



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Tuesday, March 25, 2014 — 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

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Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Education; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for 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

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Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin
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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
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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, March 25, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

INTRODUCTION OF PAGES

Speaker: Welcome back. It gives me great pleasure to announce the following students will be serving the House as legislative pages for the 2014 spring sitting. They are Allen Mark, Karyin Qiu and Jillian Smart from F.H. Collins Secondary School; Näntsäna Murphy, Nathaniel Curtis, Clodagh Berg, Hannah Bjork-Andison and Marika Kitchen from Vanier Catholic School.

Today we have Karyin and Clodagh with us. I would like all members to welcome them to the House at this time please.

Applause

INTRODUCTION OF HANSARD STAFF

Speaker: I would also take the opportunity to welcome back our very competent Hansard staff. We appreciate all the hard work that they're going to be doing for us over the sitting here. There's quite a few of them: Deana Lemke, Matthias Lemke, Nadea Lemke, Mykaela Lemke, Peg Travis, Jane Haydock, Jody Cox, Cindy Harper, Colleen Henry, Geri Dugas, Betty Redlin, Bryn Lepp and Marianne Darragh. We thank them for giving their great support we so dearly need to keep our records straight.

Applause

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: Getting on to more business, the Chair wishes to inform the House of changes that have been made to the Order Paper. The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as they are outdated: Motions No. 16, 98 and 481, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin; Motions No. 90, 200, 218, 555 and 561, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King; Motions No. 345 and 427, standing in the name for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun; Motions No. 493, 535 and 575, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motion No. 515, standing in the name of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin; and Motion No. 536, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt South.

Also, Motion No. 569, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party, has been removed from the Order Paper as it refers to a bill that has now passed this House. Finally, Written Question No. 5, standing in the name of the Member for Riverdale South, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is now outdated.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

TRIBUTES

In recognition of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I rise today to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This day is observed annually on March 21, which was this past Friday, and unites the international community in an effort to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination and address the injustices and stigmas that racism brings.

This year's international theme highlighted the important role that leaders play in combating racism and racial discrimination. It underlined the key role that political leaders and parties can and ought to play in combatting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other intolerances. This reminds us that we all have a leadership role to play in building greater trust and respect among different groups. This is a responsibility of our government, our leaders, our local organizations and businesses and our citizens.

Yukon continues to take steps to prevent racial discrimination. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Yukon Human Rights Commission for their dedication in addressing human rights issues. I might point out that we do have a visitor in the gallery today, Heather MacFadgen from the Human Rights Commission. Welcome, Heather.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The commission continues to be accountable to the Yukon Legislative Assembly and promotes equality and diversity through research, education and enforcement of the *Human Rights Act*, which prohibits racial discrimination.

Racism and intolerance can take various forms, including denying individuals the basic principles of equality, and the commission is tasked with the resolution of situations of this nature.

The commission leads important dialogue, exchanges and research on anti-discrimination issues and plays a critical role ensuring that: every individual is free and equal in dignity and rights; that cultural diversity is a fundamental human value and a basic human right; and that education and research is advanced. The Yukon Human Rights Commission plays an important role in our community. We thank the members of the commission for their work.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the organizers and partnering organizations that hosted Diversity Speaks at the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre last Friday, in recognition and celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The event addressed racism and discrimination through performances, information and dialogue, interactive art activities and locally made digital stories. These events are important because they are community-driven and bring people together to eliminate racism and discrimination in a way that speaks to our unique community needs.

I'd like to commend the Multicultural Centre of the l'Association franco-yukonnaise, the City of Whitehorse, the Chinese-Canadian Association of Yukon, the Canadian Filipino Association of Yukon, the Hidden History group, the Japanese Canadian Association of Yukon, Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, PSAC Racially Visible Action Committee, the RCMP, the Yukon African Caribbean Association, the Yukon Arts Centre and the Human Rights Commission.

The road to a world free from racism is not an easy one. It requires political will and long-term commitments. Here in Yukon, we celebrate the increasing diversity of our people, but we know we have a past that wasn't always built on mutual understanding and respect and that we have work to do to eradicate racial discrimination.

In commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I encourage the Yukon government and members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly to continue to build our understanding of human rights issues and to work collaboratively with our partners in Yukon, Canada and abroad to eradicate racism, racial discrimination and other intolerances. Racism and intolerance have no place in Yukon.

Ms. Moorcroft: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This year, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights chose as its theme "The Role of Leaders in Combatting Racism and Racial Discrimination" to highlight that leaders can mobilize political will to combat racism and racial discrimination. Political leaders and political parties can and ought to play a key role in combatting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

As leaders, we must take to heart the statement issued March 21 by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who called for all people "... especially political, civic and religious leaders, to strongly condemn messages and ideas based on racism, racial superiority or hatred as well as those that incite racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance."

On Friday, March 21, I attended Diversity Speaks, an open-venue event held at the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre to address racism and discrimination through performances, information and dialogue.

This bilingual and interactive event was organized by the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon and l'Association franco-yukonnaise with participation of a number of other groups that are part of the Cultures Connect committee to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

I would like to acknowledge present in the gallery today is Heather McFadgen with the Yukon Human Rights Commission, which was involved in organizing this event and which also works tirelessly daily to advance human rights.

This year, all Yukon municipalities made proclamations declaring March 21 as Anti-Racism Day. At Friday's

Diversity Speaks event, Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis introduced its new Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racial Discrimination citizen committee, which works with local governments to build communities that are respectful, inclusive and safe for all citizens.

There are many ways to fight racism and promote tolerance. As people remarked at Friday's Diversity Speaks, each of us can take the time to get to know people of different ethnic origin. The fine locally made digital films showed us First Nation history and shared family and cultural stories from many ethnic backgrounds.

Leadership requires us to be vigilant about detecting and preventing all forms of racial discrimination. Leadership means that we're responsible for setting standards for the conduct of government institutions that are respectful of citizens, both in words and in practice.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most profound and horrific examples of racism that still affects people across Canada daily is the tragedy of missing and murdered aboriginal women. In the Yukon alone, aboriginal women's groups and the Sisters in Spirit project have now identified 38 missing or murdered aboriginal women.

While our Assembly unanimously passed a motion calling on the federal government to hold a national public inquiry, human rights defenders, aboriginal groups and political leaders have not succeeded in convincing Canada's national government to act. Groups continue to organize petitions to force the federal government to take this racist and deplorable injustice of missing and murdered aboriginal women seriously. Indeed the United Nations has urged the Government of Canada to act.

Leaders speak out against racist behaviour whenever they see it. Leadership means that, personally, each and every one of us will promote human rights and demonstrate at all times our respect for the dignity of all members of society.

Thank you. Merci. Mahsi' cho.

Mr. Silver: I also rise to pay tribute to the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. March 21 was designated by the UN as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, commemorating the Sharpeville massacre that took place during the heroic struggles of the people of South Africa against the institutionalized system of apartheid. The role of politicians and political parties in this atrocity was very clear as they gave legitimacy to their actions by enshrining racism and discrimination into their social policy. Within our own country and our own history, Canada has demonstrated significant racism and discrimination against aboriginal peoples and racialized communities. Just recall how many apologies our country has made to these victimized groups in recent years, Mr. Speaker.

The chosen theme of the 48th annual International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is, "The Role of Leaders in Combatting Racism and Racial Discrimination", which emphasizes the critical role our political and community leaders have in this ongoing battle.

Our charter of rights and freedoms guarantees equality for everyone and, in 1971, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy.

The role of government in this regard is three-fold: to respect the rights of all citizens, to protect those rights against violation and to fulfill those rights by taking steps to allow people to benefit from them.

Racism and discrimination deprives groups defined by race, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation or other characteristics of these fundamental human rights. Therefore, governments are obligated to condemn racism and discrimination to promote solidarity tolerance and respect for diversity.

As leaders, first and foremost, we need to lead by example. In 2013 we lost one of the greatest leaders who truly embodied what it means to lead by example — Mr. Nelson Mandela. During his life, and even in death, he served as an inspiration to the international community of the power and influence that leaders can successfully wield in the fight against racism and discrimination.

If we look closer to home, the City of Whitehorse was the first city in the north to sign into the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and has taken steps to honor this commitment by establishing a CCMARD advisory committee to provide recommendations to councils on ways to tackle racism and discrimination in Whitehorse.

Furthermore, Yukon municipalities have taken their initiative this year to declare a joint proclamation in tribute of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

As I stand before you today I encourage my peers — territorial leaders of every political stripe — to acknowledge that democracy, transparency, accountability and participatory governance responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people and the preservation of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are vital for the effective prevention and elimination of racism and discrimination.

I ask that we join together in the spirit of renewed political will to commit to removing systematic barriers that perpetuate prejudices and inequalities in the social and economic fabric of our communities and advancing universal equality, justice and dignity in order to ensure that all of our citizens have equal access and opportunity to fully participate in every aspect of our society.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

In recognition of Canada Water Week and World Water Day

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I rise today to pay tribute to Canada Water Week, which officially concluded on Sunday following a week of interesting activities. This coast-to-coast campaign celebrates water and the value that it brings to all of our lives. I'd like to recognize the support, not only of various Yukon government departments, but also the Yukon Literacy Centre, Environment Canada, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the City of Whitehorse, the Yukon chapter of

the B.C. Water and Waste Association, the Yukon Film Society, Yukon College and the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre.

All of these organizations helped present events that supported the "Discover Your Watershed" theme for this year's Canada Water Week. Those events included a tour of the City of Whitehorse's pumphouse. The Family Literacy Centre hosted a series of events at the Canada Games Centre. The Beringia Centre hosted a presentation by the Premier of the water stewardship award, as well as some water-themed art and a movie-screening on the subject of water.

As well, our wildlife viewing program staff hosted a "Wetlands in Winter" tour of the McIntyre marsh. The events concluded today at lunch with a brown-bag lunch hosted at Yukon College by Dr. Amelie Janin, who is of course the industrial research chair at the Yukon Research Centre.

All of these events highlight the importance of water to our society and of course are key parts of Canada Water Week. They highlight the importance of water stewardship. The Premier also gave out the annual Council of the Federation Excellence in Water Stewardship award. This year's recipient was the Friends of McIntyre Creek.

Canada Water Week is led by the Council of the Federation and involves all territories and provinces. Canada's premiers recognize that a sustainable water supply is crucial to our social, environmental and economic well-being. This year was the fourth time we've observed Canada Water Week, and our efforts complement the work of other organizations, such as the Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation, which are raising the profile and understanding of water through Canada Water Week.

I would note that while the focus is on celebration during Canada Water Week, the government encourages stewardship year-round through resources such as the Yukon water on-line information catalogue and its companion, Yukonwater Facebook page, which are both well worth a visit.

In closing, I would note that the Government of Yukon recognizes that water is essential to life and to the health of Yukon's people, economy and natural environment. We want to make sure that Yukoners have access to safe and sufficient water to meet their needs in ways that also preserves ecosystem health now and into the future.

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition to pay tribute to Canada Water Week and World Water Day. The focus of Canada Water Week this year was "Watersheds 101". The theme is relevant in that it is based on the behaviour of water itself and not on artificial boundaries set by humans.

We are a few hundred metres from the mighty Yukon River, part of a vast and beautiful watershed. The waters from this river are being stewarded now and on a whole watershed basis by people who have long been aware of Watersheds 101. Peoples of the Yukon River have a watershed-based vision they have been acting on since 1997.

It is my honour today to pay tribute to the watershed management strategies of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal

Watershed Council. Their 50-year vision is to be able to drink water directly from the Yukon River. Seventy indigenous governments from Alaska and Yukon have signed the *Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Accord*, thus forging one of the world's largest intertribal treaties. Together they are working toward the preservation and protection of the entire Yukon River watershed for present and future generations.

Their leadership with respect to the watershed management is deeply inspiring and with gratitude, since no one says it better, I will now read their words on to the record of this house, and I quote: "We are more than what we seem, and less than what we want to be. We are bigger than Science — not constrained by the physical limitations of the scientific mind, yet grounded by analytical truths. We function with a driving respect for the land and realize that the life of our future generations depend on the actions of this generation.

"We are a Science research entity developing the modern theory of 'traditional science'. 'Traditional science' is the utilization of 'best technology' guided by long-term observations of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) into particular focus areas. Through our water project we apply a transformative approach to collecting observational data in the Arctic. The project was developed by, and uses, an Indigenous Research Paradigm as its end to end approach (or methodology). The Indigenous Research Paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that all knowledge is relational and shared with all of creation ... By transcending the Western science research paradigm we apply standard methods to collect observational data across vast scales and directly engage Indigenous communities in making those observations."

"We live in the moment, striving toward a goal that is not solely defined by measurements and calculations, but rather enhanced by their combination with traditional knowledge. Our survival is intimately linked to the condition of the natural world and we believe in living respectfully with the life around us."

In closing today, it is my privilege and honour to pay tribute to the community scientists of the Yukon River who show us how we can all be stewards of this great watershed. We can all be trained local technicians with standard protocols for data collection.

We can all be part of a water observation network to detect changes in water chemistry and permafrost. Water is the bloodstream of the biosphere. It is dynamic and knows no borders. It cycles continuously from earth to ocean to atmosphere. Water's movements above and below earth's surface shapes our geology, influences our climate and maintains all life. Water is not separate from the ecosystem, from land or from people. It is the very interconnectedness of this life that we pay tribute to today.

Mr. Silver: On behalf of the Liberal caucus, I would like to add my voice to those Yukoners celebrating Canada Water Week. It coincides, obviously, with the United Nations International World Water Day on March 22. There have been a number of events held locally in the last few days to mark

this important week, including the presentation of this year's Council of the Federation water stewardship award, and I would like to also congratulate the Friends of McIntyre Creek on their success. Dorothy Bradley and her group are worthy recipients of this national recognition.

Mr. Speaker, this week is a time to reflect on the values of the water all around us. In Canada we are very fortunate to have an abundant supply and that makes us the envy of countries all around the world. We must remain vigilant in managing this valuable natural resource.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Are there any visitors to be introduced?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce Philip Fitzgerald, who is the chair of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce; Peter Turner, who is president of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce; and Justin Ferbey, who is vice-chair of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce.

Also I would like to introduce Sharon Shorty who is a council member for Teslin Tlingit Council. Many people also know her as "Grama Susie" as well. I'd like to ask everybody to join me in welcoming them here today.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize two folks in the gallery. The first and foremost, of course, is my love, Brittany McNeil, and her mother, Vanessa Innes. I would like to ask members to join me in welcoming them to the gallery.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I invite all members to join me today in welcoming some of my constituents: Ms. Rachel O'Brien, her mother, Cheryl O'Brien, and Olive Corcoran. Welcome.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Graham: I would like to welcome to the gallery here today a former city councillor and a very good friend of mine and constituent from Porter Creek, Dave Austin, who is standing up there.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming a constituent of mine to the gallery, Peter Wojtowicz.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Kent: I'd like to ask members to join me in welcoming two individuals to the Legislature here today, the first being Hugh Kitchen, who is the president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, and the second being Adam Morrison, long-time resident of the Member for Klondike's riding as well as a helicopter pilot and former director of the Klondike Placer Miners' Association.

Mr. Barr: I ask members to please welcome Mr. Robert Wells, friend of the Ross River bridge.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I would like all members to welcome Gill Craknell, executive director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Yukon and Jim Borisenko from Nares Lake in Tagish area.

Applause

Speaker: I would like to welcome Conrad Tiedeman, a constituent of mine, to the House again.

Applause

Speaker: Tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under tabling returns and documents, the Chair has for tabling the *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly — 2014: Yukon Family and Children's Services — Department of Health and Social Services*. This report was distributed to the members and the public on February 18, 2014.

The Chair also has for tabling a *Report from the Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on the Absence of Members from Sittings of the Legislative Assembly and its Committees*, dated March 25, 2014.

Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Hassard: I have for presentation the 10th Report of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees.

Speaker: Are there any further reports of committees to be presented?

Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 17 — response

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

I rise today to respond to Petition No. 17, which was presented to this House on December 9, 2013. Petition No. 17 asks the government to assist Parhelion Medical Services and its dispensary in moving into the Watson Lake community health centre and to form a stakeholder committee to plan the use of international medical graduates and the recruitment of fully licensed physicians. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the petitioners for giving me an opportunity to address this important topic of physician coverage in our rural areas.

The Department of Health and Social Services works closely with the Yukon Hospital Corporation in the delivery of health services throughout the Yukon. As well, the department has a full-time physician recruitment officer who actively recruits physicians to the Yukon for both long- and short-term periods. A substantial amount of this officer's time

is being spent on physician recruitment for Watson Lake and in the garnering of locum services for that community.

With respect to the petition, neither physician mentioned in the petition is considered resident as they have both declared themselves as locums. We will be establishing a committee. However, Mr. Speaker, the work of the committee will not focus specifically on the role of Parhelion Medical Services as suggested in the petition. Rather it will focus on exploring options to best address the health care delivery service in Watson Lake and it will address the issues of access, quality and sustainability of medical services in Watson Lake.

Their work will include establishing the criteria to determine who will be able to operate out of the new health facility. The Parhelion Medical clinic — I should add — will be given the same opportunity to provide a proposal as any other interested party. Although we have not yet established the exact membership, the committee will include various community members such as the Chamber of Commerce, a representative from the Town of Watson Lake — and my department will be involved, as will the Yukon Hospital Corporation, among others.

We need to look at a more sustainable model that provides coverage not only for the community — and Mr. Speaker that's who we are really concerned about there, the community — but also is required by the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services. We appreciate the concerns of everyone who signed this petition, and I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the Member for Watson Lake for bringing this petition forward at this time. I would like to assure you all that we are doing all that we can in the short term and in the long term to settle this issue in Watson Lake once and for all.

Speaker: Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 14: *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 14, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that that Bill No. 14, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 14 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced?

Bill No. 13: *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 13, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 13, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 13 agreed to

Bill No. 12: Third Appropriation Act, 2013-14 — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 12, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 12, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 12 agreed to

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urge the Government of Yukon to issue a temporary staking withdrawal in the Peel watershed until the Peel lawsuit filed on January 27, 2014 in the Yukon Supreme Court by the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Yukon and the Yukon Conservation Society is resolved.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to make regulations prior to June 1, 2014, pursuant to the *Coroners Act*, section 36, establishing transparent and accountable rules of procedure for the conduct of a coroner's inquest which provide for:

- (1) the right of family members of the deceased to have legal standing to attend at an inquest and present arguments and submissions;
- (2) the right of family members of the deceased to have legal representation at an inquest;
- (3) the right of family members of the deceased and/or their legal counsel to call witnesses and examine or cross-examine all of the witnesses called; and
- (4) the timely disclosure of all relevant evidence to family members of the deceased and/or their legal counsel.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to respect the tradition of the Yukon Legislative Assembly by beginning each sitting on a Thursday.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to respect the role of the Yukon Legislative Assembly by

actually delivering the budget and budget speech inside this Chamber.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Economic growth

Ms. Hanson: Last October, the Yukon Party government confidently predicted that Yukon would see an 8.8-percent growth rate in 2014. They were wrong, so in February they drastically revised that forecast growth down to three percent. Even that is optimistic, Mr. Speaker, because Yukon's reported GDP growth for 2013 at one percent was the weakest growth in Yukon's recent history and one of the lowest in Canada.

These disappointing results have a lot to do with uncertainty in the mining sector and the lack of leadership by the government to diversify the economy. After releasing their unilateral plan for the Peel, the Premier said in an interview, and I quote: "Going to courts creates certainty."

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier really believe that provoking lawsuits by ignoring the legal processes agreed to in the final agreements will create economic certainty in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It is a pleasure to once again rise and speak in defence of the public servants in the Department of Economic Development, who from time and time again have their integrity besmirched by both opposition parties in this House.

The Department of Economic Development did not predict anything. They forecast an economic outlook for the territory that was based on the best available data that they had at the time of issuance. Since then, they have come up with a new economic forecast, as they do from time to time, and that has been put forward on the basis of, once again, the best available data that they have at the time of issuance. I am confident in their abilities to make these forecasts, based on the data they have available to them, and will continue to support them in the face of the attacks by the Official Opposition on their credibility.

That being said, I am confident that this year will be much stronger than last, in terms of economic growth, and that confidence on my part comes from this government and their willingness to invest in key infrastructure, invest in key capital projects that create opportunities for Yukon businesses, and by diversifying our economy to ensure that other sectors, aside from the mining industry, continue to have the opportunity to grow.

Ms. Hanson: The only credibility at risk here, Mr. Speaker, is that of the Yukon Party. The Yukon Party continues and likes to take credit when the resource sector is doing well, but then pretends that its policies and actions have no impact on the sector when things are less rosy.

With Yukon dropping fast from its previous top 10 rating as a good place for mining, this Yukon Party government has some soul-searching to do. The Yukon Party government is

scaring away investors by forcing court battles instead of building relationships. Mr. Speaker, this government can't even build a campground without getting sued.

When will this government acknowledge that its confrontational approach has created uncertainty and has hurt Yukon's economy?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, what scares away investors are the proposals by the NDP and the Liberals to ban mining in vast tracts of this territory, to increase royalties on resource companies, to increase taxes and to, in a genuine sense, stymie the mining industry to the best efforts that they can. What this government will continue to do is support a robust mineral and mineral exploration industry in this territory. We'll also continue to invest in other sectors of the economy like tourism, like the IT sector and small businesses in the territory that will benefit from such investments. We will continue to ensure that Yukon is an attractive place to invest, an attractive place to grow and open small businesses and an attractive place for Yukoners to find opportunities for their children to have jobs in this territory.

The parties across the way continuously put forward a number of initiatives that we know will scare away investment and that's not the approach that this government will take. We'll continue to do what we have done to promote the key economic industries in this territory and to invest in Yukon's future.

Ms. Hanson: Maintaining the status quo is not going to work. Part of the Premier's job is to create a climate that encourages industry development and investment in Yukon. This is particularly important for mining, which is a risk-averse industry. It's up to the government to do everything it can to ensure a degree of predictability. Unfortunately, the Yukon government has taken the territory in the opposite direction.

Mr. Speaker, the government didn't learn from the Peel planning process. It didn't learn from the Ross River case last year. Now, a few months into 2014, the court cases are piling up. The government's actions and attitude are doing serious damage to Yukon's reputation in Canada and abroad. My question is simple: Does the government really believe that these court battles help Yukon's economy?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government will stand loud and proud of the accomplishments that it has been able to achieve in the last 12 years since coming into government.

We are talking about consistently low unemployment numbers, an increase in the population of approximately 22 percent, 10 years of GDP growth in the face of — when you look at how many jurisdictions had severe contraction in their growth. We continue to focus on the resource extraction industry and tourism as cornerstones of our economy. We believe strongly that that sort of investment in those core industries will allow us to bring more people forward, continue to increase our population and continue to have the opportunity to grow and diversify our economy. As we will see in this budget again, we will continue our investment in critical infrastructure that will do precisely that.

We are proud of our record to date and we are proud of the record we will have going forward.

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Ms. White: After seven years of consultations, the vast majority of Yukoners supported the Peel Commission's final recommended plan. The plan set aside 55 percent of the Peel for protection, 25 percent for interim protection and opened 20 percent of the Peel for resource development.

In January, the government rejected the final recommended plan and announced its own unilateral plan. More than 71 percent of the Peel is now open to new stake and resource extraction. It allows road access and development to existing claims in so-called protected areas. This is not a balanced plan.

Why has this government chosen to so blatantly ignore the wishes of Yukoners and its obligations to honor the final agreements?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The first thing I would like to point out is that neither party on that side of the House has any business making claims on behalf of the majority of Yukoners. The reality is that in the last territorial election Yukoners elected this side of the house to govern their territory.

Now since then, we have approved a land use plan for the Peel watershed region that is, in our opinion, very fair and balanced.

Now let me explain why, Mr. Speaker. That plan creates vast new protected areas, the likes of which span almost 20,000 square kilometres. That puts Yukon at the forefront, not only in Canada, but in the world in environmental protection.

In other parts of the region, we've introduced new tools and new rules for limiting the potential footprint of any industrial activity that may possibly occur in the area to the tune of 99.8 percent of those areas being protected at any given time.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've achieved a land use plan for the Peel watershed region that is balanced, that creates vast new protected areas and allows for responsible economic development in key particular areas.

Ms. White: An article on the Peel watershed in *National Geographic* appeared two days after the government released its unilateral Peel plan on January 22. The article quotes the Minister of Environment as saying, and I quote: "The commission's process wasn't flawed, but the product produced by the commission was. And since we won a majority government, we felt a mandate to proceed in a manner that was the correct one."

Mr. Speaker, if the government had already decided to reject the final recommended plan the day after the 2011 election, why did they bother consulting with First Nations and governments and Yukoners for the last two years?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the reason why we consulted Yukoners was that it was a requirement of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the process set out therein.

Second of all, the Yukon government did not reject the final recommended plan; it modified the plan to make it more fair and balanced, as we indicated that we have done. Since then, of course, as I said, we have approved and modified a land use plan for the territory that includes vast new protected areas that span almost 20,000 square kilometres, vast new tools in key areas to protect the areas' sensitive ecosystems and biological processes and we've also created new tools to limit the growth and development of any potential activity in the area.

One of the new tools is the restricted use wilderness area that limits the footprint of any potential developments to 0.2 percent of the overall area. That means that at any given time — even in the unlikely event of the maximum possible development — 99.8 percent of those areas will be protected. This means that that area — the Peel watershed area — is far more protected than it has been over the past 100 years. What I should add is that we've achieved a fair and balanced plan for the Peel watershed region. We're proud of that plan and we look forward to implementing it upon the conclusion of any sort of legal action that we're engaged in.

Ms. White: Once again the Yukon Party government continues to choose the path of confrontation. As a result, their unilateral plan for the Peel is now before the courts.

To prevent speculative staking in the Peel in 2010, the Yukon government finally agreed to ban mineral staking in the watershed, but by that time more than 8,000 new claims were staked in the watershed. With the ongoing court case, the future of the Peel watershed is still up in the air.

Will the minister be responsible and prevent more speculative staking by issuing a temporary staking withdrawal in the Peel watershed until the court case can be resolved?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As my colleague the Minister of Environment mentioned, we're proud of the plan that we put before Yukoners for public lands in the Peel watershed. It does increase the amount of protected areas that the Yukon has. Of course there is the new restricted use wilderness area designation that manages the surface disturbance so that it can be no more than 0.2 percent, essentially leaving 99.8 percent of that land mass undisturbed at any one time.

The integrated management areas also have different levels to guide the amount of disturbance allowed, based on cumulative effects.

Mr. Speaker, the final recommended plan would have had the government expropriate many of those mining claims that the member opposite talked about and we weren't willing to risk putting Yukon taxpayers' dollars at risk to pay compensation to those claims. The plan that we've put before Yukoners — that, again, we're proud of — will protect us from any expropriation as the opposition parties would have done had they adopted the final recommended plan. With respect to a staking ban, to answer the member's question, no, we're not considering that.

Question re: Ministerial travel to 2014 mineral Roundup

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. Earlier this year, the Premier and three of his ministers travelled to Vancouver to attend the mineral Roundup. At least that's what they told the public.

Also on the agenda was a Yukon Party fundraiser with a gourmet dinner and scenic cruise on the yacht called the *Pride of Vancouver* at \$300 per ticket. The audience for the event was the mining industry. Mr. Speaker, Yukon's mining industry is in a slump. Even the Premier has admitted that himself. The purpose of the trip to Vancouver was to promote the Yukon as a place to do business, not to promote the Yukon Party.

Mr. Speaker, why did the Premier participate in this fundraising event instead of spending time promoting the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly, I and all of the ministers who were involved, again, were at the mineral Roundup as we have been every year — me, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Minister of Economic Development and the Environment, and Minister of Highways and Public Works. We were there. As we do every year, we promote and really celebrate the work of the Geological Survey that gets done. It certainly is renowned across this country and everyone looks forward to their results every year.

Mr. Speaker, we take that opportunity to ensure that we're meeting with those companies that are doing business in our territory to ensure that we keep those lines of communication open. But we're also continuing to focus on promoting this as a very strong investment opportunity for people to invest in both the exploration industry and in the extraction industry as well, Mr. Speaker.

This is what we have done this year. We were at Cambridge House this year doing the same thing, and the ministers of Energy, Mines and Resources, Economic Development and Environment and I were also at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, PDAC, in Toronto where, again, we were out talking not only to the investors, but to the large investment companies that are focusing their energies. Mr. Speaker, we've done that in the past and we'll continue to do that.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his ministers were travelling on the taxpayers' dollar. They were supposed to be spending their time working on behalf of Yukoners, not raising money for their re-election fund. Now if the Premier doesn't see a problem with that, we have a bigger problem.

Guests were promised live music, hospitality and an exclusive opportunity to connect with the Premier and his ministers, according to the poster promoting this \$300 yacht ride around the Vancouver harbour. Does the Premier think that Yukon taxpayers should fly him to Vancouver so that he could raise money for his re-election fund?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I have mentioned, there is a tremendous amount of work that goes into the mineral Roundup as there is for PDAC or Cambridge House. The days are long, they begin early, they go well into the night, and I

would commend not only the ministers but their staff for the hard work that they do.

We are not on 24/7 and there is an opportunity for personal time when we are in Vancouver, and that, Mr. Speaker, is not unheard of at all. I think that upon reflection — and we are looking forward to one of the motions that we had in the last session and that was the posting of ministerial travel, where we will be confidently showing there was no expense billed to the government as a result of anything that ministers did on their own personal time.

Mr. Silver: I suspect that many people in the gallery today would like an exclusive opportunity to connect with the Premier to talk about issues like, for example, the Peel watershed. They shouldn't have to travel to Vancouver and donate \$300 to the Yukon Party to get that opportunity.

This yacht ride around the harbour shows the people the true colours of the government and demonstrates who has their ear and who does not.

Our exploration industry is in a tailspin. The Premier and his ministers were supposed to be spending their time trying to reverse this trend. Instead, they spent their time flogging tickets to this exclusive event and floating around the harbour in a yacht, raising money for their re-election.

Mr. Speaker, why did the Premier put financing his re-election campaign ahead of promoting the Yukon's mining industry?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I am, and every member of Cabinet, and all members of this caucus are very proud of the accessibility we have to Yukoners at all times. There is not a day that goes by that there are not people who are coming in and meeting with members of our caucus or members of our government. That occurs on a daily basis, whether it's in our offices or out in other people's — meeting at an agreed-upon place or at somebody's business. This goes on every day.

This government has its ear to the ground. We have listened to Yukoners and that, simply put, is the reason why we are standing here as the government. We have listened to what Yukoners have said. The good news is that we listened to them and put forward a platform and we're delivering on that platform. That's what's important to Yukoners.

Question re: Lobbying legislation

Ms. Moorcroft: Yukoners believe strongly in meaningful consultation. It's an important part of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the First Nation final agreements. Unfortunately, the Yukon Party rarely considers the input of First Nations or the Yukon public in their decisions. That's why this Yukon Party government is facing a string of court cases with no end in sight.

Why does the government pretend to consult with First Nations and the Yukon public on important issues when they have already made up their minds?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In the last session, I had the opportunity to stand up and spoke for, I think, approximately an hour and a half, just highlighting and showcasing some of the things this government does, working in collaboration

with First Nations either collectively or on an individual, bilateral basis. That continues on and will continue on.

On top of that are those opportunities to sign intergovernmental accords, such as we did a renewal with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, or with Kluane First Nation.

Certainly we look at some opportunities, such as signing the memorandum of understanding with Carcross-Tagish on some very exciting economic development opportunities in the Carcross-Tagish traditional area.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. Of course, there are obligations. We will always meet and exceed those obligations, whether they are legal obligations, whether they're obligations just to ensure that there is good cooperation and good governance. That has gone on; that will continue to go on.

Ms. Moorcroft: When the Yukon Party government came out with its unilateral plan for the Peel watershed in January, it confirmed what many Yukoners suspected. This government does not listen to First Nation governments or to the Yukon public.

So who is the Yukon Party government listening to? Actually we have no way of knowing because Yukon has no lobbying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, does the government believe that Yukoners have the right to know who influences government decisions?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There is certainly an opportunity that occurs every four or five years when we have a general election, when we go to the people to see whom they have their trust in, who has a record and who has been able to deliver with confidence and what are the priorities for those individuals and those families, and we feel confident in the record that we have.

But when it comes to accessibility and who they're talking to, I have just addressed that issue, quite frankly. This government is very proud of its ability to meet with all individuals and to hear the priorities that people have. It's very important that we do garner and listen to what the interests and the concerns are on any issue that is out there, whether it's on the Peel or whether it's on a bridge. This is a priority for this government. We'll continue to have our ear to the ground. We'll ensure that all people have that opportunity.

We are not interested in ensuring that we set up a process so that the Hillcrest Community Association, for example, needs to register as a lobbyist to be able to tell us that they have an issue or they have an opportunity in their community. This is Yukon. We are a small government. We're very open to talking with all constituents and we'll continue to do so.

Ms. Moorcroft: The federal government, most provinces and a number of cities in Canada have passed lobbying laws to provide transparency and accountability.

Every Canadian has the right to influence government policy, but not in secret. For a number of years, the Yukon NDP has been calling on the government to bring in a lobbying law for the Yukon. Yukon needs a law to make lobbying transparent and accountable to Yukoners.

Will the Yukon Party government join governments across the country and bring in lobbying legislation so

Yukoners know who is influencing the decisions that affect them every day?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I know that it is the opinion of the Liberals and the NDP that we can solve all our problems through legislation and regulation. We understand that; we get that. We just don't believe in that. As I have said many times in this House, I don't think that we need to be asking such groups as the Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Salvation Army, FASSY, outfitters, WTAY, TIAY, AYC, AFY, municipalities, YCS, Challenge, Canadian Cancer Society — they are just some examples — school councils — should they all be registered lobbyists?

We don't believe that they should be. We believe that there is an opportunity for groups and individuals to talk to the government, to their representative MLAs, to ensure that their concerns are heard and addressed, and we'll continue to do so.

Question re: Contaminated sites

Mr. Tredger: The government recently announced that it is going to clean up three government-owned contaminated properties in Old Crow. Soil contamination from fuel and oil at two former fuel storage facilities and the nursing station are a threat to the health of Old Crow's residents and to the environment. We know there are many other contaminated sites in communities throughout the Yukon. Other sites are still to be identified. The Yukon government recently identified \$1,735,000 for cleanup work and \$500,000 for assessment work.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain the process for involving local communities and First Nations in identifying, assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I thank the member opposite for the excellent question. The Yukon government is responsible for a number of contaminated sites that have, throughout the history of the Yukon, become contaminated through some fault in the part of government.

These include highway maintenance sites that are at the top of the list — they are the most common at least — and what can happen is hydrocarbons through past practices in a bygone era contaminated soils and other parts of the environment. So we enumerate those lists of contaminated sites, create a matrix by which we judge them on how much they are contaminated and how high a risk level that contamination is, and then we rank them based on priority and we start checking them off one by one by remediating those sites.

Of course all of this process and all of this work that we have done to date has been reviewed by the Auditor General and the Auditor General has of course provided us with some significant recommendations as to how to do this process, and we have complied with all of them.

Now, the sites that the member is referring to specifically are ones in Old Crow. As we move to undertake that work to clean up those sites in Old Crow, we will naturally involve the community, the First Nation and any other groups that are interested to ensure that opportunities exist for locals to learn

from the processes, to benefit from them and to be engaged from them.

Mr. Tredger: Section 114 of the *Environment Act* established a public registry of contaminated sites. The accompanying 2002 regulations specify that, and I quote: "The Minister shall provide public access to the public registry during normal office hours."

The department's website, however, informs people seeking access to the registry to contact Environment Programs. However, there is no comprehensive list that is available to Yukoners seeking that information. Yukoners have a right to review all information held by the government on Yukon's contaminated sites.

Will the minister respect the government's own regulation and ensure that full registry is publicly accessible to Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I have quite literally read the list of contaminated sites in this House in Committee of the Whole in a previous sitting. So, I can assure the member that the list of contaminated sites is very much in the public domain. I'm sure what he's referring to though is that one of his political staffers contacted the bureaucracy to seek information when they know that the political parties are required to go through the minister to obtain that kind of information. So, he is quite correct that the public is welcome to contact our officials in the Department of Environment to review those sites and to see a list of them. If he'd like to I'd encourage him to look back at Hansard and see where I actually read site-by-site all — I think 83 or 63 was the number of sites in the Yukon that I listed in this House. So, make no mistake Mr. Speaker, that information is available to the public and I'd be happy to make it available to any Yukoner who contacts me.

Mr. Tredger: I believe that they key phrase is accessible, transparent and ease of use for all Yukoners, not just those who have the time and inclination and can afford a cruise in Vancouver.

The government said that in addition to the three Old Crow sites cleanup work, it also plans to hire specialists to work on the cleanup of the Whitehorse soil stockpile, the Klondike River highway maintenance camp and a land treatment facility off the Top of the World Highway. The government also said the work will create jobs for Yukoners contracted to carry out the work.

How will the minister ensure that contracts for the assessment and remediation of these contaminated sites will go to local Yukon contractors?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The process by which we tender our work in the government is pretty obvious. There's a tender process and Yukon companies have the opportunity to bid and do so. I know that the cleanup of contaminated sites through the Department of Environment produces a significant number of opportunities for local engineers and drilling companies that conduct this type of work.

We try to keep the contracts small and manageable so as to ensure that Yukoners have the highest possible opportunity to win those contracts. We continuously liaise with those

companies to ensure they're aware of the contracts coming down the pipe and that they are prepared for them.

I'm a little confused as to why the member opposite either doesn't understand the tendering process or hasn't done his research, but I would encourage him to review our tendering process and to also look back in Hansard to see the list of contaminated sites I've listed in this House before he makes such wild accusations about secrecy.

Any Yukoner who can pick up the phone, knock on my door or send me an e-mail can have access to any of this information, or they can just go on the website and find it themselves. The claims that the member opposite is making about a lack of transparency are simply unfounded.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of government private members that are to be called for debate tomorrow, Wednesday, March 26: Motion No. 581, standing in the name of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin; and Motion No. 494, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake.

Speaker: We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 14: *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 14, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 14, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 14, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honourable members and guests, it is my honour and privilege today to table a 2014-15 budget, the third budget of the 33rd Yukon Legislative Assembly.

As I begin, I would like to acknowledge my constituents whom I represent in the riding of Mountainview, the communities of Granger, McIntyre, Valleyview and Hillcrest. It certainly continues to be an honour and a privilege to be able to serve these constituents or residents of Mountainview in our Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon government's budget for 2014-15 is \$1,318,400,000.

The operation and maintenance budget totals \$1.024 billion, of which \$97.252 million is recoverable. The capital budget is \$293.41 million, of which \$60.592 million is recoverable.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the largest capital budget ever presented in this House. The 2014-15 budget has a healthy \$72.207-million surplus.

In my two previous budget addresses, I noted some funding pressures that the Yukon government was facing in relation to the Building Canada plan, the territorial health system sustainability initiative, and funding by the Government of the United States to upgrade and maintain the north Alaska Highway and the Haines Road. I will update honourable members on these funding pressures have been or are being addressed.

The new Building Canada fund, which was announced in the 2013 federal budget, will see the Government of Canada invest over \$53 billion in infrastructure across the country over the next decade. For Yukon, this represents approximately \$420 million dedicated in federal funding, including \$257 million under the new Building Canada fund and an estimated \$163 million under the federal gas tax fund.

The territorial health system sustainability initiative has been re-named the territorial health investment fund and is providing \$70 million over three years for a new targeted and time-limited fund to increase services in the three territories in priority health areas and to reduce reliance on outside health care systems and medical travel. Yukon's share of this \$70 million has yet to be determined.

On March 11, 2014, I travelled to Washington D.C. to meet with senators and congressmen to advocate for continued U.S. federal government funding for the Shakwak highway project. Under the 1977 Shakwak agreement, funding responsibility to reconstruct and improve the north Alaska Highway and the Haines Road lies with the United States and ongoing maintenance to be delivered by Yukon.

Estimates to complete this highway work range from \$237 million to \$340 million. We remain optimistic that our lobbying efforts will play off and funding for the Shakwak highway project will be reinstated.

As Yukon's population continues to grow, undoubtedly there will be more funding pressures put on our health and social services safety net, education system, community services, justice system, and highways and public works infrastructure. One funding pressure Yukon residential electrical consumers will not face is the cancellation of the interim electrical rebate as \$3.435 million has been provided for a one-year extension.

In view of the challenges facing the territory, our government's focus is squarely set on growing the economy in Yukon. Economic growth is the engine that drives our way of life and sustains and improves our socio-economic well-being. Government's job is to facilitate economic development to set the stage for economic growth. The private sector's job is to do business and to create economic growth. Our objective always has been and continues to be to develop an economy through strategic government investment that supports and stimulates the growth of the private sector. We believe that the government can facilitate private sector economic growth in two ways: building and maintaining modern and efficient transportation, telecommunications and energy infrastructure,

and creating a positive, supportive and competitive financial, legislative and regulatory environment.

The mining industry is a cornerstone of Yukon's private sector and a proud part of our history. While the high level of mineral exploration spending in 2011 proved to be unsustainable, this year there is still expected to be considerable investment with Selwyn Chihong alone spending \$56 million. There is a reason that this is the largest capital budget in Yukon's history. At a time when the private sector is facing economic challenges, this is the time for the Yukon government to step up to the plate and invest in infrastructure that will facilitate and stimulate the private sector. The specific infrastructure projects will be outlined later in this address.

We are confident that the capital projects we're investing in will provide a strong foundation for continued economic growth.

In view of the impact the government's capital projects have on Yukon business and industry, we'll be tendering some major capital projects in the fall in order to give contractors certainty about upcoming work, as well as ensuring that the government gets the best available pricing.

Despite this elevated spending, our government continues to have a healthy surplus that will allow us to address any emerging priorities or challenges that may arise in the future. Only two jurisdictions in Canada have no net debt: Alberta and Yukon. It's worth pointing out that global rating service Standard & Poor's in October last year affirmed Yukon's credit rating as AA for the fourth consecutive year.

The rating confirms that Yukon has achieved a track record of strong economic performance, and that we are on course for continued growth. Strengths highlighted in the ratings report include Yukon's low debt levels, strong budgetary performance, and good financial management, in addition to private sector economic performance and demographic trends.

We are introducing a number of other measures to assist Yukon's business community. One measure is to reduce the tax burden by cutting the small business tax rate from four percent to three percent. The Department of Economic Development will also be engaging with the various chambers of commerce to undertake a red tape review of the regulatory burden facing Yukon businesses and provide a report on measures to reduce this burden. In addition, there will be a review of the business incentive program that provides rebates for contractors who hire local labour and use local products to ensure the program continues to be effective.

These are just some of the measures that our government is undertaking in the 2014-2015 budget to promote economic activity. Suffice it to say, Yukon remains one of the best places in the world to invest and our government is committed to making it even more so.

Speaking of updates, I'd like to update honourable members and give a mid-term report on how our government is going about meeting our 2011 election platform commitments. The Yukon Party's 2011 election platform commitments are being implemented budget by budget. This

is our third budget of the current mandate, and much has been accomplished. We are doing what we said we were going to do. Our government campaigned on a platform of "Moving Forward Together". We committed to Yukoners to: build a better quality of life; to protect and manage our environment; to continue to develop our economy; and to provide good governance.

We made considerable improvements to our health care system that have made it more effective and responsive to the needs of Yukon citizens. Last year, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of two new health facilities, one in Watson Lake and one in Dawson. The new Watson Lake hospital will not only benefit the residents of that community, but the entire southeast region of Yukon. Both hospitals have a comprehensive range of health-related programs and services under one roof. The hospitals consist of six in-patient beds, a fully-equipped emergency room and state-of-the-art diagnostics, including X-ray and laboratory.

The Dawson hospital also houses the Dawson medical clinic and a retail pharmacy. Its second floor is occupied by the Dawson Community Health Centre programs and services such as visiting mental health and hearing service professionals, home care and public health units.

To ensure Yukoners have certainty with regard to physician services, we signed a five-year agreement with the Yukon Medical Association. This agreement reflects the increased costs of providing insured services and will support innovative approaches to health care and new procedures and advancements in care that have the potential to address increasing health care costs. It also provides for additional supports to medical graduates and visiting specialists. Once that agreement was signed, we have worked to ensure that Yukoners continue to have access to physicians by undertaking a recruitment strategy. The strategy has been working and we have seen a number of new doctors come to Yukon.

We have also taken steps to develop collaborative care options for Yukon citizens. We passed nurse practitioners' legislation and have expanded a referred care clinic in Whitehorse. As the minister has noted, collaborative care isn't just about the co-location of services; it's about building teams of appropriate health care providers to provide the right care at the right time.

It is important to recognize that Yukon citizens themselves have an important role to play in their own health and the health of their families. To help recognize this, we have implemented and are implementing an active living strategy. The vision of that strategy is a Yukon that is active, where health, well-being and physical activity are viewed as an investment in the quality of life for every individual and for a vibrant, healthy and sustainable Yukon community.

Further, the Minister of Health and Social Services launched the Pathways to Wellness project, that will allow us to focus on the promotion of well-being and the prevention of illness and to help get ahead of the rising tide of chronic conditions and the impact on the health care system. I can say with confidence that our health care system is stronger, more

flexible and better suited to the needs of Yukon citizens than it was when we took office in 2011.

We have also addressed the many challenges of housing and land availability by making strategic investments and improvements. Last year, we highlighted some of these initiatives at the northern housing symposium. We have also launched a housing action plan with input from a range of sources. In partnership with Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, we increased the number of shelter beds available for you. In Whitehorse and Mayo, we have begun construction of brand new seniors housing facilities.

We have provided 4.5 million dollars to complete Betty's Haven, which provides second-stage housing for women and children who are fleeing abuse. Yukon Women's Transition Home Society receives \$1.4 million, which includes \$247,000 dollars in direct support to operate Betty's Haven.

We worked with Options for Independence to open Dun Kenji Ku to provide housing to adults living with FASD. The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* has been modernized and regulations to support it are underway.

As a result of our investments in land development, Yukoners can now buy residential lots over the counter. A new and innovative down payment assistance program has helped dozens of Yukoners become homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, the investments and decisions we have made to date have led to increased flexibility in the housing market and helped Yukon citizens move forward through the housing continuum. We all know that in order for Yukon to continue to prosper, we need to provide opportunities for our children to excel in our school system and for students to have access to skills training that will serve our economy. On this front, we have made considerable progress.

We have negotiated and signed a new contract with the Yukon Teachers Association that provides increased instructional hours for students and increased professional development opportunities for teachers. We have introduced innovative new measures to ensure that students in rural Yukon have equitable opportunities to thrive. Last year, the Minister of Education premiered a new experiential education model that was a unique approach to expanding options and opportunities for rural students.

As well, the flipped school model adopted in Watson Lake has shown promising results. These initiatives have attracted some national attention and Education officials will be presenting the results at national education conferences this year.

Here in Whitehorse, we have begun a pilot project at F.H. Collins Secondary School geared toward students who are motivated to pursue both sports and academics. This was an excellent example of partnership between Yukon schools and the sports community.

Yukon College continues to develop and grow, thanks in part to the investments we have made over the past years. We are contributing over \$36 million this year to Yukon College's operations.

The considerable investments our government has made in developing the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining

are already yielding results, as evidenced by the recent graduation ceremony in Delta Junction.

The trades and skills training available today would not have been possible without the positive relationship that we've developed with the college. Through the new mobile trades trailer, students in rural Yukon are learning skills needed to participate in our growing economy.

The advancement of the Yukon Research Centre has also been further evidence of success. In 2013, the centre ranked fourth in Canada in the category of research income, demonstrating clearly that they are punching well above their weight. Fostering northern-focused research and innovation is important for us and plays a key role in developing technologies that provide sustainable solutions for subarctic regions around the world.

We also continue to ensure Yukoners have access to justice. Last year we passed legislation to make it easier for single parents to have their child support readjusted by keeping this issue out of the courts.

Yukon also continues to take a national leadership role when it comes to the issue of FASD. When Yukon hosted the Justice ministers meeting last year, Yukon was commended for leading progressive and innovative programs to address justice issues faced by individuals experiencing FASD.

Whether it is from cyber-bullying or on-line predators, our new partnership with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection will assist parents and children to stay safe in an increasingly on-line world.

Over the past years, we have invested in building a better quality of life for Yukoners. These accomplishments I've mentioned are only a few of the many, but what they illustrate is how far we've come as a result of the decisions and investments this government has made in the quality of life of Yukon citizens.

I'd like to turn to the second pillar of our platform, which is the environment. By implementing the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*, we have improved groundwater monitoring, hazardous waste handling and recycling opportunities. Since 2008, the government has led and directed ongoing care and maintenance operations at the abandoned Faro and Mount Nansen mine sites. In accordance with the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*, planning work for parks in the Whitefish wetlands and Summit Lake-Bell River areas has been undertaken. In cooperation with the Selkirk First Nation, we have approved the new management plans for the Lhutsaw wetland and Tatmain Lake habitat protection areas.

We are implementing the climate change strategy by working with partners on mapping and adaptation research projects. In 2013-14, seven innovative ideas have received support toward commercialization from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Yukon through cold climate and technology innovation at Yukon Research Centre.

In 2013-14, CanNor and the Yukon government invested over \$380,000, with an additional \$254,000 from proponents, for a total of over \$634,000, toward research commercialization.

Yukon and Canada have invested \$10.6 million in joint federal-territorial funding from 2007-08 to 2013-14 to upgrade or build new water treatment plants. We have improved our regulatory processes by developing guidelines to assist mining companies in quartz mining licensing processes and by reviewing placer mining projects for conformity with the fish habitat management system.

We revised our contracting directive, effective April 1, 2013, to include environmental performance standards adopted by Yukon in our contract evaluation criteria.

We have been and we will continue to be proud protectors of Yukon's environment. We are protecting our environment, working on new parks and habitat protection areas, partnering on research and development projects, providing water treatment and solid waste disposal facilities, and improving our regulatory systems. We are moving forward together.

The third pillar of our platform is the economy. We have used our budget strategically to rebuild Yukon's economy. We have helped key industries become more efficient, access capital investment, increase marketing, facilitate partnerships and provided them with the necessary infrastructure networks like energy, transportation and communications.

Our government has been working hard to secure Yukon's energy future. Energy is critical to the future of our economic growth. Our government has advanced a number of initiatives to accomplish this, including we've issued a directive to YDC to lead the research and planning of a new legacy hydro project.

This government has begun work with Alaska to complete a cost-benefit analysis of connecting the Yukon integrated grid to southeast Alaska.

Our government finalized the microgeneration policy for small-scale renewable energy projects.

The Energy Solutions Centre's good energy rebate program has completed seven years of program delivery. Approximately 5,000 Yukon households have participated in this program.

Our government has worked with the mining industry to develop and support that industry in Yukon. We've worked with Canada, First Nations and industry to improve competitiveness of our licensing and permitting regimes while ensuring environmental protection remains a priority.

We rebranded the Yukon mineral incentive program to the Yukon mineral exploration program and invested nearly \$3 million over three years to support grassroots exploration, which is leveraged at a rate of approximately 4:1. In addition, our government supported industry-led investment forums in Asia, in Europe and throughout North America to attract mining capital to the Yukon, and issued a quartz mining licence to Victoria Gold for their Eagle project.

Northern Cross Yukon 3D seismic program is underway and a benefits agreement between Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Northern Cross Yukon and the Yukon government is in place.

Yukon government is reviewing the oil and gas regulations to ensure they reflect best practices and mitigate

any activities that may create unacceptable risks to public health or the environment.

Yukon Legislative Assembly formed an all-party committee to examine the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing and our government is awaiting their report.

Through the Growing Forward 2 program, a five-year funding agreement is supporting ongoing agricultural marketing activities at the Fireweed Community Market. Our government has approved 78 projects to receive \$914,260 in Growing Forward 2 contributions.

With funding from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Yukon Agricultural Association has developed strategic planning for industry and infrastructure development on a newly zoned, 65-hectare Mayo Road parcel. In addition, our government has opened 291 hectares of new Crown land for agriculture.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has worked hard to provide land for Yukoners. Land sales were completed in Whitehorse — and those would be in Whistle Bend and Grizzly Valley — Dawson City and Haines Junction. Lots continue to be available in Dawson City, Haines Junction, Beaver Creek, Carmacks, Destruction Bay, Grizzly Valley, Watson Lake and Whitehorse.

The Teslin Tlingit Council and Energy, Mines and Resources steering committee has finalized the development of the Sawmill Road country residential project and continues to work on proposed on a proposed Morley Bay recreation lot project.

With the conclusion of public and First Nation consultations, the *Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* was approved for public lands in January 2014. Implementation of the plan is underway.

The Carcross local area plan is complete and approved by both parties.

The south-central Yukon vegetation inventory project, which is part of the forest management implementation agreement with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations is well underway. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has implemented our second consecutive year for tier 1 commercial harvesting opportunities.

The Department of Economic Development has funded the Liard First Nation to move forward on southeast Yukon forestry opportunities.

In partnership with CanNor, Yukon government and the Yukon Research Centre are investing more than \$444,000 over two years to develop more efficient and cost-effective ways to increase gold recoveries in placer mining.

Through trade missions to China and Japan, Yukon informed potential investors about strategic advantages, including our proximity to the Asian market, mineral-rich resources, substantial infrastructure and stable investment climate.

To promote small businesses, trade and investment, we have the enterprise trade fund, the strategic industries fund and the small business investment tax credit.

We assisted the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance through the enterprise trade fund and by participating in strategic

promotional events in North America and Europe, including trade missions to Germany and participating in the Mineral Exploration Roundup and the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention.

Yukon's tourism industry has continued to be a key contributor to our economy. We are marketing Yukon by conducting media familiarization tours and targeting key markets to promote Yukon.

Investments in the Carcross waterfront have resulted in a new hub of economic activity in southern Yukon.

We renewed a joint Yukon-Alaska cooperative marketing partnership, which delivers an advertising campaign to increase highway travel and promote summer adventure experiences.

Yukon has made strategic investments in our tourism economy. In 2012, Yukon hosted the Canadian Tourism Commission's annual GoMedia Canada Marketplace and the Minister of Tourism and Culture led a delegation to Germany and Switzerland to meet with partners in the territory's largest and most significant overseas tourism market.

In the fall 2013, the Minister of Tourism and I led a European tourism trade mission. One of the results was an accord between Air North, Condor and ourselves that will bring more European travellers to Yukon.

The hard work is paying off. 2013 was a record-breaking year for border-crossings with 345,510 visitors travelling in private vehicles and motor coaches crossing the border into Yukon. This is an increase of 24,270, or eight percent, over 2012.

Yukon is addressing our energy needs by implementing the energy strategy for Yukon. We released our microgeneration policy in October 2013.

The refrigeration and freezer retirement program enabled Yukoners to retire older inefficient units. Over 670 appliances have been retired resulting in an estimated 639,000 kilowatt hours of energy savings.

We have used our budgets to build up the construction resources available for Yukoners. Between 2007 and 2014, through the Building Canada fund, Canada and Yukon have invested over \$240 million in roads, water treatment plants, waste-water systems and a gasification plant.

We also completed the award-winning Whitehorse waterfront revitalization project. The Yukon-Canada gas tax agreement contributes to healthy communities by supporting long-term planning and sustainable infrastructure. To date, \$66.86 million in funding has been approved for 141 gas tax projects, serving both municipal and First Nation recipients.

We have made Crown land available for agriculture across Yukon as work continues to bring more on-line. We continue to support this industry through the Growing Forward 2 program. We are putting Yukoners first by working cooperatively with Yukon's film and sound industries in order to provide Yukoners with employment and training opportunities. Government continues to invest in the purchase of information technology equipment and applications to support government programs and service delivery. Since 2011-12, our government has invested \$27.878 million to

support our information technology sector. By using technology, government can serve Yukoners better.

Technology can also assist Yukoners to better serve their clients. To that end, e-commerce business advisory services were delivered to small businesses in Haines Junction, Carcross, Watson Lake, Teslin, Dawson City, Ross River, Beaver Creek and Old Crow. Our government supports Yukon businesses through such initiatives as the Yukon venture loan guarantee program, Yukon small business investment tax credit and partnerships with industry organizations.

Our budgets have been used judiciously to strengthen economic mainstays like mining, tourism, and oil and gas. Our budgets have helped diversify our economy in other areas, like arts and culture, film and sound, forestry, agriculture and information technology.

They promote investment in our natural resources, market our tourism product, encourage small businesses, invest in infrastructure, and put Yukoners first. We are moving Yukon forward together.

That brings us to our fourth pillar: good governance. The "Our Towns, Our Future" report addressed important matters, such as municipal funding arrangements, the *Municipal Act*, and solid waste.

A new resource royalty sharing agreement with the 11 self-governing First Nations could see them share up to an additional \$4.7 million in royalties each year.

Our government has negotiated Yukon asset construction agreements, or YACAs, for 16 projects with Kwanlin Dun First Nation, and YACAs for three projects with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. In cooperation with Canada, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation personal income tax room sharing agreement provides the First Nation with a portion of the tax revenue generated through the collection of personal income tax.

Since 2012, we have been working with the White River First Nation and Kluane First Nation on developing a draft management plan for the Pickhandle Lake Habitat Protection Area.

We are working with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to compile information fundamental for making sound forest investment and forest management decisions in southwest Yukon.

In collaboration with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'an Council and the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, we are developing a new forest resource management plan for the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes region.

Our government has been working closely with the first nations of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in the completion of a regional economic development and opportunity planning initiative, related to Chapter 22 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

The Government of Yukon signed a new agreement with the Government of Canada on resource revenues in August, 2012, enabling Yukon to maximize the benefit it gets from its growing resource economy, invest in healthy communities and manage infrastructure and energy needs.

The new agreement implemented changes to the 2003 *Yukon Northern Affairs Program Devolution Transfer Agreement* and the 1993 Canada-Yukon Oil and Gas Accord.

The new Procurement Support Centre provides advice to Yukon government employees and houses contract services. It issued approximately 1,500 procurement training certificates to Yukon government employees in the past 22 months. A standard construction contract document for use across government has been created and improvements were made to the tender forecast system.

Mr. Speaker, the 2014-2015 budget, like its two predecessors, will continue implementing our platform commitments as well as responding to changing circumstances, emerging issues and trends. It is no secret that the prospectors and junior mining companies are facing challenges in raising capital for the 2014-15 field season. It is for this reason that we increased the funding for the 2014-15 Yukon mineral exploration program by \$630,000 to a total of \$1.4 million. The Yukon mineral exploration program provides funding to individuals, partnerships and junior mining companies to move forward on their mineral exploration projects. Part of the program's function is to provide a portion of the risk capital required to locate, explore and develop mineral projects to an advanced stage.

Our government has been actively promoting Yukon's mineral industry whenever and wherever we can. On January 19 and 20 of 2014, we established the Invest Yukon Pavilion at the world's largest investment conference dedicated to resource exploration hosted by Cambridge House in Vancouver. We pointed out that our infrastructure, political stability and geological endowment all bode well for a strong economic future in the mining sector and for Yukon.

One week later, on January 27, 2014, Yukon government was well-represented at the Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver. We showcased Yukon's advantages as a place to do business and demonstrate that Yukon remains one of the world's best places to explore, to develop and mine. Similarly, in early March, our government attended the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada — PDAC — convention in Toronto that attracts over 30,000 delegates and 1,000 exhibitors. Mineral companies had the opportunity to showcase their projects to potential investors at a Yukon-focused session at the convention. Companies participating in the Yukon session included Kaminak Gold, Wellgreen Platinum, Northern Freegold Resources, Anthill Resources, Rockhaven Resources, Victoria Gold, ATAC Resources, Alexco Resources, Capstone Mining and Western Copper and Gold.

While the Yukon government has no say in setting global mineral prices, we do contribute to this key Yukon industry in other important ways. Our government has established a mining investment promotion team. The team works jointly on an advertising campaign to attract investment to Yukon's mining industry as well as initiatives to inform Yukoners of the economic benefits of mining. Our government is working with Yukon industry partners to develop an investment attraction strategy to encourage investment in the Yukon

resource sector with an allocation of \$700,000. Through trade missions to China and other Asian countries, as well as to Europe and North America, over \$700 million of investment has been raised for mining companies operating in Yukon.

Our government invests heavily in a number of infrastructure priorities, namely, resource roads, highways and port upgrades that support the growth and expansion of the mining industry.

In this budget, \$600,000 is being allocated to support functional planning for the Kondike Highway, the Freegold Road and the Nahanni Range Road.

Work is underway with Yukon College to establish the Centre for Northern Innovation and Mining, or CNIM, with an allocation in 2014-15 of \$976,000 for capital and an additional \$1.2 million for operations. The centre will identify gaps in the labour force and support the training of Yukoners to undertake skilled jobs in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, our government is working with the federal and First Nation governments to make improvements to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, YESAA, in order to increase the consistency and timeliness of assessments. At the same time, we are working with the Yukon Water Board to make the water licensing process more coordinated and timely.

Yukon's other economic mainstay, tourism, is doing quite well. In 2013, the number of people who crossed the border into Yukon reached an all-time high, increasing by eight percent, according to data from the CBSA. Given that border crossings are a long-standing indicator of tourism visitation, this is a very positive sign for the tourism industry and for the Yukon economy.

In total, the tourism industry contributes close to \$200 million to Yukon's annual private sector revenues. This includes money spent on local hotels, restaurants and tour operators. For the past four years, the Department of Tourism and Culture has operated an enhanced marketing program in its overseas tourism markets. This project was made possible with the assistance of \$2 million in CanNor funding, which terminates at the end of this month.

Enhanced overseas marketing has enabled Yukon to increase its market share in key European markets, contributing to a 33-percent increase in overseas tourism visitations. Due to the success of this project, our government has elected to maintain an enhanced level of investment in overseas marketing on an ongoing basis, allocating an additional \$590,000 to overseas marketing budgets starting in 2014-15.

Japan is Yukon's fastest-growing international market and ranks fourth in overseas visitation. Between 2009 and 2011, Yukon saw an 800-percent increase in Japanese visitation. In 2012, Yukon hosted more than 3,500 Japanese visitors, who primarily experienced aurora-viewing excursions.

On January 28 of this year, our Minister of Tourism and Culture led a delegation comprised of 15 tourism-related businesses from the Yukon to Vancouver to attend the first-ever Yukon-Japan marketplace. Australia is Yukon's second-

largest overseas market, with 6,996 visitors in 2013, representing 19.5 percent of the overseas visitors and two percent of the overall visitors to the territory. In mid-February, our government profiled Yukon's "Larger than Life" brand at Canada's Corroboree in Australia. Our Minister of Tourism and Culture signed cooperative agreements with Canada & Alaska Specialist Holidays, Adventure World, Adventure Destinations, Destination Canada and Holland America Line Australia to promote Yukon travel experiences and products in the Australian market.

The Yukon government has established a \$50,000 multicultural event fund. This new program supports festivals and events that celebrate the multicultural diversity of Yukon's communities of new Canadians. Multicultural festivals and events can play an important role in helping communities of new Canadians integrate into Yukon society and the Yukon economy. It should be noted that this program responds to a motion unanimously approved by the Legislature in December 2013.

Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre will receive \$200,000 in capital funding in 2014-15 for exhibit design and planning to enhance the ability of the centre to educate the Yukon public and tourists about Yukon's ice age past.

Speaking of the ice age, all members should take note that the travelling ice age mammal exhibit, which to date has been visited by more than one million people, is coming to Yukon from September 2014 to January 2015. The exhibit will be hosted in the Yukon by the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre in partnership with the Yukon Arts Centre. It will give Yukoners and our visitors alike a unique opportunity to see an outstanding collection of ice age fossils and exhibits.

One of our platform commitments is to work with Yukon First Nations to ensure that they remain full partners in economic development of the territory for mutual benefit of all Yukoners. A regional economic development plan for the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in as part of the chapter 22 of their final agreement has been drafted and parties are now working on finalizing the document.

On December 16, 2013, our government designed a memorandum of understanding with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation to support recreational land and infrastructure development in the First Nation's traditional territory. The MOU identified a number of potential projects including wilderness tourism opportunities, such as a major tourism lodge project at Millhaven Bay near Carcross, development of a remote-access cottage property on First Nation and public lands, and improvements to the Carcross dock and marina. These projects will provide investment and growth in the local economy and create jobs and business opportunities.

We are planning to have the first remote-access cottage lots available for lottery by August 2014, fulfilling another campaign commitment.

Our government has been working in partnership with the Liard First Nation Development Corporation on the development of a forestry industry in southeast Yukon. We aim to prepare a framework in which the economic

opportunities related to the forestry sector may be better realized.

At Canada's North Summit on October 16, 2013, we stated that it's a priority for this government that Yukoners benefit from affordable, available and reliable information and communications technology. Yukon needs fast, affordable and reliable broadband to sustain the economy and stimulate growth. Connectivity is critical to economic development in the north.

Our government has established the Technology and Telecommunications Development Directorate to support the information and communications technology sector and telecommunications infrastructure development. In partnership with the Dempster Energy Services, the directorate supported a feasibility study to provide a second fibre optic route to the south. The study determined how a second fibre optic data link could be built to increase the availability of Internet services for Yukon residents and businesses. Dempster Energy Services is a partnership of three First Nation development corporations: Vuntut Gwitchin Limited Partnership, Na Cho Nyäk Dun and Chief Isaac Incorporated.

Yukon government believes First Nation participation in network development and IT services deserves encouragement and support. It has been recommended that Whitehorse to Juneau is the best option for the diversified link because this route provides a competitive source of bandwidth into Yukon and provides diversity and reliability.

Our government is providing \$600,000 in this budget, together with \$150,000 from the First Nation development corporations, to prepare a business case for building a second fibre optic data cable connection to the south to increase the availability of data services to Yukon. This project will improve reliability, redundancy and affordability of broadband. It will be the backbone of our growing IT industry, encouraging many companies to relocate here.

On October 11, 2013, Yukon and Alaska signed a memorandum of understanding on a Yukon-Southeast Alaska economic corridor development project for electrical generation, transmission and telecommunications. The memorandum of understanding facilitates a joint study into the exploration and identification of potentially developing such a corridor between Yukon and Alaska. A request for proposals to study the viability of the corridor was released by the Yukon government on February 21, 2014, and will be evaluated in the near future.

Our government will be investing \$380,000 in 2014-15, and a further \$380,000 in 2015-16, to provide 4G mobile service to all 17 Yukon communities. This will ensure that they have the ability to use current-generation mobile applications and smartphones. Residents of the Lake Laberge constituency will be happy to learn that a cell tower is being constructed at Grizzly Valley.

Our major economic engines of mining and tourism are largely dependent upon Yukon's transportation infrastructure — our primary roads, secondary roads, rural roads, resource roads, bridges, airports and seaports. The 2014-15 budget is

providing \$85.264 million — the largest transportation budget ever — which will be allocated as follows: \$48.17 million for highway work; \$14.23 million for bridges; \$16.316 million for airports, including surfaces, airside improvements and facilities; and \$3.33 million for other roads, such as the Silver Trail and turning lanes being built at the Couch Road entrances.

I was recently in Washington, D.C., lobbying for the continued funding of the Shakwak agreement and I'd like to highlight that \$8.2 million is available this year to stabilize sections of the north Alaska Highway that are distorted by thawing permafrost, repair and replace culverts damaged by permafrost settlements, and restore highway grade. In addition to this work, a further \$7.8 million is being committed to complete pavement overlay in the deteriorated section of the Haines Road.

Work continues this year with the reconstruction of the Robert Campbell Highway with an allocation of \$8.77 million, improving the section of the highway from kilometre 97 to kilometre 107. The Atlin Road reconstruction project is receiving \$1.4 million of ongoing granular search, design work and partial reconstruction, including design and permitting for the Snafu and Tarfu bridge crossings. An additional \$300,000 has been added to the rural road upgrade program for 2014-15, establishing funding for both the resource access road and rural road upgrade programs at \$500,000 each.

A further \$200,000 has been allocated for community highway lighting enhancements, including Two and One-Half Mile and Upper Liard. The Nisutlin Bay bridge is slated for a major upgrade, with \$7 million being allocated in 2014-15 and a further \$7 million in 2015-16. Work includes a new concrete floor system, replacement of existing steel grade deck and bridge strengthening. A bicycle path/pedestrian walkway will be added on the side of the bridge, with a viewing platform and lighting for the walkway.

Construction of the new, single-span Tatchun Creek bridge has started and the majority of the work will be done during the summer of 2014. This bridge, spanning 43 metres, will see an allocation of \$5.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, considerable work has already been done to upgrade and enhance the territory's airport facilities. Work in 2013-14 included completion of the new airport terminal building in Faro, a new taxi lane at the Mayo aerodrome, apron upgrades at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport and application of surface treatment to strengthen the Carmacks runway.

Our government worked with the Canadian Border Services Agency — CBSA — Holland America and Air North to facilitate a new CBSA facility in Dawson City to support expanded charter air service. The Whitehorse airport apron panel replacement project is receiving \$8.1 million to remove existing panels and construct new concrete apron panels. The federal government is providing \$6.4 million of this project under the airport's capital assistance program, provided the project is completed by October 31 of this year.

Work continues on the reconstruction and repaving of the secondary runway at the Whitehorse airport, which runs parallel to the main runway. The runway resurfacing project began last fall and is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2014, with an allocation of \$3 million. A further \$1.7 million is being provided at the Whitehorse airport to extend the current water and sewer system to the south end of the terminal. The work is scheduled to be completed this summer and \$550,000 is being provided to develop 10 more leased lots.

Mr. Speaker, a diversified economy is a strong economy. Sectors such as oil and gas, agriculture, forestry, value-added manufacturing, film and sound, communication and knowledge-based industries are all helping to diversify the Yukon economy. I've already mentioned the forest industry in southeast Yukon and a diverse fibre optic link route to the south, as well as 4G service to all Yukon communities.

Another source of diversification is Yukon's film and sound industry. From April 1, 2013, to February 28, 2014, 27 sound recording projects, valued at \$56,650, and 22 film projects, valued at \$669,513, were approved through the Film and Sound Commission programs. In addition, \$92,888 was provided to film and sound recording businesses during this time for marketing and development activities through the enterprise trade fund in support of individual Yukon artists. An investment of \$316,156 into the factual television series *Gold Rush* resulted in an approximate \$1.2-million expenditure in Yukon and over six months' employment for Yukoners in the Dawson area.

Similarly, an investment of \$17,275 by the Yukon Film and Sound Commission resulted in two full-time positions for Yukoners on the factual series *Yukon Gold* in the Dawson area. *Yukon Gold's* total Yukon expenditure for 2013-14 was approximately \$862,651. Economic diversification remains a priority for our government.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon government has approved a land use plan for the Peel watershed region, a guide for future use, a strong vision and goals for managing land and resources in the best interest of all Yukoners. It's a balanced plan for Yukon. It is a fact that successive Yukon Party governments have done more to protect and preserve the Yukon's environment and wildlife than any previous Yukon governments.

With the approval of the Peel watershed plan, Yukon now has the highest percentage of protected land in Canada, increasing its percentage from 12.68 to 16.9 percent. I want to commend all the government officials and stakeholders who put this plan together. It was truly a major undertaking.

The Peel watershed plan has many unique features. One of the most novel features are the restricted-use wilderness areas, or RUWAs, which represent 29,702 square kilometres, or 44 percent of the region. Access and activities will be allowed in these areas but subject to a surface disturbance of no more than 0.2 percent at any one time. That means that 99.8 percent are left undisturbed.

Permanently protected areas account for 19,800 square kilometres, or 29 percent of the region. In these areas, no new

land uses are allowed in order to protect significant ecological, wilderness and cultural values. A new type of park is being created — a wild river park — to protect the Wind, Bonnet Plume, Snake, Hart and Peel Rivers.

When the RUWAs and the protected areas are combined, there is 72.8 percent protection in the Peel watershed region. On an economic side, providing balance, there are integrated management areas — IMAs — which amount to 17,928 square kilometres, or 27 percent of the region. New and ongoing land uses and surface access may occur; however, different levels of IMA — IMA I to IMA IV — guide the amount of disturbance allowed, based on cumulative effects. This land use designation system allows government to manage multiple activities while protecting important areas.

While about 70 percent of the region is open to exploration and commercial opportunities, the actual surface disturbance caused by these activities will be minimal. Restricted use wilderness areas will have regulated surface access, air access coordination, notification for low-level or class 1 mineral exploration, and regulated off-road vehicle access.

Integrated management areas will allow access to natural resources with sustainable resource development. Protection of views along the river corridors will be provided by the wild river park designation and will provide benefits for tourism ventures. The plan respects and protects First Nation subsistence activities such as hunting and fishing throughout the region. The *Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* applies to public land. This comprises 97.3 percent of the region. The remaining 2.7 percent of the land is First Nation land and it will be up to those First Nations to determine the land use for their respective areas. All proposed development projects in the region must go through regulatory and permitting processes, including the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board.

Recreational activities remain unaffected by this plan. Existing mining claims are grandfathered in the protected areas. However, access to these grandfathered claims will be carefully managed. Staking is permitted in the integrated management areas and restricted use wilderness areas, but in the RUWAs, notification is required for class 1 or low-level activity on new and existing claims. The *Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* is a balanced plan that protects the environment and respects all sectors of the economy.

One of our government's platform commitments is to maintain an enhanced quality of Yukon's natural environment for present and future generations. Amendments to the *Environment Act* have been drafted and consulted on and will be presented to this House in this sitting.

Protection of the Porcupine caribou herd and the Fortymile caribou herd has always been high on our government's agenda. The MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin recently returned from Washington D.C. where he continued to convey the message about protecting the Porcupine caribou herd.

Proposed wildlife regulation amendments addressing Dempster Highway hunting are currently undergoing review by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. A draft

Fortymile caribou harvest management strategy has also been prepared and is currently under review.

Our government has placed a considerable focus on developing a Yukon water strategy with public consultation and a *What We Heard* document published in September 2013. The Yukon water strategy is available — is awaiting Cabinet approval and should be completed during this sitting.

The Yukon water strategy is designed to ensure Yukoners have access to safe drinking water through the rural domestic water well program and by other means, including the development of community wells, increasing data collection and information sharing, and upgrading drinking water and waste water treatment facilities in Yukon communities to meet new standards for water quality.

Approximately 28 projects are planned to be completed under the rural domestic well water program in 2013-2014 to ensure Yukoners have access to safe drinking water at a budgeted, recoverable cost of \$1 million.

Improvements have been completed to the public fill station at Rock Creek in the Klondike Valley, and work has been initiated for improvements to the fill station at Tagish and for new construction at Deep Creek.

A new waste-water system for Ross River will be designed in 2014-2015, with plans to have the facility operational in 2016.

An allocation of \$1 million has been provided for this purpose.

Numerous multi-year programs are being undertaken to improve water and waste-water systems throughout Yukon, totalling \$20.667 million in the 2014-15 investment. Our government is endeavouring to meet the target recommended by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee that Yukon develop a goal of zero waste with a target of 50-percent waste diversion by 2015. As a consequence, our government has completed a number of initiatives to meet this goal: establish recycling bins at all facilities; increase signage for various waste streams and provide interim funding support for recycling processors; contribute to the territory-wide zero waste campaign promoting recycling, reuse and the goal of zero waste; and allocate Building Canada fund money to the City of Whitehorse to enhance their compacting facility and continued plans to optimize the recycling system, enhance education and provide balers to recycling depots.

Our government has undertaken a review of the solid waste action plan, including a summary of initiatives completed to date and those underway, with suggestions on how to achieve a solid waste system that works for communities, protects the environment and is fiscally responsible. A total of \$3.41 million is being allocated in 2014-15 to implement solid waste management initiatives in Yukon communities.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is allocating \$1.113 million in 2014-15 to clean up the historical oil and gas well B-62 in order to have it permanently and safely closed this summer. The Department of Environment is endeavouring to construct two new campgrounds to enable Yukoners and our visitors alike to enjoy our great outdoors.

An allocation of \$1.484 million has been provided to construct a new campground at the north end of Atlin Lake comprised of 50 new camping sites. However, the Taku River Tlingit from British Columbia have initiated legal action to block this development. A second campground at Conrad, 16 kilometres south of Carcross, is proceeding as planned with the construction of 35 camping sites to be completed this fall. This project has been allocated \$734,000 and is identified in the *Carcross-Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* and is one of the projects identified in a recent MOU signed by the Yukon government and CTFN in December of 2013.

Mr. Speaker, achieving a better quality of life is an unending quest as our government strives to improve the lives of all Yukoners. One of the largest capital projects in the 2014-15 budget is the replacement of the F.H. Collins Secondary School with an allocation of \$27.7 million. Construction of the new school will begin this spring with an estimated completion date of fall 2015. This major capital project will yield substantial partnership, employment and business opportunities for Yukon businesses and workers. Right-sizing this project has resulted in a price tag \$17 million less than the original bid. An additional \$150,000 has been provided in 2014-15 for F.H. Collins furniture and equipment. We have also identified \$750,000 to replace the F.H. Collins six-lane track and regulation-size soccer field that currently exists where the new school is to be built.

School yards across the territory are going to experience playground equipment upgrades, with an allocation of \$1.4 million over two years.

Yukon Education is implementing a rural equity action plan with a goal of helping rural students stay in school and achieve better results. This plan features a number of initiatives, of which we are proud, such as: enhanced distance learning opportunities; shared resources; support for arts, trades and other speciality programs; specialization of teachers and opportunities for students from different communities to work together.

Yukon signed a landmark education agreement with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation that makes them partners in developing school curricula and programs within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in traditional territory. This agreement was made possible by the 17.7 provision of their self-government agreement and means a greater role for First Nations in the education of its citizens as part of a single integrated system.

I have already commented on the Centre for Northern Innovation and Mining. Yukon College has created a five-year program for CNIM to integrate and provide a venue for mining and exploration and relevant and industrial trades training programs within the territory.

The Department of Education is working with the Yukon Research Centre to develop a funding proposal that will work to meet the research needs of northerners. The Yukon Research Centre intends to obtain additional funding from and capitalize on existing relationships with research universities, technology, advanced companies and key funding agencies from Yukon, Canada and really from around the world.

Our government has contributed \$2.176 million to the Yukon Research Centre to operate for the last two fiscal years and has extended funding one year, pending a review of an evaluation report. The report is expected to support our government's commitment to continue funding through our renewed multi-year agreement.

The Department of Education is continuing to implement the labour market framework over a 10-year period, helping to ensure Yukoners have the workforce they need to keep the economy strong. Five strategies have been developed to achieve this objective: comprehensive skills and trades training; immigration; recruitment; employee retention; and labor market information.

Four stakeholder communities have been created to oversee the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of those strategies and the Advanced Education branch is also conducting an evaluation of settlement services and a review of the immigration strategy.

Yukon government has entered into a four-year labor market agreement for persons with disabilities with the federal government effective April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2018. The overarching goal is to improve the employment outcomes of persons with disabilities and \$1.25 million has been allocated in 2014-15 to help achieve this goal.

The Yukon government continues to lead the way in relation to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, FASD, with \$367,000 dollars being allocated in 2014-15 to conduct an FASD prevalence study.

The new arrest processing unit will open in April 2014 at a cost of \$4.98 million. It will alleviate overcrowding and manage vulnerable and intoxicated persons in a safe and humane environment.

In 2013, the victims fund agreement with Canada was extended to 2016 and provides \$500,000 dollars per year for three years to enhance services for victims of crime.

Starting in 2013, the Yukon government has committed \$75,000 dollars over three years to protect Yukoners from cyber-crime and Internet predators.

During the two-month CyberTip advertising campaign in early 2013, more than 2,000 Yukoners visited www.cybertip.ca, representing a major increase in average monthly visits from Yukon. Our government plans to roll out a new school-based awareness campaign in 2014.

The Women's Directorate continues to work with other governments and stakeholders to combat violence against women. Through federal-provincial-territorial initiatives of the Status of Women minister's forum, Yukon has worked on a joint publication *Measuring Violence Against Women* that includes a territorial fact sheet highlighting the unique dimensions of violence in northern Canada. The three territorial offices have worked collaboratively through this forum to develop northern-specific statistics and raise the issues of northern women to influence federal approaches and funding programs. The Government of Yukon has developed a domestic and sexual assault framework to strengthen a comprehensive response that will be shared with the other two territories when complete.

Our government is working actively to respond to the housing needs of Yukoners. One such need is the lack of affordable rental housing. Yukon Housing Corporation is tackling this need by leveraging the \$13.5 million from the northern housing trust. Proponents will cost-match their contributions to construct and operate affordable housing for a term of 10 years, with affordable being defined as less than 95 percent of the median market rent in that community. Developers can match Yukon Housing Corporation contributions up to a maximum of \$75,000 per unit. Accordingly, the total economic impact will be at least \$27 million and, based on job creation multipliers, it is anticipated that 93 direct and indirect construction-related jobs will be created.

The 34-unit Whitehorse seniors building replacing 207 Alexander Street is currently under construction, with a scheduled completion date late this summer. An allocation of \$4.718 million in 2014-15 has been made to complete this work. Another \$12 million is being provided in this budget to construct a new 48-unit seniors building in Whitehorse. A design/build public tender for construction for this facility will be issued in the near future. Work has begun to determine the suitability of the lot for the new, energy-efficient, six-unit Mayo seniors housing complex. The tender for this facility design was let on February 14 with an allocation of \$2.941 million, and the project is slated to begin construction this fall with expected completion in late summer of 2015.

On the other end of the age spectrum, the Executive Council Office is providing time-limited funding of \$140,000 annually for three years to the Heart of Riverdale to support family programming.

Yukon Housing Corporation is investing \$1.675 million to upgrade a number of social housing properties in 2014-15 as follows: \$250,000 for the design and installation of a sprinkler system in a 36-unit Greenwood seniors building; \$250,000 for the design and upgrade of air ventilation system in the 32-unit Closeleigh Manor seniors building in Whitehorse; \$250,000 to implement accessibility improvements in a number of seniors buildings in support of our tenants who want to remain in their homes; \$225,000 to proceed with the revitalization of five previously decommissioned social housing units in Ross River so that they can be used again for social housing clients; \$450,000 for reconfiguration of existing social housing units in rural Yukon so that additional units can be created; and \$250,000 to upgrade the six-plex in downtown Whitehorse as a result of the relocation of tenants to the new Options for Independence building that was completed on February 18, 2014.

Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to lead Yukon government's participation in the housing action plan with work in fiscal year 2014-15 focused on housing accommodations with additional services, rental housing and home ownership. Our government launched the down payment assistance program on March of 2013 to assist Yukoners to own their own homes. As of March 5, 2014, Yukon Housing Corporation has received 37 applications to this program and 28 applicants have been preapproved to

purchase their new homes. So far, Yukon Housing Corporation has provided over \$350,000 in loans resulting in new homes for 25 families. This creates more vacancy in the rental market. The 2014-15 budget contains up to \$1 million of funding for this program.

The home ownership preparedness and education program, or HOPE, is a made-in-Yukon educational program designed to assist first-time homebuyers with financial literacy specific to purchasing and maintaining a Yukon home. The HOPE program will launch this fall.

Mr. Speaker, in order to meet the housing needs of Yukoners, there has to be developed land. The Whistle Bend subdivision is the largest land development project ever undertaken in Yukon. Funding of \$2.8 million is being provided to wrap up phases 1 and 2 of the Whistle Bend subdivision and a further \$2 million is being allocated to advance the engineering design and begin clearing for phases 3 to 7.

In keeping with our government's land protocol with the City of Whitehorse, a two-year supply of developed residential land, including a variety of lot types, was achieved in 2013.

We have worked with municipal governments to make land available for residential and recreational lots and reached land development protocols with Dawson City and Watson Lake.

The Department of Health and Social Services is undertaking a number of major capital projects that will meet our 2011 election platform commitments and improve Yukoners' quality of life.

In 2014-15, our government will start on design work for phase 1 of a new 300-bed continuing care facility and anticipate completing most of the design process this year. Funding of \$6.9 million in 2014-15 has been allocated for phase 1 design, which will include an initial 150 beds with a capacity to expand by an additional 150 beds as required in the future.

Beginning in 2014-15, the Yukon Hospital Corporation will receive \$1.418 million for ongoing funding as part of a three-year agreement, including an escalator amount for the Watson Lake and Whitehorse hospitals, and new base funding for chemotherapy drugs. There will also be one-time funding of \$405,000 for blood products and other provisional costs.

A functional plan for the replacement of the St. Elias group home was completed in 2013, and \$1.235 million is being provided in 2014-15 to move to the planning and design phase of the building process.

Subject to the Salvation Army's capital planning and funding process, Yukon government will be proceeding to design for an expanded and improved Salvation Army facility, which will include additional shelter beds and new transitional housing. Our government is investing \$3.475 million in 2014-15 for this project.

Our commitment to replace McDonald Lodge in Dawson City is also being actioned.

In addition to the \$7.021 million, which was re-profiled from 2013-2014, our government is adding \$3.4 million in

new funding to allow for an expanded design option for the new facility and for an enclosed walkway between the Dawson City hospital and the new McDonald Lodge.

The Department of Health and Social Services is proceeding with another platform commitment to replace the Sarah Steele Building. The conceptual design of the Sarah Steele replacement project has been completed. The project is proceeding to schematic design, which will be completed this spring. Tender documents will be prepared for February, 2015 and construction completed in the summer of 2016.

The new facility will allow for increased detox and residential treatment spaces, the addition of transitional beds, and a youth program. Funding of \$1.284 million is being provided for this phase of the project.

Continued funding for the operation of the Referred Care Clinic, another platform commitment, has been approved to 2015-2016, with program evaluation and determination of ongoing funding requirements to follow. Funding of \$764,000 is being provided in 2014-2015, and a nurse-practitioner will be incorporated in the facility this year.

Our government provided \$750,000 in 2013-2014 to the Food Bank Society for a down payment on the AFY building. In 2014-2015, we will continue to support negotiations toward a final sale between l'Association franco-yukonnaise and the Food Bank Society.

Health and Social Services continues to be a national leader in addressing FASD issues. Work is continuing on developing local capacity for diagnosis and assessment of adults with FASD through a team approach.

We are establishing integrated case management processes and increasing understanding among the departments and partners of FASD. We can then better serve clients and respond in a coordinated fashion to their needs.

Health and Social Services has supported the Justice FASD Prevalence Study within the correctional population and has increased its financial support to Options for Independence to operate their new 14-unit facility. The Government of Yukon will provide an additional \$2.775 million to the Yukon Hospital Corporation in 2014-15, pending legislative approval, to build a temporary home for the Whitehorse General Hospital's new magnetic resonance imaging or MRI scanner. The construction of a permanent MRI suite is linked to the expansion of the Whitehorse General Hospital emergency department. We are concerned that the MRI service would not be available for four to five years if it waited for a permanent home.

In April of 2013, the Department of Health and Social Services completed an extensive analysis of Yukon government's childcare initiatives, specifically the childcare subsidy program and the direct operating grant. Yukon childcare subsidy was created to assist low- and moderate-income families with the costs of licenced childcare in Yukon.

This subsidy is a benefit for all eligible families and there is no cap on the number of subsidised spaces. We have committed to adjusting all three of the elements used while determining eligibility for the subsidy, which will increase childcare assistance for all income groups. While the greatest

impact will be on the lower income families, overall more families will be eligible for this subsidy.

Mr. Speaker, community infrastructure plays a key role in contributing to Yukoners quality of life. The Department of Community Services will be signing a bilateral agreement with the Public Health Agency of Canada. They will be providing \$300,000 annually for four years for a healthy living program and priorities identified in the Yukon active living strategy and wellness plan development by Health and Social Services.

As noted in the opening address, there is a 10-year new Building Canada fund and Canada and Yukon will be holding discussions on the parameters of this \$257 million fund. Building Canada funds under the old agreement have been secured and fully expended for the following road projects around the territory: \$8 million for the Atlin Road upgrades; \$1 million for Beaver Creek road upgrades; \$1.7 million for the Flat Creek bridge rehabilitation; \$4 million for Old Crow road upgrades; \$32.06 million for Robert Campbell Highway upgrades; and \$1.5 million for Teslin road and drainage upgrades.

The Government of Yukon-led Whitehorse waterfront revitalization project received this year's Canadian Urban Institute's annual Brownie Award, which represents excellence in leadership, innovation and environmental sustainability by transforming brownfields. A brownfield is land previously used that has the potential to be cleaned up or upgraded in some way.

Since 2006, the governments of Canada and Yukon have invested \$33.3 million under the Canadian strategic infrastructure fund. Additional investments of \$8.1 million from the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, and more than \$1.4 million from the City of Whitehorse have further revitalized the Whitehorse waterfront. I believe all members of this House will agree with me that this money was well-spent.

Fire is an ever-present hazard that threatens the lives of Yukoners and Yukon communities. In order to combat this threat, last fiscal year, our government purchased the mobile live fire training unit, with an allocation of \$765,000

In order to combat this threat, last fiscal year our government purchased a mobile live fire training unit with an allocation of \$765,000. This unit has been deployed in Faro, Watson Lake, Whitehorse and to the FMO regional Fire Marshal's Office regional training centre at Golden Horn fire department and has trained over 100 firefighters, including myself and the minister. It was a good experience.

Firefighters need equipment to fight fires and our government has been willing to oblige. In the last two years, a total of \$750,000 has been spent on three new pumper tankers for Hootalinqua, Ibex Valley and Golden Horn. Two new fire trucks valued at \$610,000 will be purchased and will be deployed in Ibex Valley and Tagish. The replaced vehicles will be going to Burwash Landing and Mendenhall to upgrade the capacity of response in those areas.

When you purchase fire trucks and equipment, you need a place to put that equipment. Construction of a new fire hall in Beaver Creek is set to begin this spring with an allocation of

\$3.368 million. Similarly, \$393,000 is being provided to plan and design a new Carcross fire hall in 2014-15 with \$3.8 million for construction the next year. Beginning in 2014-15, funding of \$588,000 over two years has been secured to provide enhanced storage space for five community search and rescue teams.

Flooding in some communities is another potential threat. Emergency Measures Organization is coordinating the Yukon flood risk mapping project over the next two years, beginning in 2014-15, utilizing approximately \$300,000 of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development corporation's climate change adaptation fund.

Sports and recreation play an important role in promoting a better quality of life for Yukoners. Our government is proud to support the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in building a community centre in Old Crow, with a contribution of \$2.7 million to add to the funds being contributed by the Vuntut Gwitchin government itself and hopefully funds from the Government of Canada, in a partnership involving all three governments.

The sport bilateral with Sport Canada was increased by \$180,000 to assist Team Yukon travelling to the recent 2014 Arctic Winter Games in Fairbanks, Alaska, and the North American Indigenous Games in Regina, Saskatchewan. Our government was proud to support Emily Nishikawa as an elite athlete developing in Yukon for many years, culminating this year with her selection to Team Canada for cross country skiing at the Sochi Olympic Winter Games.

Yukon will be sending the largest team ever of over 140 athletes to the 55+ Games in late August in Strathcona County, Alberta. Community Services has contributed \$50,000 in 2013-14 and a further \$100,000 in 2014-15 to enable Softball Yukon to host its third world championship this July. The department also contributed \$323,000 to ensure the continued operation of Mount Sima, through funding to the new operating society, Friends of Sima. This support will provide recreational use and also an important training centre for three Yukon sports that call Mount Sima home.

Our government is providing \$150,000 to enable Team Yukon to attend the Canada Winter Games in February 2015 in Prince George, and a further \$100,000 over the next two fiscals to Team Yukon to attend Western Canada Summer Games in August 2015 in Fort McMurray.

Mr. Speaker, practising good governance is the hallmark of the Yukon Party government administrations. We practice open, accountable, fiscally responsible and cooperative governance. The 2014-15 budget is another example of this continuing practice.

Practising good governance means implementing cooperative governance and forming partnerships. One of the most important collaboration ventures I have already mentioned is Canada's review of the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*. Our government provided its comments on the proposed changes and attended two technical reviews hosted by Canada. We are currently reviewing the draft legislative amendments and note that there are a number of positive proposed changes.

Canada also provided the draft legislative YESAA amendments to Yukon First Nation governments, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board. Once our internal analysis is complete, we will provide our written comments to Canada by April 23, 2014.

The sixth annual First Nation Governance and Capacity Development Conference: Strategic Opportunities, co-hosted with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Council of Yukon First Nations, was held February 5 and 6 of this year. In 2013, the Government of Yukon renewed its intergovernmental accords with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Kluane First Nation. Bilateral discussions are underway to renew accords with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and with Na Cho Nyäk Dun, as well as establish new accords with other Yukon First Nations that are interested. Those accords provide a practical way for governments to work together on key joint initiatives.

Yukon government's Executive Council Office Aboriginal Relations is in the process of hiring two key positions — a consultation advisor in the policy and consultation unit to assist the Government of Yukon to more effectively manage consultation with both settled and non-settled First Nations, and a senior advisor in the First Nation Relations and Capacity Development unit, who will be responsible for supporting other departments to develop, implement and analyze agreements, accords, policies and other initiatives related to First Nations.

There are informal government-to-government meetings with the Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation chiefs in preparation for future Yukon and intergovernmental forums.

Yukon, Canada and the Council of Yukon First Nations have reached an agreement on the *Umbrella Final Agreement* implementation plan, which provides secure funding for UFA boards and committees for a 10-year period. The respective parties have also reached an improved funding arrangement for the renewable resources councils.

Our government is working with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation to develop a new campground near the historic Conrad townsite on Tagish Lake's Windy Arm to help meet the growing demand for recreational opportunities near Whitehorse. We are proposing to spend \$734,000 on this project this summer.

A new resource royalty sharing agreement has been reached with eight of the self-governing First Nations. This arrangement builds on the resource revenue sharing provisions of chapter 23 of the Yukon First Nations' final agreements and enables self-governing First Nations to share up to an additional \$4.7 million under this initiative.

Our government is working closely with Yukon First Nations and Canada to determine options for addressing First Nation concerns related to registering land under the *Land Titles Act*.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of where the Yukon government and Yukon First Nation governments are

working collaboratively and cooperatively together. There are many, many, many more.

Mr. Speaker, practising good governance means meeting the needs of Yukon's francophone community. In 2013-14, we invested \$289,000 to enhance French language services within the Yukon government. This allowed us to launch French language services at three pilot sites within the home care program, the specialists' clinic at Whitehorse General Hospital and insured health services. The French Language Services Directorate also worked with the Yukon French community to develop a strategic plan that will guide our efforts for the next four years. From this plan in 2014-15, we intend to expand our pilot projects to other service points in Whitehorse, as well as Dawson City. An additional \$157,000 will be invested toward this initiative.

Practising good governance means developing and passing appropriate legislation and regulations. The Department of Community Services is conducting a phased review of the *Municipal Act* in consideration of the findings of the "Our Towns, Our Future" report and will conduct one more consultation with municipalities in the summer of 2014. This holds the ultimate objective of tabling the legislation in the spring of 2015. In February of 2014, the Department of Justice asked the public to comment on amendments to the *Fatal Accidents Act*. These changes being considered will allow Yukoners the right to seek bereavement damage when a close family member is killed and where another person is at fault.

The land titles modernization project completed phase 1 in 2002. The project is now in phase 2, identifying options for an appropriate computer system and business and processes. The aim is to table a new *Land Titles Act* in the fall of 2014. Amendments to the *Condominium Act* are also underway for tabling in the fall of 2014.

Practising good governance means providing the public service with the necessary facilities and equipment to deliver effective programs and services to Yukoners. The Department of Environment is planning to design and construct a new Watson Lake district office, with an allocation of \$1.845 million in 2014-15. The building will house the conservation office, field unit, fish and wildlife regional management, animal health programming, Yukon parks, equipment and garage bays, and animal handling space.

The Department of Justice is planning to replace the Faro RCMP detachment, addressing the unique public safety needs of that community and the surrounding area. The budget provides \$318,000 in capital funding in 2014-15.

Practising good governance means being power smart. The Department of Highways and Public Works is using Power Smart to reduce the energy used by each individual computer and has reduced its energy consumption by 292,521 kilowatt hours per year, or about \$37,73 annually. ICT has begun working with other departments to expand the Power Smart initiative across Yukon government, which could potentially reduce the government's electrical consumption by an additional estimated 1.78 million kilowatt hours, or about \$292,300 annually.

Practising good governance means protecting and preserving our historical records. The Department of Tourism and Culture is providing \$879,000 for designing an archive vault expansion to increase storage space for paper records, to create a separate cold-storage unit for photographs and film, and a special vault for storage of digital records.

Practising good governance means exploring options to utilize technology to make more government services available on-line or improve existing services. The Department of Health and Social Services is planning to develop Yukon's own electronic health system rather than attach our health system to one outside Yukon. This will ensure that we maintain control of our own health information records and will give us greater flexibility to control the technologies and determine future system developments. A side benefit from this project will be an increase in Yukon's local IT industry and capacity.

The Department of Highways and Public Works is in the process of hiring a director of e-services in order to improve e-services throughout the Yukon government. Currently our government offers on-line ability to renew vehicle registrations perform lien searches, access student financial assistance and transcripts, download e-audio books and review tender documents.

We are planning to expand this growing list this year by adding new on-line services: angling licences, camping permits, search for companies and other legal entities, including document filing using Yukon corporation on-line registry, and new multi-jurisdictional personal property security registry.

Practising good governance means being open, accountable and fiscally prudent. The decision by our government to build a redesigned F.H. Collins School is still one of the best examples of fiscal prudence, saving \$17 million.

The inclusion of a multi-year capital plan enables Yukon's private sector contractors to plan ahead. We are committed to stable, predictable investments in key sectors of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, Canada as a country started with the vision of Sir John A. Macdonald, who imagined Canada stretching from east to west. It was Prime Minister John Diefenbaker who first articulated a new vision for Canada — the Canada of the north. In his northern vision address, Prime Minister Diefenbaker stated, "We will open that northland for development by improving transportation and communication and by the development of power, by the building of access roads. We will make an inventory of our hydroelectric potential."

The current Conservative government in Ottawa is continuing this tradition. The Speech from the Throne in 2011 states: "Our Government is committed to developing Canada's extraordinary resource wealth in a way that protects the environment. It will support major new clean energy projects of national or regional significance, such as the planned Lower Churchill hydroelectricity project in Atlantic Canada."

Much of Canada's extraordinary resource wealth is located north of 60 degrees, particularly in Yukon. Clean, affordable hydroelectricity is required to unlock its potential.

Canada's northern strategy continues the Conservative government's nation-building legacy with a focus on four priority areas: exercising Arctic sovereignty, promoting social and economic development, protecting the north's environmental heritage, and improving and devolving northern governance so that northerners have a greater say in their own destiny. The federal government's commitment of \$200 million under the economic action plan for the construction of the extension of the Dempster Highway from Inuvik to Tuktoyuktuk is fulfilling Prime Minister Diefenbaker's northern vision. With the completion of this undertaking, Canadians will have road access from sea to sea to sea.

The next step is implementing Diefenbaker's northern vision in Yukon, involving the development of power. The development of clean, affordable energy is the biggest single impediment to unlocking Yukon's resource wealth. Hydropower has played a major role in Yukon's history over the last century, and it is key to Yukon's future development. Electrical power generation in the territory has almost gone hand-in-hand with mining.

The Government of Canada, through the Northern Canada Power Commission, or NCPC, has been the central player in building and operating the territory's hydro facilities from 1950 to 1987. All of Yukon's present-day major hydro dams were built by NCPC.

The Mayo dam was opened in 1952 to serve the Keno and Elsa mines. This 2.5-megawatt facility was expanded in 1957 to 5.1 megawatts. NCPC began construction of the Whitehorse Rapids dam in 1956 to provide electricity for Whitehorse. Initially the plant produced 11 megawatts, expanded to 19.5 megawatts in 1966 and then to 40 megawatts in 1985. The 1966 expansion was due in large part to the Faro mine and included construction of a transmission line from Whitehorse to Faro. In 1974, the 30-megawatt Aishihik Lake hydro dam was developed to keep pace with rising electrical demand in Yukon. Thanks to the federal government's support through the green infrastructure fund in 2009, the upgraded Mayo dam, known as Mayo B, has more than doubled the amount of energy that can be generated from that facility from five megawatts to approximately 15 megawatts. Mayo B started feeding power into the power grid at the end of 2011. As part of this initiative, the Carmacks-Stewart transmission project stage 2 connected Yukon's two established hydro-based transmission grids. The total cost of these two projects was \$160 million with up to \$71 million contributed by the federal government. Similarly, the capacity of the Aishihik dam was increased by seven megawatts in 2011 through the addition of a third turbine using \$5 million from the federal government's eco-trust fund.

Mr. Speaker, these three dams — Mayo, Whitehorse and Aishihik — together with their upgrades, have served Yukoners well over the last 50 years and created an enduring legacy. Today, over 95 percent of all electricity consumed

annually in Yukon is from hydro power. The days of having an adequate supply of hydro power, however, are numbered. Accordingly, our government has funded \$2 million to the Yukon Development Corporation and directed them to develop a plan for one or more hydroelectric projects that will meet our expected long-term demand for power.

The impetus to pursue additional hydrogenation in Yukon is driven by two factors. First is the desire to meet future residential and commercial demand growth with clean, affordable hydro as opposed to fossil fuels. Expanded hydro ensures that the proportion of electricity generated from renewable sources in Yukon is maintained. Second is the goal to facilitate development, particularly mining, through an increased supply of price-predictable, clean power.

Just as in the past, mining will continue to stimulate economic development in Yukon and, as such, will remain a central driver of territorial hydroelectricity development.

Yukon has some potential world-class mines. The Casino project near Carmacks would be Yukon's largest mine to date. The project has an estimated minimum 23-year mine life, or likely 50 years, and will require over 100 megawatts of power. The Selwyn project located in Howard's Pass area in eastern Yukon on the border with the Northwest Territories has the potential of becoming the largest lead-zinc mine in the world. The project will likely have similar power demands as Casino. Proponents of both these projects, among others, have identified a deficit of abundant and affordable power as a hurdle to their project's development.

Yukon's current total capacity from all sources — hydro, diesel and wind — is only 147.6 megawatts. Most mining companies in Yukon today are planning to utilize liquefied natural gas to meet their power needs. Hydro power would be much cleaner and more affordable and increase the viability of many existing and future mining operations.

In recognition of the substantial local, regional and national benefits of an abundant supply of clean, affordable hydro power in Yukon, we are urging the Canadian government to become involved at this early stage to help us plan for the development of one or more hydroelectric sites.

Mr. Speaker, there are good reasons for the Government of Canada to continue to invest in the development of hydroelectric projects in Yukon. Such an investment would be in keeping with Canada's northern strategy in relation to two of the four priority areas — promoting social and economic development and protecting the North's environmental heritage. Yukon has enjoyed the lowest GHG emissions per capita in Canada, largely because of the renewable-based electric generating system — 10.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year per person in 2013.

Utilizing hydro power rather than diesel or LNG to meet Yukon's growing electrical demand for both industrial and residential commercial demand would allow this trend to continue. Such an investment is also in keeping with the nation-building tradition of the federal government and the northern vision legacy of Prime Minister Diefenbaker. The history of hydro development in Yukon clearly shows that this is a beneficial investment for Canada to make.

The most compelling reason for the Government of Canada to invest in the hydroelectric development in Yukon is that Canada, as the owner of all the land and resources in the territory, will be the major economic benefactor of this development. The construction of a major hydroelectric dam in the territory, together with the ultimate construction of a connected electrical grid ties with British Columbia and Alaska, are a nation-building enterprise in keeping with Canada's northern strategy that should involve both the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. Such a noble enterprise will be a tremendous benefit to Yukoners and to all Canadians and will help set the territory's economic agenda for the next 50 years.

The 2014-15 budget continues the pathway to prosperity we set out in our 2011 platform, "Moving Forward Together". This is the third budget of our current mandate — a mid-term report, if you like. We are proud of what we have accomplished to date and the good news is that there are more accomplishments to come. Step-by-step, budget-by-budget, we are achieving what we set out to do: to make Yukon the best place in Canada to live.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all of the ministers and their staff for the work that they've done to help put the budget together and, of course, special recognition as well to the Department of Finance and the excellent job that they have done.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the 2014-15 budget to all Members of this House. May God bless Yukon, may God bless Canada and God Save the Queen.

Motion to adjourn debate

Ms. Hanson: I move that debate be now adjourned.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition that debate be now adjourned.

Motion to adjourn debate on second reading of Bill No. 14 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The following Sessional Papers were tabled March 25, 2014:

33-1-109

Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly — 2014: Yukon Family and Children's Services — Department of Health and Social Services (Speaker Laxton)

33-1-110

Report from the Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on the Absence of Members from Sittings of the Legislative Assembly and its Committees (March 25, 2014) (Speaker Laxton)

33-1-111

Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees 10th Report (February 17, 2014) (Hassard)