations established a reasonable belief that illicit drugs were being transferred from the properties and the tenants were evicted from both of the properties.

The Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Fund is awarding more than \$237,000 to support 11 projects aimed at crime prevention and victims' services in three Yukon communities.

I am proud to report that on August 7, 2013, I had the honour of appointing Peter Chisholm as a new Judge of the Territorial Court. Mr. Chisholm has extensive experience with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada as a defence counsel and has strong knowledge of the legal system in Yukon and a history of volunteerism in the territory.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to represent the constituents of Porter Creek South here in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. I know a strong economy is important to the good people in my riding. This summer I noted the number of constituents in my riding of Porter Creek South doing home renovations or building additions onto their homes. I noted the number of constituents purchasing new vehicles and recreational vehicles from local dealerships, and I noted the number of young Yukoners moving back into Porter Creek South.

Mr. Speaker, it's great to see children playing road hockey, playing in the local park, door-knocking to raise money for local school trips and so on. These examples speak to the great job that our Yukon Party is doing to create a stable economy in Yukon for all Yukoners to benefit from as we move Yukon forward.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, to the Department of Tourism and Culture and to the Department of Justice, I would like to thank all of the staff and management for their support, their expertise, their professionalism, their legal advice from Justice and the strategic approach to marketing in Tourism and Culture. They do an incredible job and I am very grateful for their work.

Ms. McLeod: It's my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill No. 11, the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14*. I want

to thank the Minister of Finance and all of the ministers for their thoughtful consideration in the management of Yukon's financial resources.

It's this careful consideration that ensures we maintain a sound financial base and retain our excellent credit rating. The economy has seen a bit of a slowdown. However, Yukoners have weathered this before and will continue to do so. Just the other day, I was speaking to a contractor from southeast Yukon, and it was his opinion that even though things were a bit slower, it was still a pretty good season.

In southeast Yukon, we saw three major works finish up: the bridge upgrades at Upper Liard, the new hospital and the water and sewer upgrades within the municipality. We saw 11 kilometres of paving on the Alaska Highway through Watson Lake and it's a dream to drive on. The Robert Campbell Highway saw some much-needed work this summer as well. All of these projects were, and are, sound investments in needed infrastructure.

Watson Lake still needs a lot of upgrades in the supply and management of drinking water, and I look forward to working with the Minister of Community Services to ensure that the financial resources are made available.

I particularly like that the government continues to make strategic investments that help to keep our people working. I'm referring now to the program to see affordable housing provided by the private sector. This investment by government should see new housing options at an affordable rate for Yukoners in the near future.

Being from rural Yukon, I appreciate that this option is open and available to all Yukoners who may wish to participate so that several communities can benefit from affordable housing options. I'm very proud of the fiscal track record of this government.

Mr. Elias: It's a pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents in the Vuntut Gwitchin riding and speak to the supplementary budget today. There are many excellent expenditures in this 2013-14 supplementary budget, and I will touch on some of them, but firstly I want to thank the Premier and my new colleagues for the opportunity to serve Yukoners as my new role as a government MLA. I also want to thank my past colleagues as well, because I've learned from many of them and I'm going to use all the skills and abilities I've learned over the years as I've worked as the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin in the House.

Firstly, to the people of Old Crow, my constituents in the Vuntut Gwitchin riding, mahsi' cho for your remarkable and steadfast support, because I am so proud to be your Member of the Legislative Assembly, for it is with your direction and your guidance and your vision that make our community in North Yukon so successful. We're reaffirming our commitment to moving forward together in the greatness of our territory. We understand that greatness is never given; it must be earned. Our journey to maintain greatness has never been one of shortcuts or settling for less.

In the third year of our mandate our government is doing just that — whether it's receiving a double-A rating from

Standard & Poor's for the fourth year in a row demonstrating good financial management and achieving a record of strong economic performance and continued growth with low debit levels, strong budgetary performance and good financial management, or a Brownie Award from the Canadian Urban Institute that recognizes excellence in project management for the investment on the Whitehorse Waterfront from Shipyards Park to Rotary Park.

When there is a demonstrated need for new schools or hospitals in our territory, we ensure they are built. When there is a need for additional and complementary water governance to address the increasing water complexities in our territory, we act. We maintain a strong economy and create jobs in our territory via partnerships and through all government departments. We have put \$500,000 toward climate change projects in our territory. When there was a need for additional international investment in our territory, we go get it. When opportunities arise to partner in tourism and culture and to collaborate with First Nation governments, we seize that opportunity. When new policies, regulations and legislation are required in the best interests of our citizens to ensure environmental stewardship or independent power production, or including an initiative to help save lives by making smoke and carbon monoxide detectors mandatory for homes with fuel burning appliances or attached garages — when that happens, we debate them on the floor of this House. When new infrastructure is required to provide supportive and secure housing facilities for women and their children fleeing abuse, we seek partnerships and build them.

We are addressing one of the fastest growing demographics in the Yukon — which is seniors over the age of 65 — and providing new seniors housing in Watson Lake, Teslin, Dawson City, Mayo, Faro, Haines Junction and Whitehorse. You guessed it, Mr. Speaker: we provide for the necessary housing.

When land claim agreements require us to transform, remediate and revitalize our capital city's waterfront, there were in excess of 43 million reasons why we get it done. We also accept the awards afterward.

When decisions have to be made about the little things in our territory that help to improve the social and economic well-being of Yukoners, we gladly make decisions about them too. Like if a church's roof needs to be upgraded, or a recycling campaign needs assistance, or the construction of bird-viewing platforms is required, or supporting a conference that promotes best practices and sharing ideas on nutritious food programs in our territory, or to help the decommissioning of dangerous buildings, or FireSmart programs in Copper Ridge and other communities, we are there to assist and be a community partner and help ensure we continue to have rural equity and strength. Our government is able to make these decisions because of prudent fiscal management.

As always, I stand here to recognize my constituents and our partners in our community and their hard work. No matter what the issues or concerns are, those in the North Yukon, especially my constituents, are always there participating, solving problems and getting the job done. My dearest

constituents, it was great to see everyone having a plentiful fall harvesting season.

As I enter the fall 2013 legislative sitting with my new government caucus colleagues, I think about your unwavering support during my years as your MLA. We understand that there is no easy road to ensuring our dreams and aspirations become a reality. I want you to know that I will always work to increase the quality of life for our families. In the days, weeks and months ahead, our community will be working on ensuring we maximize the benefits from the winter road construction — or the implementation of plan B, if there's not enough snow again this year — accomplishing the critical infrastructure required for a new fuel tank farm for our community, maintaining the momentum for a new community complex, and a multitude of environmental, health and educational issues.

It was a pleasure for me to witness the riverbank stabilization project become a reality and I was proud to make the announcement of the water monitoring programs on the Porcupine, Eagle and Peel river tributaries that were advocated for. The successful completion of the chum salmon sonar tagging project was also very interesting for me to witness this past fall.

The Porcupine caribou health testing program was also initiated again this year in our community. Thank you so much to everyone who participated in that. Building of the new Yukon Electrical foundation for the gen-set that will have a heat exchange system attached is very important for new infrastructure in maximizing the energy that comes off the Yukon Electrical generation compound — and the new boards on the hockey rink will provide an exciting winter season for the children this year. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the upcoming 2014 International Gwich'in Gathering that will be hosted by my community of Old Crow and is going to be happening in July. I invite everybody to come and witness the celebration.

Another important project that is ongoing in our community right now is the building of a new Arctic Co-op grocery store that will be owned, maintained and managed by the community members of our community of Old Crow.

On behalf of my constituents, I want to thank and congratulate all the governments, businesses, corporations and individuals for keeping our community working and on track toward long-term prosperity. Communication has always been a priority for me. It is very important, because I don't want to guess what needs to be done in North Yukon; I want to know from the people what needs to be done. Sometimes priorities are given to us; they're not chosen. We must respond in kind to that challenge.

In North Yukon there have been tens of thousands of years of traditional occupation and use. We choose to lead as a collective. We choose to work and live in a healthy community and seek the same goods and services that the rest of our Yukon communities enjoy, by working with all levels of government to progress and to move forward. It's called *[Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable.]* in our language.

Communication is the key to that success. Many times good, honest feedback is necessary to maintain a fruitful, productive relationship. Our community has learned to do more with less. We've learned to be a team player with others to deal with the challenges we face in a good way and not to just sit back and simply complain.

We are becoming much better at what we do in our community of Old Crow. We are finding good solutions to the challenges we face and we do it out of necessity. That's one of the things I love most about the people I represent — when it comes time to make a decision, we make it. In doing so, that is what I believe is a catalyst for being recognized as a safe partner in the Yukon and abroad.

I want to conclude by saying that I believe our community's priorities are fair and reasonable, and when they become reality, it will assist us in maintaining a sustainable and healthy community that provides a safe, supportive environment in which to live and work for future generations to come.

I look forward to working with my new government colleagues in the last three years of our mandate to make this territory a better place.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak on behalf of this 2013-14 supplementary budget. A strong economy is vital to the growth and stability of the Yukon. I'm happy to see that, through this, the Yukon Party government continues to work diligently on keeping a strong economy here in the Yukon.

As the MLA for the great riding of Pelly-Nisutlin, I'm happy to see that work continues in all three of the communities in my riding. Ross River has recently seen the opening of their new water treatment facility. Hopefully the new arena should be open any day now. With the temperatures falling the way they are, it would be nice to see the people of Ross River tearing up the ice in no time.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon's best kept secret — which you should know is the Town of Faro — is in the process of seeing their new water pump house under construction. This follows the summer's water and sewer line upgrades.

We could throw out a few kudos to the Faro Golf Club and the Town of Faro for another amazing golf tournament this past July. Unfortunately, Mother Nature was not all that cooperative, but that didn't seem to dampen the enthusiasm of all who took part. As a matter of fact, in true Yukon fashion, many participants had to go the extra mile to make sure that they were able to get to Faro to enjoy the tournament. I mean that quite literally because some people actually had to go from Whitehorse down to Johnson's Crossing and up the South Canol Highway because of the forest fire near Little Salmon. The trip up the South Canol is probably one of the nicest drives in the Yukon, but it's definitely not the quickest or the smoothest.

In my hometown of Teslin, I'm proud to see the recent completion of a new subdivision on Sawmill Road and this was a joint project with the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Village of Teslin. I believe that in the very near future we

should see some lots available for sale and for lease from the TTC site and hopefully that will be in the next month or so.

I'm also happy to see that the water truck is now filling up at the new water treatment facility. I won't say they are getting the last bugs out of the system because that might not sound so good, but they are nearing final completion.

We had a roads and drainage contract that was finished up this fall and it will be nice to see the town sporting some shiny new chipseal next spring.

The Village of Teslin also received approximately \$350,000 through the community development fund, as well as money from the gas tax, to do energy upgrades on the recreation centre. They will be able to get waste heat from the artificial ice plant in the arena to help heat the buildings. That will be nice and save a little extra money for the town.

As far as the Yukon in general, I am happy to see that during this time of global downturn, the Yukon economy continues to grow. Yes, we would always like to see it bigger and better, but we have to remember that moving forward is definitely better than backward at least.

While the mining sector was down this year, it was good to see that tourism was up. The trade mission this fall saw the minister responsible for Tourism and Culture, along with the Premier, travel to Germany and England to promote tourism here in the Yukon. This trip seemed to be a great success. As well, the department has entered into a three-year marketing project with Holland America Line for \$50,000 a year to support joint efforts to promote cruise tour products. This will provide significant revenues and benefits to the Yukon tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also happy to see that the Yukon Energy Corporation continues to look for ways to produce more affordable energy to both service the average Yukoner as well as ensure that there is power available to service any industries that may want to hook up and help contribute to a vibrant and healthy economy. It's also nice to see that the Department of Environment has now moved into the YESAB stage with regard to the proposed new campground on Atlin Lake.

Education — I recently had a tour of the Teslin school with the minister responsible for Education and it was interesting. It's always interesting to interact with the children, talk to the teachers and get their stories first-hand on their issues — and great stories have come out of the schools as well.

This government understands the importance of our young people and the importance of education. I think with the upcoming replacement of F.H. Collins, this is just one more example of understanding the importance.

I believe all departments in this government continue to work hard to improve the lives of Yukoners. For that, I am thankful.

As the MLA for the riding that quite possibly has more millionaires per capita than any other — no thanks to Lotto Max — I'd like to thank all of my constituents for their support and input. I look forward to continuing to work hard to serve your needs.

Hon. Mr. Kent: It's my pleasure to respond today to the supplementary budget.

First of all, I would like to thank my constituents in Riverdale North for their ongoing support and providing me with their thoughts and ideas at events, such as my constituency barbecue. Over 250 individuals showed up for the barbecue that I had this past summer. It was a great opportunity to catch up with many people and thank colleagues from the government side who also participated in that event to bring different perspectives and help address some of the concerns that constituents from Riverdale North had with respect to a variety of topics.

I'd also like to thank the Premier for entrusting me with these new duties — Energy, Mines and Resources, as well as responsibility for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation. It has been about three months since the reassignment was made. It has been a very steep learning curve, but enjoyable for me. As many people in the House know, I spent some time working for a variety of mining NGOs, doing some work for them on a variety of issues. It's that experience and those contacts that I made during that time that have certainly been very helpful for me in working as the new Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Of course, mining isn't the only aspect to the portfolio. There is oil and gas, forestry and agriculture and lands, to name a few. So having attended the agriculture banquet this past weekend and stopping in on a little bit of the conference, it certainly provides me with a good overview of some of the exciting things that are happening in that industry as well.

I'll get into specifics with respect to what is happening in the department in a little bit, and I'll touch on some of the highlights for both the departments that are contained in the supplementary estimates.

First of all, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the officials and the individuals who were involved in my previous portfolios of Education and the Yukon Housing Corporation, Liquor Corporation and Lotteries Yukon. I am very thankful to all those who were involved — the teachers, the parents, the students, the school councils and all of the officials over at the Department of Education for all of their hard work over the two years that I spent as minister responsible for Education. It certainly was an exciting experience for me and I think we accomplished a number of things. I know the new Minister of Education is building on those accomplishments and moving the department forward in even bigger and better ways than I was able to achieve during my short time there — things like the land reserve expansion for Yukon College, the work to establish the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, and some of the work on the rural action plan. I understand that the event that took place with high school students from North Yukon in Dawson City in late September was a tremendous success, among a number of other things that are happening at Education.

Again, I wish the new minister well, and I know there are at least two strong voices at the Cabinet table and the caucus

table for Education. It is something that touches almost everyone in the Yukon, no matter where they are in life — almost as much as the Department of Health and Social Services. It's one of those departments that affects so many and it's such an important department for all of our citizens in what it delivers.

Thanks to the folks at the Housing Corporation, the Liquor Corporation and Lotteries Yukon, as well. I know there are a number of things that the new minister responsible for that portfolio is going to see through — transitional projects like the Alexander Street residence here in Whitehorse. Anyone who has had the opportunity to drive by will see that that project is out of the ground and we expect completion on it next year. A local contractor is working on that and we're very excited that Narrow Gauge Contracting is continuing to do that work and provide quality, affordable rentals for our senior citizens who need that type of housing.

Again, the Betty's Haven project was completed and the Options for Independence is nearing completion as well. The request for qualifications that was put out as part of the northern housing trust is also something that I think is generating quite a lot of excitement. I understand that over 50 packages have been picked up by various private sector and NGO people across the Yukon, and I think it's a very exciting opportunity to take that northern housing trust money and at least double that investment by working to leverage opportunities with others and provide affordable rentals, which is something that was identified as a key need in the strategic plan of the Housing Corporation.

I guess the other aspect that the minister responsible for housing will be leading is the development of the housing action plan. I think it's important that we continue to make investments in housing — as I mentioned, the Alexander Street project, Options for Independence, Betty's Haven, planning for the Mayo seniors residence as well as the northern housing trust money. But while we're doing that, we can certainly continue to develop the housing action plan. I'm pleased that as minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources — in the lands portfolio — that I continue to work with the current minister and the Minister of Health and Social Services on developing the plan — with of course, the input from many Yukoners along the way. So it's an exciting time for education and housing and, of course, for liquor and lotteries and all of the things that they are doing. They are doing very important work and I wish the new ministers well in their new portfolios.

Turning to Energy, Mines and Resources, perhaps I could touch on some of the aspects that are contained within this supplementary budget as well as some of the achievements and accomplishments of EMR.

First, I know that the supplementary budget itself has a number of different aspects to it. The operation and maintenance vote is \$13,858,000 and the capital vote is \$514,000. Touching on what a few of those aspects are with respect to operation and maintenance — a lot of corporate services is collective agreement increases and managers' increases. It's the same with sustainable resources. However,

there are some revotes with respect to land management, land planning and forest management initiatives.

Under the energy corporate policy and communications, the collective agreement in managers' salary increases are reflected in there, as well as one-year funding to support the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, the draba plant policy — that's 100-percent recoverable from Canada. In oil and gas mineral resources there are a number of revotes — again, collective increases taking the majority of them. There is some resource planning in the Ross River traditional territory that's being undertaken. This is where the largest expenditure under EMR in this supplementary budget comes in, and that's with respect to assessment and abandoned mines.

It reflects the amended type 2 mine sites agreement with Canada. For Faro, there is an increase of \$12,288,000; for the Ketzia mine, there is a reduction of \$25,000; and for United Keno Hill there is a reduction of \$75,000 — all of which are 100-percent recoverable from Canada. That does reflect the largest increase to the O&M budget for Energy, Mines and Resources.

There is also reflected in here an increase to the Yukon mining incentives program of \$400,000. I talked to a number of individuals in the junior mining sector and prospectors who were very pleased with that decision made this summer to increase that program. Many of them were able to take advantage of that and extend their season, so it was something that was very well received by many in the mining industry.

With respect to the capital side of things for Energy, Mines and Resources, there are a few small items — internal transfers and revotes and some aspects with forest engineering. I know that we'll get into greater detail on those expenditures when it comes to departmental debate inside the supplementary vote. Hopefully I was able to provide members of the House with a snapshot of where some of the bigger expenditures are with respect to the supplementary budget in Energy, Mines and Resources.

I should quickly turn as well to the Yukon Development Corporation supplementary vote. The 2013-14 supplementary budget contains vote authority for the Yukon Development Corporation to invest up to \$18 million in its subsidiary, the Yukon Energy Corporation, for their diesel to natural gas conversion project.

The purpose of these funds is to avoid commercial borrowing to finance and construct the LNG project. The Yukon Development Corporation Board of Directors, following consultation with YEC, will determine the terms and conditions under which this funding will be provided. If the LNG project does not proceed, the funding will not be needed, but this is part of project planning that we need to undertake.

For those who don't know, there is a business case for a staged LNG development by Yukon Energy, with stage 1 being the replacement of the old diesel generators with 8.8 megawatts of natural gas generators, along with the requisite LNG truck off-loading storage and other facilities at a total cost of \$34.4 million.

The Premier and I, along with a number of individuals from the Cabinet and caucus office had the opportunity to tour the Whitehorse Rapids facility a couple of weeks ago, and we saw the 45-year-old diesels that need to be replaced. Certainly, that age is at or near the age of many of the individuals that reside in this Chamber, so of course it's something that needs to be done. It's aging infrastructure that needs to be replaced.

The project itself still has to undergo a YESAB assessment — Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board assessment. I believe that it hasn't been accepted for adequacy yet, but we anticipate that occurring soon and that process to begin where there are opportunities for public input into the project.

We also have made a commitment that this project will be designated as an energy project pursuant to Part 3 of the *Public Utilities Act* and that there will be a Yukon Utilities Board hearing required prior to the issuance of energy certificates.

That's really where all of the dollars that are identified in the supplementary for the Yukon Development Corporation will be going and of course, as I mentioned, the board of directors of the Yukon Development Corporation will determine the terms and conditions under which this funding will be provided.

I'd like to perhaps touch on a few of the accomplishments of Energy, Mines and Resources and also highlight our clean power plans that I was able to identify in a motion that I tabled in the Legislature on the opening day of the sitting. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has undertaken a number of things to reflect what our government priorities are with respect to addressing the better quality of life. There was an open house at the Gunnar Nilsson and Mickey Lammers Research Forest with a new forestry-themed playground that increases family and community engagement with the research forest. I know the former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, I see you have given me the five-minute warning sign, so perhaps what I can do is get into a number of these other highlights when we are in departmental debates with Energy, Mines and Resources. I think I have hopefully touched for members on some of the highlights that are contained in the supplementary estimates.

There are a couple of things again that I would like to conclude on — first and foremost, a news release that was issued today by the Government of Yukon that speaks to oil and gas exploration being advanced in North Yukon. We were able to announce today that the Yukon government has issued an oil and gas exploration licence and signed a benefits agreement with Northern Cross (Yukon) for work in Eagle Plains. There will be approximately \$17 million to \$20 million spent on this project employing up to 75 people and should conclude by late winter or early spring 2014. The work that Northern Cross is going to be undertaking is a 3-D seismic program to explore for oil and gas, enabling the company to assess the geology in a 450 square kilometre area for oil and gas potential.

The company has started their work and I know many members of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun will benefit. Those two First Nations are signatories to this benefits agreement. I know that this is an important issue for the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, and he is also quoted in the news release that went out this afternoon.

I guess to conclude, one of the priorities that I'm very excited about — there are a number moving forward in Energy, Mines and Resources — is the clean power future that we're looking at developing. The motion that I tabled in the House last week spoke to not only exploring opportunities in wind and biomass, building on the micro-generation program that we released last week, looking forward to the IPP policy that will be out for public discussion and looking to hopefully implement that in 2014, but also the research and planning that the Yukon Development Corporation will look at with the development of a new hydro-electricity dam — something that has significant economic impacts.

Of course, there is an awful lot of work that needs to take place in the meantime. The Premier and I met with First Nation leadership to inform them of our plans to initiate the research and planning on this project. We were excited to listen to their questions and listen to their concerns, and many of them will emerge as the planning process unfolds. It's indeed an exciting time for Energy, Mines and Resources, whether it's mineral resources, oil and gas development, forestry, investments in agriculture or many of the opportunities to provide land for Yukoners in a number of different varieties.

I'm looking forward to my time as minister, building on the good work of the previous minister and again, delivering economic opportunities, being mindful to the environmental impacts of these projects and the importance of them for the Yukon Territory.

Mr. Silver: I rise today to respond to Bill No. 11, this year's supplementary budget.

Before I get into my reply, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank my constituency of the Klondike for the privilege of representing them here in the Assembly. When the people of Dawson chose me to represent them, I took this challenge to heart. They were looking for someone who would bring Dawson issues to the government. They trusted me to bring their concerns and priorities to the table. They wanted a representative who would fight for them and who would make sure that their government planned for their future. So, on behalf of my constituents, and of all Yukoners, I will be calling attention to the shortcomings of this budget and offer concrete solutions on how the government can better address these needs.

I will be fairly brief today because I'd like to spend some more time in the individual departments; however, there are a few things that I can put on the record here at this second reading.

\$22,206,000 on page 4-4 of the budget is one of the biggest numbers in the document before us and it goes a long

way toward understanding why I will be voting against it. \$22.2 million is the amount the budget for the new F.H. Collins Secondary School has been reduced for this year because of the government's mismanagement of this project. Earlier this week, the government unveiled a new tender and pushed construction back to next year, so the money is no longer needed in this fiscal year. It is just the latest in a series of mistakes the government has made on this project — mistakes that have cost the taxpayers at least \$5.5 million for a design that has been thrown out the window — an underground infrastructure that was installed for the old design and now will not be used.

It has been disheartening to watch the Premier try to defend this bungling by referring to a recent report from Standard & Poor's credit agency. The government has been trying to mislead Yukoners that a high rating from this company is a confirmation that it is doing a good job managing the capital projects.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Deputy Speaker (Ms. McLeod): Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I believe that the Member for Klondike just contravened Standing Order 19(h), which prohibits a member from charging another member with uttering a deliberate falsehood. The member, in accusing the government of misleading Yukoners or attempting to mislead, certainly appears to me to be contravening this and I would like to bring that to your attention.

Deputy Speaker: Member for Klondike, on the point of order.

Mr. Silver: I believe this is just a dispute amongst members and I would appreciate the ability to continue on.

Deputy Speaker's ruling

Deputy Speaker: I believe that there is a point of order. It is not in order for a member to use the word or to infer "misleading", so I would just remind the members to be mindful of their terminology.

Mr. Silver: I will continue by saying that it's bewildering to me as to how the government takes a high rating from this company as a confirmation that it is doing a good job managing capital projects on all money matters. In fact —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Silver: If I did say something that was unparliamentary, then I will apologize for it. Is that okay?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Silver: In fact, all that this credit rating means is that the Government of Yukon is a good bet to pay back their investors who buy bonds that the government backs, like the one used to finance the Mayo B project. Why wouldn't Yukon be a good bet to pay it back? It receives more than 85 percent of its funding from the Government of Canada, so of course it can pay up. The S&P report doesn't look at things like F.H. Collins, the overbudget and behind-schedule Watson Lake

hospital, the overbudget and behind-schedule Dawson City hospital, the cancelled Beaver Creek fire hall — and the list goes on and on. The main thing that the rating is based on is that the government can cover bonds that it issues and, because Ottawa still sends us hundreds of millions of dollars a year, the answer is, yes, we can cover this. The other territories have the same rating because they too receive a stable cash flow from Ottawa. Red herrings like these ones are what the government has relied on to try to defend its mishandling of capital projects like F.H. Collins. Instead of being open and accountable and admitting that it has made mistakes, the government goes on the attack and criticizes anyone who dares ask a question.

We witnessed this in Question Period just a few hours ago — no answers, just criticisms of important questions being asked by all Yukoners.

Now let's look at some of the projects. Yukoners are understandably nervous when they hear the government talking about a \$50-million expansion of the Whitehorse General Hospital. Given the track record of this government, who knows what this project will actually cost? Of course, it probably wouldn't even be necessary if the Yukon government of the 1990s hadn't cut the size of the hospital so dramatically when it was first built.

This spring, Yukoners were assured by the government that the corporation was capable of building and financing the hospitals in Dawson City and in Watson Lake, and that has proven not to be the case. The proof is in the \$27-million, out-of-the-blue bailout that is the centrepiece of the entire budget this year.

It is a good symbol of this budget because it highlights the poor planning and fiscal mismanagement that this government is now synonymous with. The Auditor General was clear on the need for better planning. The Premier, like his predecessor, thumbed his nose at the Auditor General in his main budget speech this spring. He mocked the findings that questioned whether the two hospitals were needed. We all know now, thanks to the hearings on the Auditor General's report, that the direction to build the hospitals was a verbal one from the former Premier, with no needs assessment or budget done.

What about Whistle Bend?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It would appear to me that the Leader of the Liberal Party is again contravening our Standing Orders — I believe it may be a contravention of Standing Order 19(g) — and it also would appear to be out of keeping with the practices of this Assembly to accuse another member of thumbing his nose at an officer of the federal Parliament.

That certainly is not something that any member on this side has done and that would appear to be a contravention of Standing Order 19(g), and I think that he should retract that statement and apologize.

Deputy Speaker: Member for Klondike, on the point of order.

Mr. Silver: I believe this is a dispute among members.

Deputy Speaker's ruling

Deputy Speaker: Thank you. I am going to say that this is a dispute among members. I would remind the member again — and as all members have been reminded in the past — that as you sow, so shall you reap.

Mr. Silver: Let's move on to Whistle Bend — millions spent, more lawsuits with contractors, more confidential court settlements, the infrastructure still being owned by the Yukon government because the city won't sign off on it, and, to top it all off, lots that were way too expensive for people to buy. It sits almost empty — unfortunately another project mismanaged by this government.

Another example of poor planning is the overbudget Dawson waste-water treatment facility. When this project was tendered, the government managed to disqualify a local company and instead chose unproven technology from an outside company. The system has yet to work properly and not enough training has been provided to the local operators. The city refused to take over the facility in August with all of the problems occurring, and who could blame them?

What about the final installment of the northern housing trust? Yukoners were told in May a housing strategy was being developed. Before that strategy has been completed, the government has decided it wants to spend the final \$13 million of the trust on affordable housing. No plan in place, just a decision to spend — another example of poor planning. Let's hope it works out better than the failed attempt at Lot 262.

Unfortunately, mismanagement goes well beyond capital projects. When the president of the Yukon Energy Corporation was in this Chamber in May, he confirmed that we have reached our capacity to generate power with hydro. A lack of planning has left us no choice but to meet new demands with fossil fuels. Instead of planning to expand our hydro capacity, the Yukon Party spent most of its last mandate trying to find a way to sell off our publicly owned utility. As a result, we're paying higher and higher bills. We're at the edge of an energy cliff. This summer the Premier finally announced the government was going to take a serious look at expanding our hydro capabilities and capacities by building a new dam.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Barr: I'd like to introduce my son, Jona Barr, and Corey Isenor and Al from Halifax. They are heading out on a cross-Canada tour to promote their CDs *Old Cabin* and *Corey Isenor*. Please welcome them to the House.

Applause

Mr. Silver: That's an interruption I can appreciate, Mr. Speaker.

This summer the Premier finally announced the government is going to take a serious look at expanding their

hydro capacities by building a new dam. That's probably news to the former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I asked him that very question in the spring and he couldn't name a single project that the government was seriously considering.

How it was being financed, where the location was or how large it was going to be all remained unanswered at this point.

If it is managed anything like F.H. Collins, Yukoners shouldn't be holding their breath as we wait for it to begin to be built. We have poorly managed capital projects and a mismanaged energy picture, and that brings us to our economy.

This year, our economy will lead only New Brunswick and Northwest Territories in GDP growth. We are 11th of 13 in Canada. The Yukon Party government has focussed almost exclusively on mining, and the consequences of that eggs-in-one-basket approach is now being felt.

According to the government's own statistics, private sector employment was down by 1,100, or 8.7 percent, from September 2012, yet we continue to hear the government's "all's well within the private sector company" line. Again, the government's own stats don't back it up.

Even with the unprecedented interest in Yukon, Brewery Creek was still not able to get off the ground due to regulatory problems. Only one Yukon mine is currently in full production. New mines on the horizon are all facing significant hurdles before they can even begin production.

Building stats are down; housing prices are down. There was a lottery for lots in Whistle Bend and no bidders. The signs of a slowdown are all around us. The Yukon Party coasted on high mineral processes and prices for several years and took credit for good economic times. As things slow down, we now see letters to the editor from government ministers blaming global economic forces.

Let me quote from former Yukon Party ministers who have had this to say about the Yukon's economy — 2007, and I quote: "...I will take credit for becoming the hotspot in Canada..."; 2010: "... we, the Yukon Party, made the Yukon an attractive place to live."; 2011: "... it has everything to do with us — this government ..."

It is now 2013 and our GDP growth for this year is almost the lowest in Canada and suddenly it has nothing to do with government; it's global economic forces. This government won't take any responsibility or accountability for this poor showing. Watching Mr. Harper speaking this week in the federal Conservative convention — refusing to take any responsibility for the problems with senators he appointed — you don't need to look very far to see where this government takes its lead from.

As mining realities started to slow down this summer, the government suddenly realized that we have a tourism industry and decided it needed to take steps to closer associate itself with it. It included a trip to Germany where no new funding was announced — none. There was also some very interesting numbers from the Canadian Tourism Commission that said quite the opposite of what this government is saying —

namely that international visitors have dropped and not increased.

To a large degree, our economic future depends on the territorial government's ability to get along with First Nation governments. Yukoners remember the Premier's refusal to meet with the CYFN leadership during the election campaign — a decision that set the tone for this government's acrimonious relationship with First Nation governments. In two years, the Yukon Forum has met only once. I spoke to a chief last week who said the government alone wants to set the agenda at the forum and still won't allow First Nations to bring forward their priorities. It was Grand Chief Massie who said recently the government only wants to meet to celebrate, but not to do the hard work required to get to that point. How are poor relationships affecting our economy? Let's start in the Southeast Yukon.

The government's non-existent relationship with the Kaska has led to several lawsuits and stalled development of the richest oil and gas area in the territory. The Yukon Party has been unable to cooperate with the Kaska on signing the *Umbrella Final Agreement* or negotiating another interim measure. It has instead largely tried to ignore the Kaska. The result is a stalemate that benefits no one. The former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has complained that he spent \$2 million and could not get an agreement on oil and gas. What is the price of no exploration for 11 years? How much has been lost in jobs, royalties, income taxes, et cetera? Far more than \$2 million.

Later in this sitting, the government will be forced into bringing forward amendments to the territory's mining laws because of yet another loss in the courts. To make matters worse, the government has once again not even bothered to consult with First Nations about the amendments. It is my understanding that neither the Kaska nor the miners have even seen a draft of this bill.

Let's move on to the other end of the territory — White River, another unsigned First Nation the government has tried to ignore with the same disastrous results. What impact does the recent battle over Tarsis Resources exploration have on our economy? The company had permission to explore and then that right was taken away by the courts because this government didn't meet its obligation to work with White River. What do we lose at the end of the day? Certainty — an item that is always on the top of the list of the mining industry folks. It hurts our investment climate and leaves the miners looking for other places to explore.

Another example of where this government has poisoned the well with First Nations and negatively impacted our economy is in the Peel watershed. For several years now, the entire area has been off limits because, once again, this government cannot get along with First Nations who have a voice in the planning process. Even a potentially good news story, the signing of a new resource royalty agreement with First Nations, has come off the rails under this government. First the Premier said no, he wasn't interested in giving the First Nations a bigger piece of the pie, and then he changed his mind and said okay. He announced last fall a deal that was

in place and then had to backtrack and admit that the deal wasn't done after all. The big priority was taking credit for a deal, not actually doing the work to ensure that this deal was completed. The government can't get even the winners past the goal line.

The command-and-control, divide-and-conquer approach that this government brings to the table is just not working. Their relationships with First Nation governments are the most important relationships that this government has and they are being badly mismanaged. It is taking a toll on our economy and there is a human cost as well. At the end of the day, we all live here and it is a better place when we are all trying to get along.

We have passed the two-year mark of this government. The same old Yukon Party is bringing us a spirited defence of the status quo, a commitment to sit back and relax and to hope that the commodities will rebound while a generous federal government does its work. For all Yukoners, the Liberal Party will continue to represent an alternative vision — a vision where our government plans for our future, a vision where we harness our natural advantages and where we overcome our natural challenges. Yukoners are calling for this vision — a vision where their input is truly valued, a vision where they are supported in achieving their goals and surviving the downtimes. In order to help achieve this vision, we need to help our current government identify how it can do better, how it can listen better, and how it can plan better because the evidence is clearly that they must.

A government that plans better will not leave our territory vulnerable to the whims of the federal government and to the prices of gold and silver. We need a budget that reduces our dependence on Ottawa. After 10 years in power, this government has doubled its dependency on federal money. When the government came to power, approximately 80 percent of the expenses were paid by federal transfers. Now, Mr. Speaker, almost 87 percent of the expenses are paid with federal money. On behalf of Yukoners, I am calling on this government to plan to achieve a more dependable, less dependent source of revenue. While the government thinks they are good fiscal managers, the fact remains that Yukon gets more of our budget as a percentage from Ottawa than we did 10 years ago.

While we must leverage our natural resources, we also must endeavour to support our incredibly strong tourism industry. We need a budget that recognizes this industry as the Yukon's best chance at diversification. A Liberal government would not — as this government has done — flat-line tourism spending. This marketing budget remains almost unchanged from when the government took office a decade ago. Tourism numbers in 2012 are lower than they were in 2006. Near silence was not the right answer when this government's friends in Ottawa chose to cut Parks Canada, to apply a duct-tape solution in response to public protest. There is no planning to deal with the downloading of the Government of Canada.

So while this government claims to be pro-business, this government does little to recognize and to support one of the

main pillars of our economy, which is tourism. Yukoners need a well-thought-out budget that will allow us to focus on families and their hard work. They do not need a budget that will haunt them in the papers for months to come. Unfortunately, this budget update will do exactly that. Yukoners do not deserve more stories about overbudget schools. What they deserve are headlines about the diversification of the economy and long-term plans on issues that impact everyday lives.

In order to develop thoughtful plans and to address these issues, this government needs to start listening. By listening, I don't mean holding consultations that are overruled by backroom deals. I mean actually listening — listening to First Nations, listening to our parents and to our teachers, listening to our patients and our health care professionals, listening to our small business owners and our mining and tourism industry and, like it or not, listening to our NGOs and conservation groups.

With regard to my community, there remain issues with housing, the defective waste-water treatment facility, the planned McDonald Lodge, our new hospital, the Dawson land use plan that just recently lost its senior planner, municipal water and sewer infrastructure and Klondike Valley fire hall. We need leadership that empowers First Nation governments and we need to consult openly and fairly.

I've outlined my objections to the direction of this government and this budget in particular, and therefore I will not be supporting Bill No. 11.

In closing, I would like to thank this government for all the work that they did in preparing this budget, but on behalf of Yukoners, I would like to challenge this government to do better. Yukoners deserve better planning. They work too hard for their money to be wasted. Yukoners deserve better listening and they are too important to have to fight to be heard.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's very interesting to see the interim Leader of the Liberal Party work himself into a bit of a lather there as he read his prepared speech that he clearly put a lot of time and effort into over the summer. I want to respond to so many of the things that I heard, but time just does not permit. There are a number of things that I want to speak about that I'll have to put above the list — or put higher on the list — than responding to some of the drivel we just heard, but I will forego that and start by thanking my constituents of Copperbelt North for their continued support. I thank them as well for giving me the privilege to stand here in the Legislature and represent them.

It's a pleasure for me to rise today and speak to the *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* for 2013-14, which is the first budget document we will get to speak to in this sitting. It's a little bit different from when we left in the spring because, of course, there are some changes that have occurred both in our government in the structure of Cabinet, as well as our caucus. I'd like to mention some of those issues as well, but first I wanted to take the opportunity — I know that this is a document that the opposition parties don't like to review, but

as some have referenced in this House already, Standard & Poor's had the opportunity to review our public finances and our economy recently and reaffirmed their AA rating of the territory's credit rating.

I'd like to quote from the document that they published on October 15, 2013. It's available from www.standardandpoors.com/ratingsdirect.

"We are affirming our 'AA' long-term issuer credit rating on the Territory of Yukon. We also affirming our 'AA' issue-level rating on Yukon Development Corp.'s C\$100 million senior unsecured debt. In part, the ratings reflect our assessment of extremely low debt, healthy economic performance compared with that of similarly rated domestic and international peers, very positive liquidity, and significant grants from the Canadian government. The stable outlook reflects our expectations that, in the next two years, Yukon will continue to have strong budgetary performance, with stable operating surpluses that exceed five percent of consolidated operating revenues and near-balanced after-capital results; and a debt burden that peaks at about 20 percent of consolidated operating revenue."

In their rationale for issuing that rating they say: "The ratings on Yukon reflect Standard & Poor's opinion of the territory's relatively low debt burden, very positive liquidity position, and healthy economy that is concentrated somewhat within the mining sector. The ratings also reflect our view of the 'predictable and well-balanced' institutional framework for Canadian territories, our assessment of the positive impact that Yukon's financial management has on its credit profile, and the lack of material contingent liabilities. In our opinion, the territory's limited budgetary flexibility and average-but-improving budgetary performance mitigate these strengths somewhat. Based on our conservative base-case forecast, in the next two years, we expect that Yukon's tax-supported debt will increase modestly and remain about 20 percent of the consolidated operating revenues, and less than 10 percent of nominal GDP. We believe that the territory's tax-supported debt burden remains exceptionally low compared with those of its international and Canadian peers."

While we've been saying this for a number of years in this House, speaking about Yukon's strong fiscal management and responsible decision-making processes, it is nice from time to time to receive some external validation from internationally recognized institutions like Standard & Poor's, which provide these assessments to the end of a rating.

Further to that, it was a pleasure for me to join my colleagues in hosting a few months ago the Conference Board of Canada's Centre for the North meeting here in Whitehorse. It was a great opportunity for us to touch base with the Centre for the North which is, of course, the only other institution in Canada that reviews and provides a forecast for the territorial economies in Yukon as well as in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. It was nice to receive a little bit of external validation for the forecast that we have of the economy going forward.

I'd like to quote from the news media, a CBC interview on Wednesday October 16, 2013, where we were having a

discussion with Mr. Glen Hodgson, who is the VP and chief economist at the Conference Board of Canada — a very well-educated, well-experienced and altogether a very sound mind when it comes to economic forecasting. Hodgson says, “The Yukon benefits from a comparatively diverse economy. Yukon, to me, looks like a very southern economy, in fact — a strong services base which sustains you through hard times but also with a resource economy layered on top of that.”

Again, it’s nice to receive some validation for what we’ve been saying — that, while others are pessimistic about our economic outlooks, both our own internal forecasts in the Government of Yukon, as well as the Conference Board of Canada’s forecasts, are actually quite optimistic about the territory’s economic performance in the years to come.

This budget document contains a number of things, but among them is the budget allocation for the Department of Economic Development. Within that is one particular project I would like to highlight. It’s a rather simple community development fund project but it’s very important to me as the MLA for Copperbelt North and I wanted to take the opportunity to speak to it briefly.

The Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association received a relatively small amount of money, but it was a big deal to that association. It was funding provided to them for the provision of services related to planning for what we refer to in our neighbourhood as “Winze Park.” It’s an empty, city-owned lot on Winze Lane in my riding. In that funding, the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association had the opportunity to hire a consultant to host a consultation where we heard from residents in my neighbourhood as to what their vision and hopes were for that particular piece of land and that particular park.

I had the pleasure of joining the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association in hosting a barbeque in September, where they hosted this consultation. They had a number of billboards up that had different potential ideas that the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association — in consultation with that consultant — thought would be some good starting point ideas. They received a significant amount of input. I believe it was over 100 people who provided comments on the planning documents that they had proposed.

Since then, the neighbourhood association has gone back, taken all that input, compiled it and made a decision about what the most common features of a park were that residents identified and will now be drawing up plans for constructing some of the activities, buildings and facilities on that park land that they heard from residents were needed.

The next steps for that project are to develop those options, meet with the City of Whitehorse and determine their level of support and interest in some of the activities they’re planning and then, of course, to come back to funding grant bodies, such as the community development fund, for the development and construction of the park itself.

So I’d like to commend the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association for the work that they have done. The Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association is one that I have the pleasure of sharing with the Member for Whitehorse West —

of course, the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association is broader than just my riding. It includes hers, as well. It’s one we have the pleasure of sharing.

I did want to note some of the individuals who were recently re-elected to their board, because they’ve done some fantastic work to date and I’m very optimistic about the work that they’re going to be doing in the future. Josh Clark was re-elected as their president, Ryan Kinney is the vice-president, Lila Cornell is the secretary, Yesh Sharma is the treasurer, Damien Burns is the FireSmart coordinator and Phil Borgel is the past president. I’d like to especially thank those individuals for the time they put into their neighbourhood association and for the work that they’ve done, not only on this park, but on a number of other issues that are important to the residents in my riding.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the budget and the Department of Economic Development, I also wanted to take the opportunity to congratulate and welcome aboard our new deputy minister, Murray Arsenault, who was hired earlier this year as the Deputy Minister of Economic Development. Mr. Arsenault has a diverse background and his input is certainly welcome in this government. I think he’ll be an excellent contribution to our team of deputy ministers, which provides our government with the support and advice that we need to make decisions about governing this territory. Mr. Arsenault has a career that includes extensive experience managing a variety of business ventures in northern Canada. Most recently, Mr. Arsenault held the position of general manager of the Dakwakada Development Corporation, which is a private equity firm based in Whitehorse with investments in construction, manufacturing, retail and communications. It is the development corporation of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Prior to that, he worked in economic development in both the public and private sectors in the Northwest Territories, and he holds a master of business administration from Cape Breton University.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Arsenault is actually out of the country right now. He is in Europe, either in London or Zurich — I can’t remember what the schedule suggests. But he is filling in for me in an investment attraction tour to Europe with some companies from Yukon. Originally, I was scheduled to attend that and join in that investment attraction effort, but duties in the Legislature called and I’m here today. So, with the deputy minister in Europe, that meant that the trip to China needed to be filled and our assistant deputy minister, Mr. Terry Hayden, is filling in for Mr. Arsenault in China. So we have two concurrent investment attraction events going on — one in Asia, and one in Europe.

I returned from the United States a few weeks ago where I did similar activities.

What I’m getting at with this is that we know that in this investment market with relatively soft mineral prices and a very challenging environment to raise investment capital. We know that it’s our job to really enhance what we are doing to attract investment to this territory. Investment to the territory is critical for economic projects to go forward. We know that and we’ve addressed it in this House many times before, but I

wanted to take the opportunity to highlight just some of the activities that we have underway right now, which include our target investment attraction markets of Europe, Asia and North America.

Another interesting change for the group on this side of the House was, of course, the addition of a new member to caucus, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin. I wanted to take the opportunity to thank him for his input in the past few months since he has joined our team, and really highlight some of the meaningful ways he has contributed to some of the decisions that we've made on this side of the House.

Earlier this year I, as the Minister of Environment, announced that we would be enhancing the water monitoring program in North Yukon to improve its overall understanding of water distribution, movement and quality in an area with increasing potential for development. This was an investment that we had made in part because of what we'd heard throughout the consultation period related to the development of our water strategy, but it was heavily influenced as well by the input from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, who really made it very clear to government that his constituents had a remarkably high value on the water in their area and that they needed to be assured that Yukon government was doing all it could do to understand the water resources in the area and encouraged government to make increased investments to the water monitoring in that area.

That announcement was one I was very proud to make, but I have to give credit where credit is due, and that is significantly with the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

Another similar investment that I was able to make as Minister of Economic Development related to an issue that the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin had lobbied me about a number of times from across the way, but now, with him as a colleague, it was easy to take the next step on it — this was related to trapping. In the Department of Economic Development, we recently provided two-year funding to the trappers' organization, which came out of work done with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Yukon Trappers Association. That was a pilot project to find ways to increase opportunities for trapping in the territory. That was yet another example of an issue that was of keen interest to the member, and one that he raised with me a number of times from across the way and was able to make a difference in advocating on behalf of that issue as a colleague of mine.

The next few items I wanted to mention, Mr. Speaker — I know that you have signalled I have only a few minutes left, so I'll have to truncate my comments a little bit. I did want to speak a little bit about my new role. Yet another thing that has changed since our previous sitting is that, while the main headlines were focussed on some of my other colleagues who changed portfolios in the Cabinet shuffle we had earlier this year, in that shuffle, I received the added responsibility of being the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission. So that's something I'm very proud of.

I very much appreciate the patience of that department in providing me with briefings and getting me up to speed on the issues related to the Public Service Commission. It's

something that, to be perfectly honest with you, I haven't had a tremendous amount of experience with previously, but I know that the folks in that department are very professional and very well-qualified and are able to provide me with the guidance needed to be successful. I'd like to thank the Public Service Commission and, in particular, the Public Service Commissioner, Ms. Catharine Read, for their patience and their support so far.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying that this budget document is the first budget document we've had for this sitting, so it will be a topic of a great deal of discussion in the coming weeks. I look forward to getting into the specific departments that I'm responsible for, including Economic Development, Environment, and the Public Service Commission. Some of the issues and funding lines that you see in these departments are, I know, of great interest to members on both sides of the House, so I'm sure we'll have some robust discussions around this budget document and the specifics related to those departments.

Having expired my time, Mr. Speaker, I'll just conclude by saying that I look forward to debating this budget document and working with my colleagues who have new roles, my colleagues who maintain their roles, and folks who are new to the caucus altogether.

Hon. Mr. Graham: As I was saying, I am pleased to speak to some of the highlights in this supplementary budget for Health and Social Services and to update the Legislature on some of the important priorities identified in the budget.

However, before I do that, I would just like to follow in the footsteps of my colleague, the Member for Riverdale North, and thank the Premier for not giving me any additional responsibilities during the recent Cabinet shuffle. I think he recognizes the limits of my abilities and left me right where I am — where I am beginning to learn something about the Department of Health and Social Services.

During the year, a number of revotes were included in this supplementary budget in order to proceed with some of the priority initiatives that we had identified previously. In addition, there are a few new funding initiatives that I would like to point out to members here. I was also quite surprised by the comment of the Leader of the Official Opposition about the lack of information in the budget with respect to the capital budget. I looked in my budget book and found that not only was the detail quite good for the additional \$5,941,000, it kind of goes through and explains what every dollar is for.

I'll be happy to expand on those during Committee of the Whole, but it's quite obvious, at least in this capital budget, what the priorities are.

I have mentioned before one of my priorities — the priority I place on ensuring our Alcohol and Drug Services are able to respond to the many needs of individuals with addictions in this territory. Project phases 2 and 3, which include the conceptual and schematic design work for the new Sarah Steele Building replacement, are underway. We are pleased that the site selected for the new building is confirmed by the city and we really appreciate the work done by the city

in ensuring that property has now been transferred to us. It was also, with the studies done there, clearly evident that there were no graves on the property that we would like to use for the new Sarah Steele Building. So we really appreciate the cooperation with the city and with the Department of Highways and Public Works for all of the work done in that area.

In this budget, we have also included supplementary funding to proceed with the Yukon addiction services system — the standards and evaluation project — which is 100-percent recoverable from Canada. The funding will allow us to continue with the project that is underway on the development of program standards, performance measurement and evaluation. We are also continuing with implementing our medically supported detox program. Nursing staff, including a quality assurance registered nurse, are in place, as well as a detox social worker.

I know once again the Member for Riverdale South, the critic for Health and Social Services, would have us believe that absolutely nothing is happening with respect to the implementation of collaborative care practices here in Yukon. However this is only one of a number of initiatives that have been started by this government with respect to collaborative care. This one was a high priority with me and so it was one of the collaborative care practices or initiatives that we began and have now put in place for the Sarah Steele Building.

A common diagnostic tool is now used by both detox and the emergency room at the Whitehorse General Hospital. Protocols between agencies such as the Salvation Army and Health and Social Services are also in place. We are also continuing with cross-cultural awareness and other staff training and have included revoted funds in this budget to continue on this very important initiative.

Planning for the future needs of our seniors and elders population as well as those others among our population who require long-term care is another priority of this government. We are moving forward with phase 2 of the design/build request for proposals for the McDonald Lodge replacement project in Dawson City and we have requested a revote of funds for this budget. We are all aware that the demand for additional long-term beds in Whitehorse will increase with our aging population, so we've included funding in this budget for the next step, which is business-case planning for a new continuing care facility to ensure that we are prepared for the increased aging population in the territory.

The Yukon Hospital Corporation is now in a position to move forward with the planning for renovations at the Whitehorse General Hospital for an MRI suite and the expansion of the emergency department. This budget includes a \$2-million contribution toward the MRI purchase, which was promised by this government during the election, and \$1.4-million for project initiation for the hospital expansion project. Additional capital funding will be required in future budgets for construction and I will be very happy to share this with the House once we have completed details and estimates.

I'm pleased to report back to the Legislature that the collaboration between the department and the Yukon Hospital

Corporation for the purpose of health care delivery planning for Yukon communities is well-underway. We are nearing completion of the community needs assessment that I promised for both Watson Lake and Dawson City and during this session I am hoping to share with you the details of those assessments and our plans to move forward with ensuring the programs in those facilities are based on a collaborative care model partnership between Health and Social Services and the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

The Auditor General's report wasn't favourable in many areas. It gave the government and the Yukon Hospital Corporation the opportunity to work on a comprehensive plan. Health and Social Services announced at the time it would develop an integrated health facility program and services model in those two communities, which will enable the design of health and social programs and services to creatively and effectively meet community-specific needs.

In a recent meeting with the Hospital Corporation president and CEO, it was agreed by both of us that such a plan was a welcome addition to these communities, and we both look forward to presenting both a high-level plan in the near future and allowing the department and the Hospital Corporation to work out details in the coming months or years.

We also continue to support the NGOs that provide valuable services to our community. I'm pleased to indicate that my department will be providing increased operation and maintenance funding to support the recently opened Betty's Haven second-stage transitional apartments. We'll also be supporting the operations — although the money is not in this supplementary budget, it will be in the next — to support the operations of the new Options for Independence complex that will hopefully be opening in the next little while.

With all of our NGOs, we're working to ensure they are aligned with the strategic directions of the department and that we have good accountability processes in place. Recently, in the spring of this year, we provided a training session to NGOs in order to ensure that they had the ability and the required documents to provide the department with the accounting that we require in order to be able to report back, not only to the Auditor General, but to this Legislature on the millions of dollars that we provide in funding to a number of NGOs throughout the territory. The training sessions provided the NGOs with documents and the ability to provide the information necessary to ensure that accountability for those funds is not a problem in the future.

That brings me then, Mr. Speaker, to addressing prevention and supports related to FASD. This is a priority of this government and this supplementary budget contains funding for the final year of the integrated case management and adult diagnostic team development project. As well, this budget contains funding for a tri-territorial FASD prevention initiative, which is 100-percent fundable and recoverable from Canada.

Planning for and managing our health human resources is foundational to our health care system operations. We continue to focus numerous efforts at the recruitment and

retention of health professionals. Included in this are physicians, nurses and other health professionals. I am pleased to report that our recent progress in this area, based on the collaborative efforts of the department and the professional associations, was quite good.

Health and Social Services launched the website www.yukonmd.ca to provide information on career opportunities, benefits, hospitals, physicians and communities. As well, the department hired a physician recruitment and retention officer this year. Since that time, seven new physicians have begun working in Yukon, including a second psychiatrist. Our work is attracting the attention of local physicians we hope will consider the Yukon as their future home base.

Once again, contrary to what is being said by the opposition critic in this area, our working relationship with the Yukon Medical Association and, in addition, the Canadian Medical Association, is very good. We will continue working with them to provide health professionals to this territory. In fact, I just recently had an e-mail passed along to me from the new president of the Canadian Medical Association in which he expressed his great desire to come to the territory to work with the local physicians, as well as our department, to better work on a health care system that would be unique in Canada. We're looking forward to further discussions in that area and seeing great results as these discussions continue.

The budget also contains specific funding to increase our capacity and support for internationally educated health professionals in order to integrate them into our health care system. Support to individuals who have been trained as health professionals in other countries can take many forms. This includes supporting their pathway to licensure or supporting them in an alternate health care career choice. This is the first year of a new three-year agreement with the federal government and funding for this initiative is included in this supplementary budget. Planning for the future quality and sustainability of a constantly evolving Health and Social Services system is definitely a challenge for all, Mr. Speaker.

As governments, we are no exception to this rule. During this session we will also be debating two important bills aimed at the fundamentals of our health care system — that's the management of our personal health care information and clarifying for all Yukoners the eligibility requirements for being entitled to publicly funded physician and hospital services, along with Yukon-specific benefits such as medical travel and our drug problems.

Speaking of our drug or addiction problems in the territory, I know there has been a lot of talk about the need for a drug information system in the Yukon that would help with abuse and misuse of prescription drugs. We know anecdotally that there are problems throughout Canada, as well as in this territory, and elsewhere in the world with resale of prescription drugs. We have probably all heard the stories about people who go to various physicians, get prescriptions, and will go physician shopping as well, to get prescriptions for this purpose.

A drug information system, while a good tool, would not necessarily end the sale of prescription drugs. It would, however, assist us in controlling the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs within the territory. As well, it would give us the ability to track adverse reactions so that all providers know medications of the individual as required. It would also be very easy for physicians or other health care providers who are able to prescribe medications to link into the system and see if an individual has received the same prescription from someone else.

It sounds like a very easy system to implement, but it's not. These systems are extremely complex and we need to ensure patient confidentiality and that the system is available and operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Part of the work we have to do as government is to find a system that will work for everybody and therefore make it easy for health care providers to use. A drug information system is a piece of the electronic health record. Health privacy legislation needs to be in place to ensure this type of information sharing and to ensure that records are secure and only accessed by health care providers, as required, to deliver good patient care.

Those are some of the initiatives that we're working on and some of the things that we're planning for the future. These are only a few of the highlights from the Health and Social Services department and I look forward to continuing this debate in Committee and throughout the session.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It's a pleasure to rise here this afternoon in second reading on the *Second Appropriation Act, 2013-14* for this fiscal year. It has been a busy summer.

First of all, I'd like to begin by thanking the staff of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for their dedicated support and services during my time as minister and thank the staff of the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation for their help and support. Having had the opportunity to take on responsibility for Community Services, Yukon Housing, the Liquor Corporation and Lotteries Yukon, I enjoy the opportunity to work with the dedicated staff there, as well, on addressing the challenges and opportunities within those areas, and, of course, working on completing the tasks identified within the mandate letter that reflect our commitment to complete the platform commitments that we made to Yukon citizens in 2011.

There are a few things I would like to note as highlights from this year. I was pleased to have the opportunity this summer to deliver on a specific 2011 election commitment made to my constituents by officially opening the playground at the research forest, which is located on the Hot Springs Road and the Mayo Road — or north Klondike Highway, as it is officially known outside the community. I would like to thank Amanda Barnsley and other members of the local parents' group who brought this community project to my attention a couple of years ago for their work in helping to make it happen and helping us design and develop this forestry-themed playground that has provided what, so far, seems to be a very well-used opportunity for local parents

both on the Hot Springs Road and Mayo Road areas and across the river in the Hidden Valley and MacPherson area.

A few other notable highlights from this year — investments within my riding — include the new fire truck for the Hootalinqua fire hall that, along with the then Minister of Community Services, the Member for Whitehorse West had the opportunity this spring to see delivered — a new state-of-the-art pumper tanker fire truck. It is the third of this type in the territory, similar to the first that was purchased for the Ibex Valley volunteer fire department last year, which the Member for Whitehorse West and then Minister of Community Services and I had delivered to them. There has also been one purchased for — I believe it's Golden Horn — one of the volunteer fire departments on the south side of town.

These are state-of-the-art pumper tankers including pumper turrets that allow firefighters to drive and spray water at the same time, enhanced lighting capabilities and heaters to prevent water systems from freezing.

Although it's not limited to people in my riding, it is of interest to a number of my constituents, and I thank the current Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for the work in finalizing a microgeneration policy that was recently approved by Cabinet and announced. It will allow my constituents and others, particularly those who have previously had alternate energy systems, like solar and wind, to sell power back to the grid. Of course, it does provide the ability for new users to come on as well, but I know I've heard from other constituents who still have the solar and wind, plus battery systems that they had prior to the recent extension of power in areas such as the south Fox Lake area. I know that there are several of them interested in this opportunity to once again produce power to reduce their own usage of power from the grid and, at certain times, to have the opportunity to sell energy back to the grid at a 21-cent-a-kilowatt-hour rate, which is a rate based on the number that has been presented by the utilities to the Yukon Utilities Board and has been accepted as being considered the avoided cost of diesel usage.

I would note contextually that it does cost more than that directly to have a purely diesel system, but that number is based on some of the other costs and elements of it and we chose to use the Yukon Utilities Board recognized number as a good place to start in providing a higher incentive to those producing that power than would have been provided with what had previously been envisioned as a net metering program, which would only give one kilowatt hour credit for every kilowatt hour sold to the grid.

My last announcement as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in August was the commitment to the Fireweed Community Market Society, to increase their annual funding, which was a specific part of our 2011 election platform commitments related to agriculture and was also part of the mandate letter. That increase goes on top of other investments that we've made in agriculture, including providing the Yukon Agricultural Association with a 30-year lease for 65 hectares of land on the Mayo Road. That is intended to allow the development of centralized agricultural infrastructure and give

them the ability to do some long-term planning to address the future centralized infrastructure needs of the Yukon's farming sector.

As well, we increased funding to the Yukon Agricultural Association previously. The specific announcement to which I referred for the Fireweed Community Market Society was an increase to the funding to a total of \$250,000 over a multi-year agreement.

That supports the continued market operation and development and activities, including the summertime outdoor market and the year-round Yukon-made store. It has also been a good example. Through the work of dedicated vendors there it has really provided Yukon citizens who were not necessarily aware of some of the variety of agricultural products available the opportunity to buy some in an accessible manner from small producers and also make connections with those farmers that hopefully lead to longer term relationships and a choice to purchase Yukon-grown products from local farmers.

I've also had the opportunity since taking on the new role at the beginning of August to visit a number of communities in my role as Minister of Community Services. I've had the opportunity during that to meet a lot of people and renew connections with others. I have met with all of the incorporated municipalities, as well as several local advisory councils and First Nations, particularly those that provide services such as water, waste, et cetera — although in both the latter two cases of the local advisory councils and the First Nations, I simply ran out of time before the House went in to travel out to the communities and meet with everyone. I look forward to continuing that after the House rises.

Another thing that was really a pleasure for me today was the opportunity, along with the Premier and the Member for Whitehorse West and another former Minister of Community Services, Archie Lang, to officially open the new emergency response centre at the top of Two Mile Hill. That capital project resulted from a commitment made in 2006 in that election to begin the planning of a new ambulance station at the top of Two Mile Hill or in that vicinity. There was a significant amount of work that went under the watch of both the previous ministers I mentioned into planning and developing this facility. I also want to give recognition to the staff of Community Services, as well as Health and Social Services and any other departments that played a role in doing that development, for their good work in designing a facility that will be an important part of meeting Yukon's emergency response and emergency medical service needs for many years to come.

It is a step to further improve the ability for our ambulance service in particular to respond to areas of Whitehorse and the surrounding rural areas, including my riding and my constituents, in a more timely manner. Of course, there are always limitations on how quickly that can occur, depending on what other tasks and duties there are and what other calls have occurred, but providing a more centralized location and now having two ambulance stations in operation is certainly going to be something that will be

very important to someone's life at some point in time. I think it's fair to say that we don't know whose life it will save, but it stands to reason, based on the information that we have about health response times, that at some point in time putting that facility in place will mean that someone's life is saved as a result of that. It's a real pleasure to see that building completed and to see it officially in operation as of today.

In the interest of time, there is a wide range of issues that I could bring up and could discuss here this afternoon. I will leave some of them for budget debate later on in Committee of the Whole. I also understand that most of the NDP members are not participating in second reading in the interest that they have indicated, saying they hope to get on to Committee of the Whole debate in an expeditious manner. We certainly have no objection to that and I will shorten my remarks some in light of that.

What I would also note, in terms of the needs of Yukon communities, is there has been unprecedented investment in recent years through funding such as Building Canada funding — a tremendous amount of investment in capital projects, including water and sewer, many of which were driven by the changes under the national standards related to arsenic.

Total acceptable lifetime arsenic consumption resulted in a significant decrease to the amount that was now considered safe versus the amount that had previously been considered safe, and that has been something that has been very expensive for municipalities and for the Yukon as well. It's really a challenge that we're not unique in facing; it is one that others in the country have also been challenged in trying to meet those new standards that reflect an update as to what is understood to be a safe level of consumption of arsenic over a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of other things I would just note. One of the issues that was brought up by a member of the opposition today with regard to the Ross River suspension bridge is an area that is part of community tours. I travelled there with the Deputy Minister of Community Services as well as the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin. We sat down with Chief Ladue of Ross River First Nation to talk about matters, including that.

One thing I want to note is that we do very much appreciate the connection that some residents of the area, including some of my own constituents, have to the historic value of the bridge, but one thing that I would hope is that if members of the opposition are choosing to raise this in the future, there will be a little more recognition than we saw today and in some of the public comments recently that public safety is the driving reason behind even considering demolishing the bridge or tearing it down. It's not a choice that we want to be considering. It is only as a result of that recommendation by the engineer that that option is even being considered at all. As I noted in Question Period today, that is not an option where we have simply taken one engineer's report and ended it there, but it is the case that the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes from the NDP appears to have preservation heritage as the only priority on his mind. On the

government side, both ministers and departments also need to keep in mind their obligation to protect public safety.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, on a point of order.

Mr. Barr: The member opposite seems to be thinking that I only have one thing on my mind and that's preservation, and that's simply not true.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Order please. This is a dispute between members.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: If I may, without referring to your ruling, I would again just wish to note that it appears to me that the focus of the questions was simply related to heritage from members opposite and what I'm again wanting to convey is that the government very much does appreciate the value that people place on the usage of this bridge and its heritage, which was originally a bridge put in for oil in the first place. It was a North Canol pipeline bridge. It was a result of development of that resource of the North Canol.

There are a few things that need to be given very serious consideration in assessing that report — notably, the strong concern of the engineer regarding the risk of the bridge potentially collapsing, which he described as imminent, and what the potential consequences of that would be. So, again, as I noted in Question Period, at the request of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin and at the request of the Chief of the Ross River First Nation, we have allocated additional resources toward having a peer review arranged and we look forward to having that assessment of the engineer's report and recommendation. I just wish to reiterate to the members that, when it comes to a conflict between public safety — particularly since it is immediately adjacent to a ferry that is part of our highway system — and to the heritage values that are in place, we do have to place a very high priority on public safety.

We recognize that if there are options that can be done to safely address the structure then certainly we should give consideration to those options rather than not giving due consideration of the importance people place on them, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Another thing I would note in closing on that subject is that, for members of the public who are interested in this, video from the inspection done by engineers and the welding contractor is up on the department's website and it does provide a more detailed picture of exactly how badly the structure is cracked.

Mr. Speaker, I appear to have lost track of time here this afternoon. You're signaling to me that my time is running short in second reading, so thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member's time has elapsed. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to first off thank my constituents of Whitehorse West for their continued support over these past 11 years and to thank them for their ongoing input and suggestions and perspectives, which have helped shape what I have worked on over the years and helped deliver to the table as well.

I want to thank the Minister of Finance for tabling this bill we are speaking to today, which reflects another healthy net financial resource — money in the bank. We are very fortunate to be one of two jurisdictions in the country to be able to say that. It's not something that we take for granted. It is something that we acknowledge and we are very fortunate to be where we are today, despite the circumstances and what we have seen in the global economy over the years.

Mr. Speaker, this budget not only reflects a strong fiscal position, but it enables us as a government to be able to proceed with initiatives — to continue on important initiatives as outlined within our platform and also as identified by Yukoners over the years. It has also enabled us to be able to carry forward on issues of specific importance as they arise from day to day, and that is very important because not every government is able to do just that.

Perhaps before I go on to speak to my new portfolio of Education, I would first like to extend a great big thanks to the Department of Community Services. I held that ministerial portfolio for almost two years and I can say that it is a department that is by all means all-encompassing. It is, however, a department that pretty much touches the lives of just about every single Yukoner, no matter where you live.

The work that these individuals do within the Department of Community Services is, in fact, very important. It has been a complete honour to work alongside many of those individuals over the years, to be able to advance numerous issues of importance to Yukoners and to be able to work alongside our municipal governments, First Nation governments and many other stakeholders in our community, to work toward a more sustainable economy and a more sustainable quality of life in our territory. I'm very proud of the work that we have been able to undertake.

I want to congratulate the Department of Community Services on also having received a national award recently on the work that was completed on the Whitehorse waterfront. That is one initiative that has been underway for several years — likewise the initiative in Carcross. I was in Carcross with my son and my mother earlier this fall. It never ceases to amaze me just what a transformation there has been in that community. To see the leveraging of investments made by Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the individual businesses themselves is remarkable.

The product was Yukoners all over. I've never seen so many Yukoners on the boardwalks as I did in Carcross. It is, in fact, a great thing to see those investments come to life and to really enhance vitality in communities.

Likewise, the Whitehorse waterfront has been an unbelievable success. So again, congratulations to our many partners and many different departments — not just Community Services, but Tourism and Culture, the museum

community, the business community, the Kwanlin Dun First Nation — for all of their individual investments and the partnerships that those investments have enabled our government to accomplish over the years. It is but one example, or a couple of examples, of what can be achieved when we are able to work together on common matters of mutual importance.

I also want to congratulate the Department of Community Services on the recent opening of the emergency response centre. As the MLA for Lake Laberge just recently talked to, I was very honoured to be there at the ribbon-cutting ceremony earlier today and that has been another initiative that has been in the works for years. It will make a significant difference in the lives of Yukoners. It will enhance the response times to communities such as those that reside along the Hamilton Boulevard corridor. Likewise, it will serve the residents of Porter Creek and the communities along the Alaska Highway. It complements the service already provided at the Whitehorse General Hospital and will only serve to enhance those deliveries.

I want to also commend all of our EMS staff for their continued work day in and day out.

I actually had the opportunity to do a ride-along with EMS earlier this summer. We actually had a number of live calls, not knowing what to expect. It was a real eye-opener for me just to see the skillsets required for each of these individuals — professionals, I might add — not only the physical skillsets required, but also the interpersonal skills required of individuals to work alongside some very complicated and very challenging situations.

Again, we are very blessed to have a very professional staff at EMS and all of our first responders. Whether they're in the fire profession, in search and rescue or in wildland fire, all of these individuals have to be congratulated for their ongoing work.

The other thing that I just wanted to mention was that I wanted to congratulate Community Services on what I would say is an exceptionally successful Operation Nanook that took place earlier this summer. It was an extreme collaboration. It was the first time that Yukon had ever hosted Operation Nanook, and it was the best ever — I think, perhaps, the best that Operation Nanook has ever been hosted north of 60.

It came together as a result of the City of Whitehorse — it was a collaboration of First Nation governments, it was collaboration of a multitude of several different departments throughout the Government of Yukon coming together on a series of mock exercises. It engaged citizens in ways that we haven't engaged citizens — even when there was a mock wildland fire approaching the City of Whitehorse in the Southern Lakes region, they had the Canadian Armed Forces and many of our volunteer search and rescue individuals going door to door, knocking on doors in the Sima subdivision for example — Whitehorse Copper.

For me, it was good. It was a great experience and it's something that we do need to look to, to continue to raise awareness about the importance of always being prepared in the territory. I think it did just that. But more importantly, it

showed us just what in fact can be done. So in those extreme times of emergencies, who is it that you are able to call, what is that phone number and how do you trigger that response? What are those protocols in place? It was exercised unbelievably at every point. Even those exercises that perhaps could have been a stronger response — those are opportunities for us to learn and to regroup and to debrief. That's in fact what is going on as we speak right now. We debrief and we come together as collectives throughout the territory. How can we make our territory more resilient in times of emergency, whether it's flooding or forest fires or some other mock accident — real time and real life? I just want to congratulate that because it was an exercise — it was some 18 months in the making as well. I think it was executed superbly.

Recently I had the opportunity to join a number of my ministerial counterparts and members of Habitat for Humanity in the ribbon-cutting of the triplex at Ingram subdivision. This is one of several new homes that have emerged over the years thanks to the hundreds of volunteers associated with Habitat for Humanity. In all of that are the great partnerships with organizations like the Yukon Women Trades and Technology, partnerships with Yukon College, the extreme partnerships and sponsorships with many of our businesses. There are so many that I am not going to list any of them for fear that I would actually forget any of them.

Of course, there's always a unique partnership in which, through the Department of Community Services offering and making the commitment of having a piece of property available in Whistle Bend as the stages proceed within the Whistle Bend subdivision. Right now, of course, Habitat for Humanity is working together in collaboration with Yukon Women Trades and Technology on the women's first belt, and it's again another fantastic collaboration of women and men coming together. I had the opportunity to spend the day on the work site when we had Global Village volunteers from the Ottawa and Toronto area come in. The unbelievable and heroic efforts of these volunteers who take of their time to come all that way to work on that particular project for a week — the expertise that those individuals bring and being able to leverage, again, the expertise that are right here at home. Congratulations to the successful ongoing work at that particular site in Whistle Bend. It's going along very well and I just want to congratulate all the leaders all of the facilitators and the many, many volunteers over the past year on that particular project. Certainly, we look forward to continued success on that initiative and also toward the next project in Whistle Bend, as well.

I just wanted to again make reference to some of our investments in the fire service as well. Earlier this summer, there was delivery of the new mobile fire training unit, which the Premier and I, for better or worse, survived — the mobile live fire training unit — even though I was the first one in the can, I believe. So, again it was another opportunity for me to experience first-hand the physical strength of it all — of being in the fire service and being called out day in and day out — no matter which time of the day or night — and the strength required with all the gear.

That particular day that the actual unit was launched it was probably about 30 degrees out. It was a very warm day but, you know, just another day in the fire service. When we tried it out, it took a lot of strength — mental and physical — but I was able to go into the facility and just took part in a very small part of the training initiative — some external as well as internal exercises — again, the ability of that mobile fire training unit.

We were in Watson Lake just recently this fall and had the ability to see that facility on the ground training up individuals, providing that enhanced experience at the Watson Lake fire department. I was there with the MLA for Watson Lake and the ability to be able to proceed with that kind of training is immeasurable.

I wish I could have another couple of hours, and I know I will have a lot of time this coming sitting, but I also wanted to say I am really thrilled. I am excited to be the Minister of Education. I'm not a trained educator — that is not my background — but I am a parent. I am very passionate, just like every single one of us in this legislative sitting, about the future of our kids.

The Department of Education is all inclusive of K to 12 in the public school system, to adult education, to training to support our labour market needs as we know it today. I can say that all staff at our Department of Education are equally as passionate about the delivery of quality and accessible education for the territory. I can say that since back in the day when I was growing up in Watson Lake and I went to school, it has changed considerably from that time to where we are now in the delivery and core curricula and how we are learning these days with the enhancements in the IT sector and how we are learning with more experiential, hands-on learning.

I can speak to a number of initiatives that I have seen first-hand — the rural experiential model that took place in Dawson City — a tremendous opportunity for students in several of the rural communities to come together for the first time to experience something that they feel passionate about for a week solid — and the confidence that has been instilled in those students to carry forward for the rest of the year and the continuation of these models as we look to the spring and so forth.

The expansion of the Learning Together initiative is another opportunity for us to bring educators, families and caregivers alongside their children, early learners, to come together to become more familiar with the school setting, to get them prepared for learning when they arrive for kindergarten. It's another exceptional program that we're very pleased to be able to expand to other schools this year alone.

Likewise, there is the advent of the sports school, delivered as a pilot project at F.H. Collins. I could speak to F.H. Collins and the experience that I have had in speaking with many educators, some of the school council members and some of the students who are engaged at F.H. Collins about the future of the school. It is exciting indeed and I think it's going to be a huge opportunity for us to be able to advance learning as we enter the 21st century.

It is unfortunate I don't have more time because I would love to speak to other initiatives in Education. Other than that, I just look forward to working with all members of the Assembly in this sitting and listening and speaking to some of the initiatives that we are working on — likewise in the Women's Directorate and the French Language Services Directorate. There are equally as many exciting initiatives underway for the benefit of all Yukoners.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I'd like to thank the Premier and my fellow ministers for the supplementary estimates.

I'd also like to thank my constituents for the support for me on this learning curve in the last couple of years. I'd like to thank the department and my fellow colleagues for the sound advice that I get, and also our staff.

The Premier spoke earlier to our AA rating and we heard a little bit about the slowdown in construction in the Yukon. I know from many, many of my constituents who I've talked to that they're still waiting for contractors — they're waiting for electricians, plumbers and furnace repair guys to come. There is still a waiting list. Everybody is still busy.

So before I speak about the department stuff, I'd like to talk a little bit about some of the success in the vast riding of Kluane. I'm going to speak to some of the positive stuff. At lunchtime, I had myself a happy sandwich, not a doom and gloom sandwich like some members opposite. I had a happy sandwich.

Over the last few months, we've seen many improvements and upgrades completed in the Kluane riding. I committed to these and I spoke to these during our election campaign. I worked hard on behalf of my constituents. I'm really pleased with some of the positive changes. I'll speak to a few of the things.

I've heard nothing but positive comments from every constituent and truck driver about all the new outhouses that we've done and the brushing that we've done in the riding. For many, many years, as a wilderness guide, I heard about the canyon boat launch and I was there. We could never use it. My esteemed colleague, the Minister of Environment — due to him and the hard work of his department — that is fixed now. It's great. The constituents are happy.

I'm still working with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations on the Aishihik Road. That's near and dear to my heart. They're working with us, coinciding for permits so we can get some more work done on that. Things go a lot quicker when we work together. Also I passed on to the elders and to the educators who go up there on the school bison hunt how important this is.

This summer the Premier spoke to a special warrant. I just want to highlight a couple of things. One of the things I heard during the campaign was that the Snag Road needed some work, so I worked with the chief of the White River First Nation. With the special warrant and extra monies put out there, they got the opportunity to upgrade the Snag Road. It was fundamental to the First Nation getting back out on the land and I think that's a wonderful thing. Our subdivision of

Pine Lake also saw some minor repairs and some upgrades done to it.

Recently, some wonderful things happened and it's about local contractors working for the members opposite. There were some road upgrades that were done in Beaver Creek and some road upgrades that were done in Kluane, in the community of Burwash Landing. All local contractors — I visited the job sites. They did a wonderful job — all local contractors working — lots of my constituents out there working. They had their equipment on. I was really, really happy to see that there were local contractors out there.

I toured our Haines Junction water reservoir a couple of times this year. That's a multi-million-dollar project in Community Services. They finished partially and it will be finished next spring. I am looking forward to that being completed. I was also able to coordinate a couple of very important meetings in Haines Junction, in conjunction with a forestry open house that was held in October. I was able to arrange a meeting with the foresters and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

At this meeting, the foresters were able to speak directly to the minister responsible and describe fully what they see as barriers to doing business in the forest industry. The next day I also brought together the contractors and the Minister of Community Services for a face-to-face meeting to discuss their concerns with the new requirements in the National Building Code. Both of these meetings were productive and I see some positive steps moving forward. I would like to thank the two ministers who came out to rural Yukon. I am very impressed with my fellow colleagues. They have no issues with coming out to rural Yukon to talk to rural Yukoners.

I wanted to highlight the Dä Ku building, which is our visitor reception centre. This is the first year of it being open and running. There were quite a few events there. There were a few potlatches I attended. It's a beautiful building and it's worth seeing.

I am still working and look forward, after meeting with federal ministers in charge of Parks Canada, to working on some of the ongoing issues. I'd like to see the Parks Canada staff be there as long as the Yukon government staff every day throughout the summer, and that's a work in progress.

One of the things I would like to speak to a little bit — we heard about fiscal responsibility and we talked a little bit about it during Question Period with a question from the members opposite. I want to talk about the Beaver Creek fire hall. We did not receive any satisfactory bids. It is in my riding. We didn't cancel it, but when the construction went out to tender the lowest bid was 50-percent higher than the estimated cost. Our consultant will be reviewing the design for the building and we will provide the community of Beaver Creek with a new fire hall. We just want to make sure we do it fiscally responsibly and we do it right.

I spent a lot of time this summer working on Shakwak, which is about permafrost. That is with the Canadian and Yukon governments and the Alaska government.

We've been working with legislators in Washington, D.C. Of course, high on my agenda is to make sure that that road is

successful for sovereignty and security, and also for the tourist industry and economic development between the State of Alaska, southern Canada and the southern states.

So I've had meetings with Senator Murkowski's office. I've spoken to senators. I've spoken to the governor. It's been on the agenda of the Prime Minister and the Canadian Ambassador. So this is something that my department, my fellow colleagues and I, at any opportunity bring forward. It's about the link for national security, economic development, energy security and tourism.

Another thing I'd kind of like to highlight is that this is the 10th anniversary of the self-government of the Kluane First Nation. They celebrated it. I wasn't able to attend the ceremony in person. It was a very special day filled with feasting, speeches and special presentations. I just wanted to extend my sincere congratulations to Chief Math'ieya Alatini, the council, the elders and the members of the Kluane First Nation on reaching this momentous milestone.

A couple of other highlighted things within the village of Haines Junction — the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Development Corporation recently acquired Madley's General Store and the whole parking lot. They tore it down. They're going to open it up and put in some retail space. I'm happy to say that one of the local entrepreneurs, Fas Gas, is developing the big shop into a store, so we should see something before Christmas.

I also wanted to highlight the fact that one of my constituents, the grandson of the late Grace Chambers, applied to the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board. My colleague, the Minister of Tourism, was instrumental in making this happen, and we've managed to have Grace Chambers Creek named when you go through Burwash.

Those are just a few highlights. I understand that time is of the essence and the members would like to get to things. During general debate on my department we'll have the opportunity to go through on some of these issues. We'll probably be talking about the Beaver Creek fire hall and maybe a few other things.

Some of the things throughout the department that happened this summer include the opportunity I had to go to Yellowknife last week to the conference, Developing a Northern Transportation Strategy. The vision forward for the Department of Highways and Public Works, for me and for my fellow colleagues — I believe in finding solutions. We, as a multi-jurisdictional are across the north, have transportation challenges and capitalize on the opportunities presented by improved infrastructure. It is fundamental to the success of our nation and to our territory. I know my colleagues across the north do share this sentiment. Canada was built around transportation networks.

The reason is simple because the future of Canada lies in the north. The idea was outlined in the federal government's most recent Speech from the Throne. He spoke about how we are a northern country; we are a northern people. Canada's greatest dreams are to be found in our highest latitudes. There are the dreams of a north that is confident and prosperous, a true north strong and free. Only the northernmost community

in our territory, Old Crow, is without road access, as we speak. My esteemed colleague — I would like to welcome him to this side. He has a wealth of knowledge and experience. I look forward to working with him, but I really look forward to working on the Old Crow winter road. It's snowing out there right now and I'm hoping it keeps coming so we can get this done. It's imperative for the community of Old Crow.

The goal here is to develop a multimodal transportation system that connects communities in the Yukon, and enables economic development and enhances our national sovereignty and security, and creates corridors and gateways to national global markets. Some of the key issues within my department, of course, include our road infrastructure and how we leverage innovative ideas to build better roads, not just more roads.

Some of the northern jurisdictions face similar challenges when it comes to such things as remoteness. Our small populations, a low tax base, short construction season and permafrost are things we have to deal with.

I also had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to attend a Transportation Association of Canada trade show this fall and was introduced to products used in other jurisdictions — new and innovative ideas.

I had the opportunity to meet with the federal minister and discuss some of these issues that we have in the north — with permafrost — with Shakwak, which I spoke to earlier — and with looking at the Diefenbaker Road, which is the Dempster Highway, which goes all the way to Inuvik. My fellow colleagues in the N.W.T. are working on the road all the way to Tuk, which will be to the Arctic Ocean. I look forward to working with the federal government, and I look forward especially to working with our First Nations partners, our federal government, our Alaska counterparts and Northwest Territories counterparts on seeing this road — the Diefenbaker Road — brought to a standard, where, for the future of our children, maybe there will be an opportunity for a seaport and a route through from the south to the north.

One of the things that was key to the centre of this was that the transportation networks across the north deserve renewed attention and they are getting renewed attention, as they will be fundamental to continue the success as we grow and evolve as a territory. Whether that's economic development, whether that's transportation infrastructure, this will be key to transforming that potential into reality. But, in doing so, we will remain mindful that not only must resource development be done responsibly, so too must the development of our transportation infrastructure that supports that.

We need to work on the costs associated with developing and maintaining northern transportation infrastructure. It cannot be accomplished by our territorial government alone. I spoke to that earlier. We need to work together in this. By working together, we can pool our resources and ensure that the right investments are made to benefit the north and country as a whole.

I look forward to working on my Department of Highways and Public Works and with all the other

departments, and to hearing what comes from across the floor on how we can build and grow the Yukon's economy and tourism, and how we can still keep this pristine and beautiful place as it is. Through this, we can secure prosperity for Yukoners now, for our children, and for generations to come.

In closing, I would like to say that I look forward to the opportunity to debate the budget in Highways and Public Works and to answer some questions in detail. I also look forward to this spring sitting. I do look forward to working with my fellow colleagues. I would just like to thank my constituents again for their dedication to me and dedication to the north Alaska Highway as our own little separate entity out there.

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

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will be brief. I think I did explain in my second reading speech some of the reasons for the changes that have come about in terms of our fiscal position. I know that as this bill moves through Committee, we'll have the opportunity for individual ministers to talk specifically to the amounts that are appropriated in detail by their departments.

There were some questions that were raised and I unfortunately thought that I did answer that question. We did talk about the fact that our budgets are based on the best information that we have at the time and that budgets also can, and usually do, change over the course of time. A couple of things did impact the difference between what our projected surplus was and our budget mains, and what it is now as a result of the supplementary budget — one being \$8.9 million for the special warrant and the other being the increased employee costs through the new collective agreement and the managers increases, totalling approximately \$12.3 million.

The good news is that we have a government that has been fiscally responsible, and as a result of that, we have the ability to make such investments at this time without really doing it on the backs of future generations because we have the money now in place to be able to move forward and make such an investment, both in programs and services and also capital investment as well.

On that, I will conclude my statements for second reading and we will look forward to further debate in detail by department.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

DIVISION

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. Stick: Disagree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Mr. Tredger: Disagree.

Mr. Barr: Disagree.

Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 11 yea, 7 nay.

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

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 11 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 4, 2013:

33-1-92

Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office 2013 Annual Report (Speaker Laxton)