



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Thursday, April 16, 2015 — 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 Tourism and Culture; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, April 16, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: To start, the Chair wishes to inform the House of a change that has been made to the Order Paper.

Motion No. 886, standing in the name of the Minister of Justice, has been removed from the Order Paper at the request of the minister.

The Chair also wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 925, notice of which was given yesterday by the Member for Watson Lake, was not placed on today's Notice Paper as it is the same as Motion No. 898, which is already on the Order Paper.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Yukon Schools' Athletic Association annual wrestling tournament

Hon. Mr. Graham: It is indeed a great pleasure for me today to rise in the House on behalf of all members to pay tribute to the Yukon Schools' Athletic Association annual wrestling tournament, which took place yesterday on April 15 at the Canada Games Centre. For my colleagues in the Legislature who didn't have the chance to witness more than 550 students come together in friendly, but often serious, competition, let me paint you a little picture.

Competitors came from 16 schools across Yukon to test their skills on the mat. This year the tournament just continues to grow, as students from St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction were also welcomed to the competition. Eighteen mats were in action to accommodate about 1,400 wrestling bouts in one day. The Canada Games Centre was filled with crowds cheering on their classmates, friends, siblings and children. When the last wrestler was pinned, participants received medals in about 85 weight classes.

The overall team banner for total score was awarded to Christ the King Elementary, and the best performing team, with the highest points per wrestler, went to Ghùch Tlâ Community School of Carcross.

Fresh from competition, I would like all members to join me in welcoming here today several competitors: Gage Albertini, Bryn Studney-Amos, Brandon Nadeau, Miles Telfry, Zared Netro, Zakayla Netro, Paris Legault, Payton Mason, Eugenie Champerval, Paige Stockley, Joshua Rafter and Konrad Simpson. Welcome, all of you, to the Legislature.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Graham: The competitors I have just named are accompanied by Ted Hupé and his staff from Holy Family who have accompanied the students here today. Thank you, student athletes, for your good sportsmanship, for your hours of training for the competition, and for giving it your all. I know everyone, even those who didn't get a medal, was a winner yesterday.

My thanks also to the volunteer referees who kept the young wrestlers safe. It's encouraging to me, as a referee myself, to see former elementary school wrestlers and coaches return to help out.

Thank you to the Yukon Schools' Athletic Association and the team at Holy Family Elementary School, working with coordinator Ted Hupé, for undertaking this logistical feat to provide Yukon students with an opportunity to engage in an inclusive and rewarding sport.

Wrestling is an easy sport to understand and everyone can do it. No one is too big or, as you can see from some of the competitors, too little to compete.

Olympic wrestler Dan Gable said, "More enduringly than any other sport, wrestling teaches self-control and pride. Some have wrestled without great skill – none have wrestled without pride." Students develop a strong physical base, self-confidence, discipline, perseverance and respect for their opponents. These qualities transfer from the mat to their lives.

The wrestling tournament illustrates how Yukon school sports programs provide excellent experiential learning opportunities to all of our students. Physical activities like wrestling help students develop important skills and keep them engaged and energized. Students don't just grapple with their opponents; they grapple with winning and losing, goal-setting and problem-solving. The skills they learn in sport and in friendly competition are truly skills for life.

Yukon schools demonstrated what can be achieved when we work together by bringing together so many students from across the territory for this wrestling tournament. Congratulations to all of the students who competed, representing their schools and communities and showing the true spirit of sport.

I would just like to take the opportunity, as I have mentioned a couple of times, about the difficulty that Ross River students are experiencing in their day-to-day school because of the problems with their building. I would like everyone here to know that there were four students, I believe, from Ross River School who trained throughout the spring break with their instructor on almost a daily basis so that they could stay in condition to come to this wrestling competition. I think it is an absolutely wonderful example of, first of all, a teacher showing that kind of dedication and the students showing the dedication to their sport as well.

Again, thank you to all the coaches for training, encouraging and supporting these students, to the staff who organized this great event, to the families who have cheered on our students at home and in the stands, and to the volunteers — not only the referees, but the on-site

coordinators. Mr. Speaker, I'm already looking forward to next year's competition, so thank you very much.

In recognition of Law Day

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Today it gives me pleasure to rise in recognition of Law Day, which celebrates the 33rd anniversary of the signing of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Law Day recognizes the anniversary of the proclamation of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which was signed on April 17, 1982.

In honour of this milestone, the Canadian Bar Association introduced Law Day in 1983 as a way to commemorate the *Canadian Charter of Rights of Freedoms*, which built on the foundation of the *Canadian Bill of Rights* brought forth by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker in 1960.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker stated that a bill of rights was needed to take a forthright stand against discrimination based on colour, creed or racial origin. The *Canadian Bill of Rights* protects numerous rights, including the right to life, liberty and security of person, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, equality rights, rights to fundamental justice and rights to counsel. Those rights are reflected in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which we are celebrating here today.

I would be remiss if I did not note the flaw in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which is the failure to include an important part from the Diefenbaker bill of rights, that being the right to own property and to have that protected in a constitution, which was also supported in the Legislative Assembly through a motion passed on November 24, 1982, moved by Andrew A. Philipsen, after whom our Law Centre is named.

That motion read: "that the Legislative Assembly of Yukon support the resolution passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia on Tuesday, September 21, 1982, respecting an amendment to Section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* so that it would read as follows: '7. Everyone has the right to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice', and urge the legislative assemblies of all other jurisdictions and the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada to adopt similar resolutions."

I will also quote briefly from Mr. Philipsen of that day in recognition of his commitment and of the importance of this matter. Mr. Philipsen noted that it is of paramount importance that the Assembly express support for the inclusion of property rights in the Canadian Constitution and that section 7 of the present *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is seriously deficient in not including within its provisions the right to the enjoyment of property.

It is also important to note and acknowledge that the *Canadian Bill of Rights* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* were not the foundation of the principles of legal rights within our Canadian democracy. They owe their existence and their roots to other important and revolutionary

legal documents, notably the *Magna Carta*, which celebrates its 800th anniversary this year, having been created in 1215.

The *Magna Carta* and its companion document, *The Charter of the Forest*, set the very groundwork for many concepts that continue to define democratic life today. As symbols of justice, they also act as powerful reminders that those who govern do so only by the consent of the people.

The *Magna Carta* is widely viewed as one of the most important legal documents in the history of democracy as there are many enduring principles of liberty that still resonate with and inspire people today. Some examples of the principles that never lose their relevance are key concepts of the *Magna Carta*, which include: nobody is above the law of the land; the right of habeas corpus, being the freedom from unlawful detention without cause or evidence and the right of trial by jury. Early women's rights were acknowledged within the *Magna Carta*, although have been wisely expanded significantly since that time. The reference in the *Magna Carta* included that a widow could not be forced to marry and give up her property.

The companion document to the *Magna Carta*, *The Charter of the Forest*, which was originally issued in 1217, held up the values of universal human rights, which set out protections for the common man and the protection of the commons, which set clear limits to the privatization and importance of stewardship for shared resources.

I should note that the *Magna Carta* actually began its life as a peace treaty — a treaty that has motivated countries, people, whole movements and effected change. This document holds a place in our collective hearts as a first in a series of instruments that are recognized as having special constitutional status. I should note that even democracies such as the United States use the *Magna Carta* as an important part and building block of the American constitution.

This year on June 12, 2015, the *Magna Carta* will be coming to Canada and will remain here in various locations until December 29, 2015. The document will be in Ottawa-Gatineau from June 12 to July 26. It will be in Winnipeg from August 15 to September 18, in Toronto from October 4 to November 7, and in Edmonton from November 23 until December 29.

Today we also celebrate educating the public about the legal system, the legal profession, as well as the legal institutions that form the cornerstones of Canadian democracy. Law Day empowers the public at large through a variety of celebrations and activities that bring awareness to the importance of our evolving law, the history of our law and the administration of justice.

This year, Law Day celebrates the 30th anniversary of section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* coming into force. That section guarantees that the rights of individuals are equal before and under the law and that individuals have the rights to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability. All Canadians play an important part in upholding

the charter, and I would thank some of those who play an important role in this in the Yukon, including: Yukon First Nations, for providing responsive programs and services to support citizens and families who are engaged in the justice system; Yukon Legal Services Society, which is Yukon's legal aid provider, for ensuring that low-income, vulnerable and disadvantaged Yukoners have access to justice by providing quality legal services for matters mandated under the charter and by providing advice and representation in areas such as employment insurance, social assistance benefits, and landlord and tenant issues through its Neighbourhood Law Centre; the Yukon Human Rights Commission, for their dedication to addressing human rights and promoting equality and diversity through research, education and enforcement of the Yukon *Human Rights Act*; members of other boards and committees for hearing and reviewing justice-related matters; and the many organizations like the Yukon Public Legal Education Association, the Law Society of Yukon, transition homes, and women's shelters — and the list goes on — who provide legal information and services, facilitate increased access to the justice system and advocate for the legal rights of Yukoners.

In addition to the people I have mentioned, those who protect the rights under the charter also include the RCMP for their work in preventing and investigating crime, maintaining peace and order in enforcing laws, and Department of Justice staff who play a very important role in making sure that Yukon's justice system is accessible, administered well — and their work in continuing to enhance and improve programs and services for individuals navigating the justice system.

One of the most recent examples of this includes the partnership of the Department of Justice and the Women's Directorate through our recent announcement of funding for a new women's legal advocate position that will help meet the needs of women navigating the legal system and ensure that they are made better aware of the supports available to them as well as their rights within the system. The women's legal advocate position is intended to provide timely support and legal information to help women understand their legal options, their rights, the implications of certain choices and justice system processes. This initiative will also provide legal system training for service providers working with women to help victims of crime get access to initiate legal consultation and increase collaboration between agencies.

Navigating the justice system can be difficult, especially when trying to address matters that may require consideration of criminal, family, child protection, poverty, mental health and human rights law. We are optimistic that this new position — I should note and acknowledge the work done by the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues in developing the proposal for that position, which flowed out of the recommendations from *Sharing Common Ground* — will be an important complement to the supports available for women and will help those navigating the justice system to better understand and be in a better position to address matters that may require consideration of criminal, family, child

protection, poverty, mental health and human rights law. We look forward to working in the next steps of this initiative.

I should also note that on May 1, the Yukon branch of the Canadian Bar Association will host and celebrate the 25th annual Law Day Charity Fun Run and Walk in Whitehorse. Co-founded by Justice's very own Deputy Minister Tom Ulyett and local lawyer Dan Shier, this run continues to not only bring the community together to celebrate Law Day, but also provides a charitable donation to local organizations that are helping to make the Yukon a better place.

This year's event's proceeds will benefit the Yukon Association for Community Living. For more than 50 years, the Yukon Association for Community Living has been advocating for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. The Yukon Association for Community Living works hard to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities have the right and ability to live in our communities as respected and responsible citizens. I encourage Yukoners to run or walk in support of this worthy organization and in honour of Law Day. The run and walk this year will start at noon from the visitor information centre and follow the Millennium Trail along the Yukon River. Registration is available at Sport Yukon until April 29 and on race day at the visitor information centre.

Sincere thanks to the Canadian Bar Association for planning this annual event and thank you for the opportunity to pay tribute to Law Day. In closing, let me express my personal thanks to the many people, throughout the 800 years since the Magna Carta's inception, who have contributed to the principles that we all benefit from here today and the protection of the rights within Canadian society that too often we take for granted.

Mr. Silver: It is with great pleasure that I rise today on behalf of the Liberal Party and the Official Opposition to pay tribute to Law Day and the anniversary of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Law Day was created by the Canadian Bar Association as a national day to mark the one-year anniversary of the signing of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It also provides an opportunity for those in the legal profession to educate the general public on Canada's legal system. It was 33 years ago that the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was signed into effect, enacting one of the strongest and most far-reaching pieces of our constitution. It was also on this day that patriating the Canadian Constitution formally took place, another landmark moment.

Canadians pride themselves on our diversity, multiculturalism and far-reaching rights that we have given to all our citizens. Prior to the enactment of the charter, unfair laws could have been enacted by a legislature with no formal complaint process. The charter ensured that individuals would be protected regardless of the values of the government of the day and still sees many existing laws get challenged in the Supreme Court. The charter puts our individual freedoms into the Constitution.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has become the hallmark of what a modern bill of rights should look like and has been used by many other countries as a basis for their own charters. This piece of legislation would not have been possible if it were not for the efforts of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and his then Justice Minister, Jean Chrétien.

Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute privilege to stand before you today and to pay tribute to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and to thank those who made it possible.

In recognition of World Hemophilia Day

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On behalf all members, tomorrow is World Hemophilia Day and I would like to take this opportunity to ask my colleagues in the House to stop for a minute on Friday and think of all those individuals who live with inherited bleeding disorders.

The World Federation of Hemophilia reports that 6.9 million people have a bleeding disorder and 75 percent of them don't know it. How many of those 6.9 million might live here in the Yukon? Yukon is not exempt from this disorder and there are citizens living here with hemophilia.

Hemophilia is a bleeding problem. People with hemophilia do not bleed any faster than normal, but they can bleed for a longer time because their blood doesn't have enough clotting factor, the protein in the blood that controls bleeding. They can also experience spontaneous bleeding in joints, muscles or other parts of their body. There are various types of bleeding disorders.

Hemophilia is quite rare, affecting one in every 10,000 people, and the most severe forms affect almost only males. Women can be affected if conditions are right: a father with hemophilia and a mother who is a carrier. A person born with hemophilia will usually have it for life. Typically it is not something that can develop later in life if a person is not born with the disorder.

The theme for this year's annual recognition day is "Building a family of support". Work internationally is aimed at building that family for individuals living with bleeding disorders. Families come in many shapes and sizes, but they all share the ability to support and advocate. World Hemophilia Day provides us an opportunity to talk with extended family and friends, colleagues and caregivers to raise awareness and increase supports for those living with an inherited bleeding disorder.

Tomorrow in 122 countries individuals and groups will rise to raise awareness of hemophilia and other inherited blood disorders. This is all part of a critical process to ensure better diagnosis and access to care. Ultimately it is about improving people's lives. I hope we all pause tomorrow. Thank you.

In recognition of International Day for Monuments and Sites

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I rise today to pay tribute to the International Day for Monuments and Sites, sometimes referred to as World Heritage Day.

In 1982, it was suggested that a day be established to celebrate the diversity of heritage throughout the globe. This project was approved by the International Council on Monuments and Sites at their symposium in Tunisia. This international council is made up of a network of experts, including architects, historians, archaeologists, art historians, geographers, anthropologists, engineers and town planners. It has over 9,000 members in 144 countries, including Canada.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the council. Canada is an active member of the International Council on Monuments and Sites. In fact, two Yukoners sit on that Canadian board, including our own manager of Historic Sites in the Department of Tourism and Culture.

The purpose of this international day is to raise awareness of the world's diversity of cultural heritage and the efforts to try to preserve it for current and future generations. There are many proclaimed days across the world that pay homage to culturally significant sites. Here in the Yukon, we pride ourselves on making cultural heritage a regular part of our lives and, of course, there are many sites of significance to celebrate here at home.

The Yukon government has designated nine Yukon historic sites over the years that are considered to have heritage significance at a territorial level. The most recent historic site designation was the Old Log Church and Rectory, which has merited designation at both the territorial and municipal levels. The heritage aspects of this site will be managed through a cooperative arrangement between the Yukon government and the City of Whitehorse.

From built heritage, such as the Sign Post Forest in Watson Lake and the Old Log Church, to historically significant sites, such as Herschel Island Territorial Park, Fort Selkirk and the Dawson historical complex, to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kluane National Park and Reserve and Tatshenshini-Alsek Park, Yukon is home to a diverse range of heritage sites that Yukoners can experience and enjoy each and every day.

Our historic sites are designated at the municipal, territorial or federal level.

Mr. Speaker, an important initiative that is currently underway is that of the application for a UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for Tr'ondëk-Klondike. This project is being led by a community-based advisory committee, chaired by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in heritage director, and includes representatives from local residents, including a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizen, the Klondike Visitors Association, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson City Museum, City of Dawson City, Government of Yukon and Parks Canada.

The Yukon government is very pleased to support the continued work of the advisory committee and the important work being undertaken, as we speak, by the various stakeholders to evaluate and consider the economic, social, cultural and financial impacts associated with gaining status for this very important and culturally rich area.

I am very pleased to report that, due to the great work of many individuals throughout the years, this project is on track.

An economic impact study and a cultural study have been completed with other contracts and thematic studies to support the nomination also underway.

As I mentioned before, we are pleased to support this important work and congratulate the work of the committee thus far and the many stakeholders engaged in these important discussions.

We are very privileged in Yukon to be surrounded by rich heritage legacies and to have the ability to enjoy these sites year-round and to share them with visitors to our territory. I encourage all Yukoners to explore some of these significant sites in Yukon that contribute so much to our quality of life.

Mr. Barr: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP Official Opposition to pay tribute to World Heritage Day, which will be held on Saturday, April 18.

On World Heritage Day, we celebrate the diversity of human culture and commit to preserve and protect the shared wealth of humankind. World Heritage Day originated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, which passed a resolution at its 22nd session in November 1983 recommending that member states examine the possibility of declaring the 18 of April each year International Day for Monuments and Sites.

The world is watching in horror as significant artifacts of human history are at risk. The remnants of ancient Mesopotamia have been under siege for over a decade with the U.S. invasion of Iraq and later by militants driven by ideology. One of the consequences of the haze of war is the destruction and plunder of cultural treasures. Where there is war and conflict, there is a great risk that the past will be obliterated along with the human carnage.

There are 1,007 properties on the list of world heritage sites. These include the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, the Tiwanaku spiritual and political centre of the Tiwanaku culture in Bolivia, L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site of Viking settlements in western Newfoundland, the Great Wall of China, the great training and education centres in Timbuktu, Mali — I might add that I was going to go there when I was in Mali. It was recommended that you don't travel at that time as there was a changeover in government and people were losing their lives going to Timbuktu. So I chose to stay and I'm here today because of that decision.

Auschwitz and Buchenwald — Nazi concentration and extermination camps — these sites tell amazing human stories; the relationship to the land and the environment; of great feats of determination and engineering; and of the human propensity for good and for evil.

It is an opportunity that, on April 18, along with colleagues from both sides of the Legislature Assembly, I will be attending in Dawson City the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon convention. The City of Dawson and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation are working on a plan to nominate the Klondike as a world heritage site. The world heritage site would include the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in fishing camp, the Chilkoot Trail, the Klondike goldfields and the historic Dawson region. The designation awarded by

UNESCO would mean Klondike sites would benefit from millions of dollars in annual grant money, as well as draw more tourists to the area.

World heritage means more than preserving historic sites. The world's languages are our heritage and many languages — indigenous languages — are at risk of being lost forever. With that, it is a loss of a people's voice and a way of being.

Mr. Speaker, I want to end with some words from Wade Davis, the world-renowned ethnobotanist who lives in northern B.C. He has been a defender of the Sacred Headwaters of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine and has been the National Geographic explorer-in-residence.

Mr. Davis says, "Just as there is a biological web of life, there is also a cultural and spiritual web of life — what we at the National Geographic have taken to calling the 'ethnosphere.' It's really the sum total of all the thoughts, beliefs, myths, and institutions brought into being by the human imagination. It is humanity's greatest legacy, embodying everything we have produced as a curious and amazingly adaptive species. The ethnosphere is as vital to our collective well-being as the biosphere. And just as the biosphere is being eroded, so is the ethnosphere — if anything, at a far greater rate.

"Some people say: 'What does it matter if these cultures fade away.' The answer is simple. When asked the meaning of being human, all the diverse cultures of the world respond with 10,000 different voices. Distinct cultures represent unique visions of life itself, morally inspired and inherently right. And those different voices become part of the overall repertoire of humanity for coping with challenges confronting us in the future. As we drift toward a blandly amorphous, generic world, as cultures disappear and life becomes more uniform, we as a people and a species, and Earth itself, will be deeply impoverished." Thank you.

Mr. Silver: I rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus to also pay tribute to World Heritage Day. April 18 marks World Heritage Day, a day to celebrate significant cultural and historical places around the world. Here in the Yukon, we are fortunate enough to have some incredible treasures.

Whether it's the natural beauty of our mountains or some of the historic relics that sit along our rivers and valleys, Yukon's heritage is constantly around us. Yukon is fortunate to have a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Kluane National Park. Of course, the Klondike region is on the consideration list.

Speaking of the Klondike, I would be remiss in my duties if I didn't mention all of the amazing institutions that tell the story of our special corner of the world. Whether it be the story of Dawson and the gold rush found at the Dawson City Museum or the traditions that pre-date the stamperders at the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre or the many tours of historic sites maintained by Parks Canada, Dawson, Klondike and Tr'ondëk — major pillars of Yukon heritage.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like welcome Chase Blodgett, who is one of many transgender Yukoners. Chase is a transgender man, meaning he was assigned female at birth, but identifies and lives as male.

Chase has chosen to come today by himself to represent the isolation that transgender people encounter on a daily basis due to systemic discrimination. Because of their gender identity, transgendered people can be denied access to health care, housing and employment.

Many lose friends and families. Many fear for their safety. PFLAG, the Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, reports a high risk of suicide for transgender people. As our understanding of the full range of human sexuality and gender identity increases, Yukon should follow other jurisdictions in Canada by adding gender identity and expression as protected grounds in our *Human Rights Act*, as recommended to this Assembly's Select Committee on Human Rights by the Yukon Human Rights Commission.

Acknowledging the anniversary of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, as the Minister of Justice did a few moments ago, gives us pause to consider that, as our knowledge of discrimination and human rights grows, so does our commitment to respecting human rights and to improving human rights law. While Chase is standing alone in the public gallery, many Yukoners have indicated their support for recognizing trans rights in our *Human Rights Act*, as evidenced by the 130 signatures in the petition I will table today.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Chase asked me to acknowledge the 100-player league of the Whitehorse Women's Hockey Association, which passed the first policy of its kind in all of Canada, formally welcoming male-to-female and female-to-male transgender players into their league. It is time for us as policy makers to follow community leaders and make the Yukon a safe place for transgender and gender-non-conforming individuals.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming Chase Blodgett.

Applause

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: The Chair has for tabling a report from the Chief Electoral Office of Yukon, entitled *Annual Contributions to Political Parties in the 2014 Calendar Year*. This document is tabled in accordance with section 398 of the *Elections Act*.

Ms. Hanson: I have for tabling excerpts from the meeting minutes of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Monday, March 30, 2015.

Speaker: Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Reports of committees.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 20

Ms. Moorcroft: I have for presentation the following petition to the Yukon Legislative Assembly:

This petition of the undersigned shows

THAT the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to urge the Yukon government to advance equal rights for transsexual, transgender, and gender-variant people by:

(1) introducing to the Legislative Assembly amendments to Yukon's *Human Rights Act* to explicitly include gender identity and gender expression under section 7 of the act as prohibited grounds for discrimination;

(2) supporting full equality and respect for trans people accessing Yukon government jobs, programs and services; and

(3) using public education to fight intolerance, discrimination and violence against trans people.

Mr. Speaker, there are 130 signatures on the petition for tabling.

Speaker: Are there any other petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the community development fund to support the Whitehorse Curling Club to install an energy upgrade of outdated, inefficient surface lights and install a separate meter for the ice plant.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the community development fund to support the Copper Ridge Neighbourhood Association to develop a four-season, multi-use park on Winze Lane in Whitehorse.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to follow the recommendations of the current and previous Information and Privacy Commissioner and the example of other Canadian jurisdictions by amending the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to include a provision that would require a public body to disclose information that is determined to be clearly in the public interest.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to release an up-to-date accounting of the outside legal costs for the Peel land use plan court case.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Hydraulic fracturing

Ms. Hanson: This week the Premier attended the Quebec Summit on Climate Change and signed the *Declaration of the Premiers of Canada*. This declaration recognizes the scientific consensus calling for a significant reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions. It also recognizes that northern regions are particularly vulnerable to and disproportionately affected by climate change. The document commits the Premier to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and yet, Mr. Speaker, this government has just announced its intention to allow fracking in the Yukon.

Does the Premier not see how contradictory it is for him to sign a declaration to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Yukon while launching fracking in the Yukon, which will significantly increase Yukon's emissions?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I have in fact just returned from the climate change summit in Quebec City where we had the opportunity as three northern premiers representing 40 percent of Canada to talk about the fact that the north is a very low emitter of greenhouse gases. In fact, Yukon is probably around a half of one percent of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, Yukon is, I'm told, the third lowest emitter per capita in this country, but, in fact, truly we are feeling the effects of climate change here and around the territory.

This government continues to invest in emission reductions. We continue to invest in renewable energy and we continue to invest in technology and innovation. We know that carbon fuel is not a luxury. It is a necessity in this territory and truly across the north. This government will not support any action that will increase the costs to Yukoners because we all live in an area right now where it already is very expensive.

We're certainly willing to talk with other jurisdictions about mitigation and about adaptation, but we're not prepared to increase the cost of living for all Yukoners.

Ms. Hanson: Right, let somebody else do it. Earlier this month, the Yukon Party government finally came clean on its pro-fracking agenda. This agenda is anything but clean.

Analysis of life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions for fracked gas has shown them to be as dirty as coal. Fracking wells also leak 40 to 60 percent more methane into our atmosphere than conventional natural gas wells. These fugitive emissions are potent greenhouse gases.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that continued emissions of greenhouse gases will accelerate global warming, climate change and threaten sustainable development, and it cautions two-thirds of known and proven resources should stay in the ground, including Yukon.

Why is the Premier taking the irresponsible road to opening Yukon to fracking, when it runs contrary to the scientific consensus that fracking contributes to —

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

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I have to say that the government, through the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, has been very articulate in what this government's plan is. We are accepting all the recommendations of the select committee, and we are opening up the opportunity for applications for potential hydraulic fracturing, but that would only be with the support of the affected First Nations.

We're talking about the southeast corner of Yukon, in the Liard Basin, where we've had an oil and gas industry for almost half a century, from which there have been royalties of \$45 million, which have been shared — approximately \$10 million of that has gone to First Nations.

This government supports responsible development; this government supports the ability to have Yukoners come home and be involved in a responsible oil and gas economy. This government will continue to focus on ensuring that there is prosperity and growth for all Yukoners.

Ms. Hanson: Fracking is not responsible development, and this Yukon Party government has been pursuing a pro-fracking agenda from the very start. They appear to believe that aggressively extracting fossil fuels from under the Earth will make Yukon a net contributor to Canada. Let me be clear: If we open the Yukon to fracking, the only net contribution that Yukon will make to Canada will be to increase our nation's greenhouse gas emissions. It is time for this government to get serious about climate change.

In 2009, they took a small step in their climate change action plan by committing to Yukon-wide emissions targets by 2011, but they later abandoned that commitment, all the while checking it off as a completed action in their 2012 annual report. Why has the Premier abandoned Yukon-wide emissions standards targets? When will this government get serious about tackling climate change?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As the Premier mentioned, we are accepting and addressing all 21 of the select committee report recommendations and moving forward with actions on each one of them. We are open to applications for potential hydraulic fracturing in only one area of the Yukon, the Liard Basin, and that would occur only with the support of affected First Nations.

This government has been clear with respect to reducing greenhouse gas emissions over the years, and we're taking action. Just yesterday we announced a commercial energy-efficiency program with respect to multi-unit residential buildings as well as commercial lighting. That's on top of a residential energy-efficiency program that we announced last year.

There are several initiatives being undertaken by the Department of Environment. The Department of Highways and Public Works will be reskinning this building in this current fiscal year so that we can make our own buildings more energy efficient, and of course the work on the new F.H. Collins — it is being built to a LEED silver standard, I believe.

The new buildings that we're developing are being built to high energy-efficiency standards. The existing buildings we're retrofitting to higher energy-efficiency standards and we're working on climate change across all departments in the government.

Question re: Corrections programming

Ms. Moorcroft: Last Tuesday, the Minister of Justice responded to the Auditor General's report by standing and saying — and I quote: "The focus it should be noted is about rehabilitation." The Auditor General found that Yukon is missing opportunities to rehabilitate offenders and it is not adequately preparing them for successful reintegration into the community. The Auditor General report found that more than half of the offenders in his study sample had not been offered all of the core programs. Effective corrections core programs can help people change their behaviour, reduce the chances of re-offending and in turn help make Yukon safer.

How can the minister claim his government is focused on rehabilitation when more than half of the offenders sampled in the Auditor General's study did not get the programming they needed?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It's really unfortunate to hear the way that the Member for Copperbelt South is choosing to characterize the situation. As I noted in responding to her previous questions about the Auditor General's report, these reports are very helpful and useful to help identify where there is room for improvement.

As was noted by the department in response to the Auditor General's points, it also should be recognized that the period of time when the review was conducted was a period when they were transitioning to the new correctional facility. That was a very challenging time for the department in terms of the work that they were doing in making that transition, but again, as I noted to the member, some of the issues identified by the Auditor General have already been acted on, as they were previously identified through internal quality review mechanisms.

Those other areas that need further work we are committed to working on. I have confidence in the department and the work that they are doing to address those matters. I will support the department in doing that good work and we are committed to continuing to improve Yukon's rehabilitative systems and programs, but the member should recognize in fact what a dramatic improvement has been made since the days she was Minister of Justice.

Ms. Moorcroft: It's one thing to find a report helpful and it's another thing to actually do something. I'm asking the minister to make a commitment here. Building a new facility is not an excuse for not offering programs.

Part of the Department of Justice's responsibilities is ensuring that when people are convicted of sexual assault or domestic violence they undergo a risk assessment before they are released into the community. The Auditor General found that only one in four offenders convicted of sexual assault and only one in three of the offenders convicted of domestic violence had the necessary risk assessments completed before

their release. One missed risk assessment is too many. The fact that the majority of sex offenders in the study did not undergo additional risk assessments before their release is unacceptable.

What is the minister doing to ensure that no more sexual violence and domestic violence risk assessments will be missed?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, as I noted previously in responding to the member opposite, there have been significant improvements made in the work that is done by Yukon Corrections and Yukon Justice since the days when the member was Minister of Justice, for example. Through the correctional reform process and through *Sharing Common Ground*, the bar has been raised further. In some of those areas where the new standard was set — clearly during that period of time, in files reviewed by the Auditor General in 2012, there were issues where we were not meeting the new standards that had been set out.

Again, as I noted to the member, some of these issues have already been identified through internal quality review processes and are being acted upon. Those remaining ones that are outstanding will see further work on them. I should remind the member that significant work has been done — and positive work in areas such as the Community Wellness Court and the domestic violence treatment option, which are new and recent innovations in correctional reform in the Yukon — and truly the staff and all who were involved in those processes deserve a pat on the back for the excellent work they're doing and the success they're achieving, and the fact that — not only in other Canadian jurisdictions, but internationally — people have taken a look at the good work that's done through the successful Community Wellness Court. It's truly a testament to all those involved for their success.

Ms. Moorcroft: The minister can talk all he wants about his government's focus on safety, but the numbers are clear. Three out of four sexual assault and two out of three domestic violence offenders did not get the risk assessment needed before going back into the community. The government is not doing what it needs to do to protect victims and communities.

The minister has just acknowledged, as the Auditor General reported, that the government is not meeting the standards of the *Corrections Act, 2009*. Will the government commit to ensuring that, from now on, all those convicted of sexual assault and domestic violence will be given the necessary risk assessments, without exception?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the member and remind her of the fact, as she acknowledged, that the *Corrections Act, 2009* set out a new standard. In the time since then, we have raised the bar in the level of what is expected within the Yukon correctional system, a significant improvement since the member's time as Minister of Justice.

I would again congratulate staff, particularly those for some of the programs, such as the Community Wellness Court, domestic violence treatment option, and through the

expanded victims services that are available within the Department of Justice. I should acknowledge the work of my predecessor in expanding those services. There has been a significant increase in the services that are offered within the Yukon's corrections system and I would like to acknowledge the work of all involved in doing that.

I do recognize that, in the 2012 report done by the Auditor General, there were areas where we were not meeting the new standard that we had set out and, again in those areas, as I noted, staff are working on them and will have my support in ensuring that those issues, which have not already been addressed, will be focused on and we will take appropriate steps to continue to raise the bar in the standard of rehabilitative programs and services that are offered.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Silver: Under the watch of this government, the Keno mine closed in 2013 and we had the second-lowest GDP of any place in Canada. In 2014, spending on mineral exploration dropped 22 percent. Across the border in the Northwest Territories, we saw a 32-percent increase in spending that same year. We began 2015 with news of Wolverine mine being closed, leaving many Yukon companies owed more than \$4 million in unpaid bills. After insisting that we were a mineral hot spot in Canada, the Yukon Party has changed its tune and now blames low mineral prices for the downturn that we are currently experiencing. As we head into an election cycle, the Yukon Party has sprung into action, announcing that by 2016, a mineral development strategy will be in place.

Why did the government wait until three-and-a-half years into its mandate to begin working on this plan?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I'm proud of the work that we have embarked upon when it comes to the mineral development strategy. This is on top of a number of initiatives that we started throughout our mandate. Of course the member didn't reference the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, which has been established to train Yukoners for job opportunities in the mineral sector. Whether it is placer mining or hard rock mining opportunities, there are a number of different opportunities that Yukoners are being trained for right now — not only Yukoners in Whitehorse, but Yukoners in the communities through the mobile trades' trailer. The member opposite didn't reference all of the significant investments that we have been making in infrastructure — such as highways, airports and telecommunications, as well as energy infrastructure — including our plans for our next generation hydro, as well as plans to upgrade the power line from Stewart Crossing to Keno City to ensure that there is enough power capacity for that important industrial corridor, including the mine that the member opposite referenced.

There are some incredible success stories that have been built out of the latest exploration boom. Again, through the work of the mine licensing improvement initiative and the mineral development strategy, we want to emerge from this current downturn in the world metal markets in better shape

than we went in and, once again, claim our spot as one of the top mining jurisdictions in the world.

Mr. Silver: The facts remain the same — that we are not turning exploration projects into actual mines. Exploration has dropped off ever since this government came into office, in actual fact. Two mines have closed and the one that the government kept insisting was going to boost our GDP, never ever opened. Another problem the government was well aware of when it came into office was the overlap between the Water Board and other regulatory agencies. Finally, after years of inaction, the government has started a mine licensing improvement initiative and is trying to address this problem.

Why did this government sit on the sidelines until 18 months before an election to try to fix this particular problem?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, what the Member for Klondike is not telling Yukoners with his question is what we have done with respect to licence improvements. There have been improvements made to the Yukon *Waters Act*. There have been timelines instituted for the adequacy phase with respect to type A licences for quartz projects. Through the work of the mine licensing improvement initiative, we will continue to address some of those overlaps that exist between the licensing and permitting issues. We are doing so in partnership with First Nations, moving forward to ensure that we can come up with a licensing and permitting system that is responsive to the needs of industry, but of course protects the environment in the long run, which is one of the utmost purposes that we are looking for.

The member opposite mentioned exploration projects — I think that coming out of the last exploration rush we have seen projects like the Coffee gold project that is owned by Kaminak Gold Corp. — Wellgreen platinum has moved forward with their activities. In fact, Mr. Speaker, early estimates for exploration this year are in the \$100-million range, which is up from \$80 million in 2014. Again, these are estimates that are put together based on announcements by companies at this point, but we see those numbers trending in the right direction and we are proud of the work that we do to support the mining industry.

Mr. Silver: The fact remains that the government came into office after a summer of record mineral exploration in 2011 and not a single mine has opened up in three and a half years since. In fact, two mines that it inherited have closed under its watch. Exploration has declined every year that this government been in office. One thing that is on the rise under this government is court action. The government's legal battles between First Nations have seen 13 percent of the Yukon removed from staking until at least 2017. Another legal battle with Yukon First Nation governments is on the way unless this government backs down on its changes to Bill S-6.

So I will ask this question: What involvement will First Nation governments have in the development of these two new initiatives that are finally underway?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: One thing is for certain in three and a half years, which is that in three and a half years, this Liberal leader and the Liberal Party has opposed and voted

against every initiative that this government has put forward and fundamental industries within this Yukon economy. What we know for certain is that he has flip-flopped on a number of issues through three and a half years. What we know for certain is that he has no position on anything and he has no plans for anything.

Question re: Renewable energy strategy

Ms. White: The timing is more than a little ironic in that the Yukon Party government made their bold push for fracking on the eve of climate change talks initiated by the premiers of Ontario and Quebec that the Premier attended.

Yukon citizens, Yukon businesses and Yukon First Nations are showing real, concrete leadership in investing in exciting renewable energy projects. The Kluane First Nation has a geothermal well and is actively pursuing district heating in a year-round greenhouse. They are working to install three wind turbines to offset their reliance on fossil fuel for power generation, and every single year they install solar panels on more of their government buildings.

If renewable energy investment was a race, Kluane First Nation would be crossing the finish line before the Yukon Party even left the block. When will the Yukon government show the same leadership as Kluane First Nation when it comes to investing in diverse sources of renewable energy?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Of course we are looking at renewable energy options within the Yukon government — not only the work of the Yukon Energy Corporation's studying wind at Tehcho near Stewart Crossing as well as Mount Sumanik here in Whitehorse. That work is underway on wind. We are engaged on next-generation hydro talks. There are transmission line opportunities that will expand not only the distribution of electricity throughout the territory, but the options for bringing on additional renewable sources throughout the territory. I find it ironic that perhaps the Member for Takhini-Kopper King missed the debate with respect to the supplementary budget, but actually the Yukon government has provided a \$1-million investment to the Kluane First Nation to assist them in their renewable energy project. Unfortunately, she missed that during the debate earlier this week, but again we are partnering with Kluane on these renewable energy options and we are excited to be partners with that very progressive First Nation.

Ms. White: It is fantastic that this Yukon Party government is able to ride on the coattails of the leadership of the Kluane First Nation. Other jurisdictions have put lots of incentives in place to encourage homeowners to become energy producers and sell back to the grid. Yukon citizens are showing real leadership in investing in solar on their homes despite the limitations in the microgeneration policy. I understand that there are 11 people who are connected and selling back to the grid.

The incentives that are in place are clearly too low. These 11 people have tied into the grid and haven't made the change because of the financial incentives. They weren't that compelling. They did it because of their personal convictions to combat climate change.

Will this government commit to review the microgeneration policy incentives to empower more Yukoners to produce renewable energy and possibly sell it back to the grid?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Unfortunately the member opposite has not checked with our residential energy incentive program that provides up to \$5,000 for individuals who are accessing the microgeneration program. I know a number of individuals who have taken advantage of that as well.

We're excited with the work that we're doing to assist Yukoners. One of my neighbours around the corner is reskinning her house, putting in new windows and a new roof based on accessing that program, the residential energy efficiency program. Part of that was to assist those individuals who want to add microgeneration capabilities to what they're doing. We're coming out with an independent power producers policy program sometime this year, after consultations last year. I would encourage the member opposite to do a little bit more research before she brings questions to the floor of this House.

Ms. White: I will take that for what it's worth.

There are innovative approaches on renewable energy that Yukon businesses are getting behind. Northwestel, in partnership with the Cold Climate Innovation Centre saw solar panels installed on one of their towers as a pilot project. With a projected four-a-half-year return on investment, the project was a great success. Northwestel now has five towers across the north with solar panels and it plans to extend it to six more towers shortly.

The Yukon government's big idea is a megadam with connection to B.C. at a cost of billions of dollars to be built anywhere between 15 and 30 years from now if — and there is a big if to this Mr. Speaker — the public can agree on which river valley should be flooded. So we need action now. That's what I'm looking for — action from this government.

Why is this government shooting for far off megaprojects to fulfill our renewable energy needs and neglecting investments in projects that can meet our needs here today?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think we need a little bit of a context here. In the Yukon, if we look at all of the electricity consumed — and that includes all of those communities that are not on the grid and get all of their power from diesel — 95 percent of the electricity consumed in this territory comes from renewables. If you look at on-grid, over 99 percent of all electricity consumed is from renewables. We will put that up against anywhere in this entire country. This government, over the years, with vision has expanded with Mayo B, has expanded with another wheel at Aishihik Lake, and we are now moving forward with a vision to ensure the prosperity of Yukoners for generations to come with our next generation hydro project.

That is the difference between this government and the opposition: vision.

Question re: Rural infrastructure projects

Mr. Barr: One can't help but wonder how this government goes about setting priorities for recreational

investment in Yukon. It seems like election photo opportunities always end up coming before the actual needs of Yukon's communities. While Whitehorse gets an artificial soccer field in Whistle Bend with no real needs analysis, the winter has come and gone and the Carmacks arena remained closed for most of the season.

Why is the government failing to support the infrastructure needs of Yukoners in the communities?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I have to take umbrage with the question put forward by the member opposite. We have made investments in each and every community throughout this territory when it comes to recreational infrastructure as well recreational programs.

I would suggest that, if you look at our recreational infrastructure that we have available to us in the Yukon, I would put us right at the top in terms of the country. We have access to an incredible array of recreational infrastructure throughout the Yukon.

I know the member opposite referenced the specific case of Carmacks. Obviously there's an unfortunate situation in that community where they've had some failing infrastructure. We're working very closely with the municipality to address those needs. I've written a letter to both the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes to explain what is going on with that. I encourage them to talk to the town council in Carmacks and ask how Yukon government has been working hand in hand with that community to address their needs. We've been providing resources, we've been providing expertise and we've been discussing what their vision for the future is in that particular community.

I have to just fundamentally disagree with the member opposite in his preamble. We've invested significant amounts of money in all recreational infrastructure throughout this territory, and we're very proud of that record.

Mr. Barr: We have talked.

Carmacks isn't the only Yukon community that's falling short on infrastructure support. The government is scrambling to finish projects this year, as our initial Building Canada funding expires. Not only is the Yukon Party government failing to prioritize community needs, this government is having trouble directing the completion of multi-year projects on time.

These are projects like water, sewer and road upgrades in communities like Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing and Teslin that have been long anticipated. Why has the Yukon Party government let so many projects drag on to the point that their federal funding may expire before finally making a sustained attempt at project completions?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Again, I'm surprised at the line of questioning here. I should note that each and every one of those investments that we've made — each and every one of those important infrastructure investments we've made in Yukon communities — the member opposite voted against. He chose to take his partisan angle and vote no to those investments, instead of supporting the remarkable

infrastructure investments we have made, whether they be in drinking water or —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Dixon: So, Mr. Speaker, I expect that the member opposite will continue to vote against these investments. I know that they find it very humorous, the types of investments that they voted against. I know they take great pleasure in voting against those investments in Yukon communities.

We take them seriously and we take this job seriously. We try to ensure that Yukon's infrastructure needs are addressed, whether they be in the communities, whether they be in Whitehorse or whether they be in roads that connect us all together.

We'll continue to do what we've been doing, which is to ensure that Yukoners' infrastructure requirements are met, whether they be drinking water, whether they be waste water or whether they be recreational infrastructure. I encourage them to vote for the budget and, of course, all the significant investments that are made therein.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 17: *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 17, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I have to say something that I have repeated myself many times in this Legislature, and that is that Yukon is in a very enviable financial position. It is a position that I and my colleagues are very proud of.

I have spoken previously and at some length at our government's approach to planning, budgeting and decision-making about how our government proactively manages to ensure and to allow for appropriate legislative consideration for our proposed expenditure initiatives.

Indulge me once again, as I cannot emphasize enough the importance of strong planning, budgeting and decision-making processes. In its basic form, planning and budgeting is about decision-making. It is all about identifying priorities and then considering, developing, resourcing and implementing appropriate actions to provide —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. White: I would like to take this opportunity to invite two people into the gallery today. We have Stu Neatby and Siân Madoc-Jones. They are joining us today. Thank you so much for coming.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In its basic form, planning and budgeting is all about decision-making. It is all about identifying priorities and considering, developing, resourcing and implementing appropriate actions to provide the best services possible to Yukoners. At its core, planning and budgeting requires decision-makers to make choices. The budget process supports us as decision-makers to consider all issues and identify appropriate solutions. In this regard, the development of a budget serves as both a planning tool and a control tool. Decision-making is an ongoing and evolving process. It remains not only the prerogative, but the obligation, for our government to consider emerging issues and priorities and to recommend effective and appropriately resourced solutions and actions to the Legislative Assembly.

I will speak at some length about this in my Committee speech for Bill No. 18, which is the *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, but it seems apropos to pause here for a moment and reflect on observations in the Standard & Poor's report in September of 2014. Standard & Poor's has once again confirmed Yukon's double-A rating and, in doing so, made a number of observations that reflect our government's commitment to strong financial management. Standard & Poor's recognizes our government's commitment to strong budgetary processes. If I may, in its report, Standard & Poor's confirms Yukon's double-A rating, noting that our rating reflects — and I quote — a couple or three quotes I have: "...the territory's very low debt burden, exceptional liquidity, strong budgetary performance..." and "...the territory demonstrates strong financial management..." and the expectation "...that Yukon will continue to produce strong budgetary results..."

Despite the frequent criticism heaped on our government regarding our budgetary track record, it is fair to say that Standard & Poor's gets it. Our record has been strong and will continue to be strong as we support Yukoners through our current 2015-16 budget as well as future budgets.

This Legislature will have the opportunity to consider our 2015-16 budget in full as we debate Bill No. 18. Of course, this will take some time as the members opposite conduct their diligence in their review and critique of our 2015-16 budget. In the meantime, I am pleased to introduce Bill No. 17, *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

This act provides for spending authority through to June 4, 2015 and will allow this Legislature to ensure the continued, uninterrupted operations of government while Bill No. 18 is under consideration. In addition, this act ensures appropriate authority is granted to departments, so that they can make some very significant payments and commitments, including: \$18.3 million for the comprehensive municipal grant; \$15.8 million representing the first quarterly payment

for the Yukon Hospital Corporation; and \$25.5 million for our annual contribution to Yukon College.

This act is not focused solely on operation and maintenance requirements. As Yukoners are well aware, we do have a shorter construction season than is experienced in southern jurisdictions. It is important for our contractors to get out there at the very first possible opportunity. This act provides for capital spending on a number of fronts, including: \$9.281 million to continue implementation of a number of projects initiated under Building Canada; \$10.4 million as the construction on the F.H. Collins replacement project progresses; and \$1.518 million to advance the Salvation Army redevelopment project.

I am sure that the members opposite appreciate how important it is for our contracting community to be at work, delivering these projects.

As I stated earlier, the Legislature will have a full opportunity to debate our entire 2015-16 budget when we convene for consideration of Bill No. 18. In the interim, this act ensures the continued and uninterrupted operations of government.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, this act requests spending authority, which in total is not to exceed \$353,979,000. The purpose of this spending authority is to defray the various charges and expenses of public services of Yukon for the period April 1, 2015 through June 4, 2015. Of this total amount, \$257,358,000 is provided for operations and maintenance and \$96,621,000 is provided for capital. The full details of these expenditures are included in the main estimates and will be fully discussed and debated during general and departmental debate on the 2015-16 main estimates.

I would also again like to acknowledge and thank all of the officials who worked on putting together this interim supply bill and of course, special recognition to all of those people within the Department of Finance.

Ms. Hanson: I rise to speak to Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*. I would just like to make a couple of comments with respect to the interim supply. It is a mechanism for the government to ensure ongoing operations, pending legislative — legislative — approval, Mr. Speaker — of the budget.

I have to make a comment, Mr. Speaker. I find it quite saddening that the Finance minister, the Premier, has dismissed the notion of the parliamentary process and parliamentary democracy, and that in fact, in his comments, the references are simply that the Yukon Party with the majority are the decision-makers. In fact, in a parliamentary democracy, all members of the Legislative Assembly —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Mr. Elias: The Leader of the Official Opposition is suggesting that the Hon. Premier is dismissing parliamentary process. That's clearly a contravention to the Standing Orders.

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

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the member opposite refer to any section of our Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly when he made the point of order, and what I heard was my colleague responding to a budget speech or a speech on this interim supply bill. I believe this is just a dispute among members.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition stated that, in her belief, the government was portraying themselves as the sole approvers and pointed out that it is in fact the entire membership of the Legislature. In her assertion, she said it was her belief, so she may believe that. It may be true; it may not be true. I don't know.

It's a dispute between members.

Ms. Hanson: All members of this Legislative Assembly, not just members of a majority government, are elected to represent the citizens of this territory. All members of this Legislative Assembly have a right and obligation to speak to the assertions that are put forward by the government and, in particular, we have an obligation as the Official Opposition, as the opposition, to hold the government to account for the decisions they do make and as those decisions are manifested, as we shall see, in the main estimates.

It is parliamentary tradition that the entire budget is tabled in a timely way so that the members of the opposition — all elected members — can do their due diligence.

If the Minister of Finance seriously believed in the legitimate role of all elected members of this Legislative Assembly, he would table this budget in February. He would not table it in April, after the beginning of the fiscal year, because what he's doing is he's setting it up on the assumption that a quarter of the expenditures that this government anticipates making is fait accompli.

The opposition is placed in a situation where it has no choice but to support the supply bill because it's necessary for the interim operations. But I want to put the Minister of Finance on notice: This does not imply that we support the contents of the main estimates, the operation and maintenance and capital estimates, for 2015-16. We will hold the government to account; we will hold the Minister of Finance to account throughout the course of debate.

It's ironic for the Minister of Finance to talk about — that he believes, in his words, in strong budgeting and planning. If he believed in strong planning, he would deliver on that and he would have tabled this budget before the beginning of the fiscal year — at least have had the appearance of respecting the parliamentary process.

As I said, my comments would be brief. Our support for the *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, Bill No. 17,

does not signify support for Bill No. 18, but it is done on sufferance.

Mr. Silver: It gives me pleasure to rise on Bill No. 17, *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that we are already well into the 2015-16 fiscal year as we begin debate on the interim supply bill. The normal course of events is to begin the session in late March and to allow time to pass the interim supply bill before the fiscal year actually begins. That, of course, didn't happen this year for several reasons: the Yukon Party lost their newly minted chief of staff quite suddenly; we saw a major shuffle of Cabinet. It is interesting to note, on that shuffle, that the new minister responsible for housing — in the 2015-16 main budget, finally we see the remainder of the northern housing trust fund finally getting spent, with some of that money actually on affordable housing too. I want to congratulate the new minister on accomplishing something in his first 100 days on the job that the previous Yukon Party minister failed to do since 2006.

Speaking about that shuffle — and also combined with the musical chair routine with respect to the Premier's chief of staff position and the unexpected departure of the Deputy Minister of Finance — it is the main reason why we are starting so late and beginning second reading on an interim supply bill halfway through the first month of the new fiscal year.

It is interesting to see the Premier's explanation for the late start — somehow being related to March break, spring break. In a news release in March, the Premier stated that the Spring Sitting would start later than usual — April 2 — and I quote: "...to accommodate families who may be spending time together during the school spring break period of March 16 to 27."

It is interesting that that was not a concern last spring when the Legislature started on March 25, right in the middle of spring break. I would suggest that the real reason the session is late this year, of course, is that the government simply was not prepared. Between Cabinet shuffles, deputy changes and the departure of a hand-picked chief of staff from Ottawa, the government simply wasn't ready to table a budget on time.

It was easier to blame it on spring break than it was to admit that.

With regard to the content of the bill — the interim supply bill itself — it is merely housekeeping to allow the government to spend money until the main budget passes the House at the end of May.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I speak with my constituents often about issues that are important to them — issues such as a healthy economy, including resource extraction, tourism, private sector businesses, the knowledge sector and trades. Constituents of Porter Creek South speak to me about issues like health care and how they recognize that Yukon's health care is arguably —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

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

Mr. Silver: I'm sorry to interrupt, but I would like to ask the rest of the House to help me in welcoming a constituent of mine, Tracey Caley.

Applause

Speaker: Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Welcome, Tracey, to the gallery.

The constituents of Porter Creek South speak to me about issues like health care and how they recognize that Yukon's health care is arguably one of the best in Canada.

Now, I've commented before in this Assembly with regard to spending more of my time learning about health care on a global scale. I consider myself very fortunate to live in a place where the level of care is truly second to none. We are fortunate to have that, but we are not entitled to have that.

I recognize — just for one example — how fortunate seniors are in Yukon. Over the last 10 years, your Yukon Party government has increased the budget for home care across the territory, because we on this side of the House believe it is important to keep seniors in their homes and in their communities as long as possible.

Now, I know the members opposite have a difficult time believing this or perhaps understanding this. I've read their entertaining rhetoric in the paper and on-line. What's even more amusing is their inability to follow and have a true appreciation for a budget.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Mr. Silver: I'm sorry to interrupt again, but I believe the word "rhetoric" has been eschewed as unparliamentarily in the past, and I would ask the member opposite to refrain from using it.

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

Mr. Elias: On the point of order, I have heard the word "rhetoric" used many, many times during this Sitting alone, and I've been here for how many years now? Nine years — and it has been used quite regularly in members' use of language. I think this is a dispute among members.

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: Some interesting arguments. The use of the word "rhetoric" directed at an individual and their comments within statements in this House is out of order. Right now, my memory is not 100-percent clear as to how the minister phrased it formally. I will say that there is a point of order and ask the minister to please rephrase that statement without using that word and we will carry on. If I check the Blues tomorrow and find out that it was directed in a broader sense, then I may change the ruling.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I'll rephrase that word from "rhetoric" to "comments" in general.

Based on the comments and debate from the members opposite, Yukoners know that in a Yukon governed by the NDP-Liberals, we would see no support for the increase in the budget for home care; we would see no increase in budgets for mental health services and services to people with disabilities. In fact, the Member for Riverdale South indicated that she doesn't see the correlation between —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please. While the heckling is not necessarily unparliamentary, it is getting to a volume where I am finding it difficult to hear the person who is presenting, so I would ask you to bring it down a notch, so that I may hear what the person is saying. Minister, carry on please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was just saying that, in fact, the Member for Riverdale South indicated that she doesn't see the correlation between people with disabilities and mental health issues and I find that very odd. We clearly wouldn't see a healthy economy from the members opposite. Both parties have proven that in the past and history would repeat itself.

The members opposite have voted against investments in the resource sector; they have voted against investments in our tourism economy; they have voted against investments in the knowledge sector and the trades; they have voted against expanded services to people with disabilities; and they voted against expanded services for people with mental health issues.

The members opposite in fact have voted against the need for safe travel, through investments in road and airport infrastructure. They have voted against the need for predictability and stability in environmental stewardship, despite their cries for protection of lands. In fact, we have seen them vote against the need for economic stability and diversity throughout the entire territory. We have seen them vote against our party's confidence in the private sector to provide services to Yukoners and to visitors at places like Dredge No. 4 and the *SS Klondike*, at our museums and cultural centres, as well as health care initiatives.

The NDP-Liberals have even gone on record in this Legislative Assembly speaking out about their lack of confidence in government staff and the services that those good women and men provide on a daily basis. The NDP-Liberals seem to have no confidence in government staff; they seem to have no confidence in the private sector tourism companies; they seem to have no confidence in construction and mining companies — yet the NDP-Liberals want to govern this territory. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that makes no sense at all. In fact, I know that scares a lot of Yukoners.

Our government has confidence in the staff and services that are delivered by that staff. I have talked at great length before on how the economic situation was dire in 2002, when we took office. It was indeed the good women and men of

Yukon — those working in government, those working in the tourism sector, those working in construction and exploration and mining and other private sector jobs — who had the confidence in this Yukon Party government to govern the territory and bring it back on track.

Yukoners knew that this Yukon Party government, through hard work and deliberate strategic investments, would be able to restore confidence and investment to our territory. This Yukon Party government did just that. We delivered on our promise of a better Yukon to Yukoners and, by working together, we were able to deliver on programs and services to Yukoners, like no other government has been able to do.

It was the Yukon Party that committed to building Yukon's future, and we have delivered. Since 2002, the Yukon Party government has increased budgets in mental health services and services to people, especially children, who have disabilities, but we have particularly increased the home care budget by over 350 percent, so seniors can stay in their homes and in their communities longer. That is action. That is an investment in Yukoners. We committed to Yukoners on this very thing and, like our other commitments to Yukoners, we have delivered.

The interim supply bill before us speaks to a healthy economy. Our budget speaks to investments in the resource sector. It speaks to investments in tourism economy; it speaks to investments in the knowledge sector and trades. Simply put, this Yukon Party government budget speaks to putting Yukoners to work.

We truly have it all. We have resources beneath the ground that can support us for generations to come. We have a solid tourism product that the world wants to see. We have infrastructure that supports travel, trades, IT and other knowledge-based sectors. We have a private sector that is motivated and is very eager for growth and we have a Yukon Party government that can commit and deliver to Yukoners.

Recently I had a conversation with a couple of large local businesses. They reported to me that they appreciate the economic diversity that their Yukon Party government has created. They went on to say how clear it was to them that, although the resource sector is not quite as strong as it has been in the past, these local businesses still saw increased revenues for 2014 over 2013. That tells me that we're on the right track.

I've said before that this budget isn't about dollars and cents. This budget is about confidence; the confidence Yukoners have in this Yukon Party government to maintain a solid economy — the confidence Yukoners have in this Yukon Party government to keep them working; the confidence Yukoners have in this Yukon Party government to invest in health care, tourism, resource extraction and education, environmental stewardship and so much more.

Our territory managed to grow even through a difficult global economic crisis that affected millions around the world. Despite that we managed to continue to grow. That is a testament to solid leadership.

My point is this that we recognize that strong leadership has very tangible, very important consequences. Our

government has made a point of working to rebuild Yukon. Yukoners trust this government to manage finances in the good times and the lean times, something the other parties simply cannot report.

As the Minister of Health and Social Services, I'm reminded on a daily basis of the demands government has to provide services and programs to Yukoners. If we're ever going to have any realistic hope of providing these kinds of services that so many of us look forward to, then we're going to need a steady, reliable own-source revenue stream to fund those programs.

As the Minister of Health and Social Services, I see first-hand how much money we spend on health care and I often find myself thinking there must be a better way when it comes to health care. When it comes to lifestyle choices — whether it is smoking, excessive drinking or sedentary lifestyle — I firmly believe that we need to do more than say to people, "That's a bad choice." I think we have role to play in providing healthy, positive alternatives. It is because I believe that we need healthier, positive options for people that I support our government's efforts to build a new sports complex. We announced this project a year ago and we're continuing to work on it.

Just today we announced a new tobacco prevention resource called Kickin' Ash. It has been developed by the Yukon government to help prevent youth from picking up the smoking habit. Now it has been eight years since I quit smoking. I'm so glad to see this resource being offered.

Yukon has the third highest rate of smoking in Canada, surpassed only by Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Ninety percent of smokers report lighting their first cigarette or being addicted before the age of 18. Our goal is to help young people to resist the urge to start smoking so they can remain tobacco free and healthier as adults. Kickin' Ash was designed to help community organizations and schools address the issue of tobacco use by young people by giving youth, aged 10 and older, tools and knowledge aimed at preventing smoking.

This resource will be given a pilot run this summer by as many as 10 interested organizations. Feedback from these participants will then be incorporated, making it a community-driven resource. Grants of up to \$500 will be available to groups interested in participating.

Funding for the development of the Kickin' Ash resource was provided by the Yukon northern wellness project through the Public Health Agency of Canada. Information sessions on how to most effectively engage with youth using this program resource will be held in Whitehorse next month. Sessions may also be held in some communities, depending on the interest. Organizations interested in piloting the resource should contact the Health Promotion unit at 667-3507 or kickinash@gov.yk.ca. The deadline to apply to this is April 29.

My constituents appreciate having jobs and businesses, and I applaud this government for investing over \$312 million in our capital budget. As the Premier has said on a number of occasions, government can provide the foundation of infrastructure that businesses and corporations need in order to

grow the economy. As I looked at this budget, I thought of people in my riding of Porter Creek South who would be working because of items like the \$13.5 million for maintenance and upgrading of government buildings.

When I was first elected, as I have mentioned in this House on many occasions, a number of families affected by disabilities connected with me. One family in particular who had more than one child with a number of complex medical needs reached out to me. As I listened to them share their story, I realized that addressing the needs of just one child could overwhelm the family's finances and, as I said, they had more than one child with multiple disabilities. I often contemplate how a family would cope if they didn't live in a country like Canada or a territory like Yukon. How would they manage if they had to raise those funds themselves? Now I know first-hand the money to provide the specialists, the support workers and the special medications and the necessary equipment can be extremely expensive. That money has to come from somewhere, but it seems like the members opposite think that money just falls from the sky. I don't know if they have figured out that governments get money either by collecting it from taxpayers or by borrowing it. For me, a budget that focuses on putting Yukoners to work, a budget based on confidence, is a budget that continues to enable government to help families who have children — or adult children — with special needs.

I would like to reiterate the information I shared with members last week regarding the MRI that this government invested in. Not only did it open on time and on budget, but since the program started to provide patient care less than three months ago, it has operated as planned and conducted close to 400 MRI scans. This has improved access to care, ensured quicker diagnoses, reduced medical travel and any related costs and patient stress.

We also know that some patients have received an MRI exam in Yukon up to seven months ahead of scheduled appointments down south. Thank you to the Hospital Corporation. Thank you to the Hospital Foundation and those individuals and businesses that donated their time and money and the men and women who work at the hospital each and every day.

The budget has almost \$9 million from the new territorial investment fund that will resource chronic disease management, mental wellness, e-mental health supports and Yukon telepsychiatry programs.

This budget continues to provide funds for long-term care, including converting the old Oblate house into a small continuing care facility as an interim solution. It includes \$26 million for the new continuing care facility at Whistle Bend. We have \$7.8 million for the 15-bed McDonald Lodge continuing care facility in Dawson City. This budget has money to help shelter and house people with mental health needs. We have invested over \$10 million for the new Salvation Army centre and over \$650,000 in O&M funding for the transitional housing for persons with mental health conditions. We have \$21 million for the new Sarah Steele Building.

The Member for Klondike talks a good game about mental health. We are doing more than talking about it. We are investing in services for people with mental health challenges — shelter, housing, treatment, wellness. We are fulfilling our commitments to Yukoners.

In conclusion, not only do I look forward to my duties each and every day in serving the public, but I look forward to working with an incredible Yukon Party team — the premier, my caucus colleagues and our amazing staff who can deliver on its commitments to Yukoners time and time again.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: It is a privilege to get up and speak today about the *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*. I do rise today to talk a little bit about some of the Department of Environment's ongoing work and plans for the fiscal year.

First, however I do want to note my appreciation and the good work undertaken by the department staff. Day in and day out, they do a great job. Whether you are out hunting or enjoying a relaxing weekend in a government campground, or marvelling over some of the Yukon's great environment, the Department of Environment staff have a role in making these safe, welcoming activities. Of course, this role is often done in collaboration with the First Nations, our renewable resource councils — I will speak about them a little bit — and with the land claims organizations such as the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

It is important that the department build and maintain strong and trusted partnerships, and we have done that because we recognize that stewardship of the department is improved through strong, effective partnerships.

I just want to talk a little bit about some of the work we are doing right now when it comes to climate change. In 2012, the *Yukon Government Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report* — we established additional greenhouse gas reduction targets and supporting actions for those key Yukon sectors that are collectively responsible for the majority of territorial emissions: transportation, building and energy efficiency, industrial and electrical sectors. We have heard some of this in the House earlier today.

The Yukon government supports made-in-Yukon innovations, including development and commercialization of the cold climate technologies — Yukon Research Centre — energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy incentives programs — Energy Solutions Centre, Yukon Housing Corporation — and expansion of renewable energy infrastructure for the Yukon — Energy Solutions Centre, the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation. Yukon government fosters collaborative opportunities for effective partnerships and sharing responsibilities, including Yukon's climate change committee partnership between the Yukon government Climate Change Secretariat, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Research Centre's Northern Climate Exchange, and the Arctic Athabaskan Council plus the pan-territorial adaptation partnership — partnerships between Nunavut, Northwest Territories and us here in the Yukon.

Yukon government's *Climate Change Action Plan* outlines four climate goals, including: lead Yukon action in response to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; adapt to climate change; and to enhance knowledge and understanding of climate change. So the department is working on, and this government is committed to, reducing greenhouse gas emissions for Yukon and is working across government and sectors to achieve the targets in supporting the actions set out in the 2009 *Climate Change Action Plan* and the 2012 *Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report*.

The Yukon Development Corporation is conducting research and planning for hydroelectric energy generation in the Yukon to meet the expected growth and demand for electrical power. Programs include: the microgeneration production incentives program introduced by the Yukon to enable local renewable energy to supplement electrical generation in the Yukon by allowing customers who produce energy from renewable energy sources to be compensated annually for feeding surplus power back into the grid; the good energy residential incentives program introduced by the government supporting Yukoners in building or renovating homes to achieve energy savings; the commercial energy incentive program introduced by the Yukon government to assist Yukon apartment and condominium owners in retrofitting their buildings to improve energy performance and reduce energy consumption. I can tell you Mr. Speaker, my constituents are quite happy with these programs. I have received a lot of feedback and they like the direction this government is going.

The Yukon government recognizes that the impacts of climate change are having an immediate and significant impact on the Yukon and across the north. As a result, we're focused on effective adaptation efforts as well as climate change mitigation.

Yukon government efforts to address significant impacts of climate change in the Yukon include: researching our ecosystem changes; predicting the impacts of the mountain pine beetle, which is slowly coming from the south; mapping landscape hazards; flood-risk mapping; examining the impact of thawing permafrost on agriculture, our north Alaska highway — near and dear to my heart; and the Yukon water, of course. We can't forget water. It's important.

The Yukon government has co-lead the creation of the Arctic adaptation exchange, an on-line information portal that enables the sharing of adaptation information across the Arctic. When I was briefed on this, I was very impressed with the department's hard work and this is something that globally will be sought after by many jurisdictions in many countries, I'm sure, as we move forward.

We also foster collaborative opportunities for effective partnerships, cooperation and sharing of responsibility, including partnerships in the pan-territorial adaptation partnership that I spoke about, adaptation and mitigation groups, and the adaptation national platform run by NRCan.

The Yukon government's *Climate Change Action Plan* demonstrates key initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas

emissions and responds to the changes in our climate that we're already seeing.

The Yukon supports work at the local, regional, national, and subnational levels and addresses climate change and simultaneously continues to ensure that economic opportunities are created for our residents through balanced sustainable development.

The Yukon government currently measures and verifies and reports on emissions from the Yukon government on the internal operations to help manage government greenhouse gas emissions. We also work closely with Environment Canada to improve reporting systems for calculating Yukon-wide greenhouse gas emissions. To enable this effort, we have conducted work to better understand the Yukon's broad emissions and where they come from and are able to communicate this information back to Environment Canada.

Yukon looks forward to continuing these collaborations between the jurisdictions. It is going to better able us to enhance our ability to capture our emissions data.

We also work hard to develop infrastructure that is both resilient to the changes in permafrost underlay and in reducing energy consumption through how much we have to spend on heating.

Government-funded new residential construction meets a made-in-Yukon standard for energy efficiency called SuperGreen homes. These super-insulated homes allow for greater energy efficiency and comfort during the long winter months. Over the last three years, the Yukon power system, which services most of the Yukon's population, was powered just about 100 percent by clean energy hydro.

We continue to work on ways to further develop our clean energy portfolio across the Yukon: the expansion of the hydroelectricity and transmission capacity at the Aishihik and Mayo plants; the linking of the existing electricity grid in order to increase the utilization of renewable electricity; implementation of the microgeneration policy, which was announced in 2013; and providing the opportunity for residential and commercial electricity customers to generate electricity through renewable energy sources and sell the surplus back — I spoke of that earlier. Earlier today, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources spoke a little bit about the independent power producers policy.

The Yukon government's *Climate Change Action Plan* does outline goals; it outlines changes and this is stuff that the Yukon government brings. Also, one thing that we are really proud of is the Yukon climate change youth ambassador to the United Nations international climate change negotiations event. This year it is going to be held in Paris. This program recognizes the importance of youth involvement in climate change issues. This innovative program enhances climate change knowledge and skills within Yukon youth.

That is a little bit of an update for you with the ongoing work that the department is doing and a lot of funds within our budget go toward this.

I want to talk a little bit about some of the other stuff in Fish and Wildlife. Right now, we are just winding up the bison hunting season so the bison management — we are

looking forward. I think we have just got the finals out on the status and activities. I don't want to go into that too much.

We also have the bison health monitoring project where we have the largest disease-free herd, I believe, in the world, or at least in North America. It is important that we monitor —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. Stick: I would point to 19(b)(i). We are discussing the *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, and I would have thought it was this government's intention to pass it sooner rather than later. The member opposite does not seem to be addressing this particular bill.

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

Mr. Elias: It has been historical practice in the Assembly that when we are talking about budget bills in second reading or in general debate, the speaker is allowed a great deal of latitude within the discussion as budgetary line items throughout a budget are quite broad.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: The problem with this point of order is that it is impossible to totally separate a single appropriation bill from the government's finances as a whole.

In second reading, there was a lot of —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

I'll choose the words; I don't need any help from the gallery. During second reading, any appropriation bill can always be cast broadly — and I mean that very broadly. That will change when you get into Committee of the Whole, when you are focusing on line-by-line reading. Although it is very difficult, or impossible, for the Speaker to know where the presenter is going and how they are going to tie it together, I have to say there is no point of order at this time.

Minister of Environment, please.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I just want to highlight a few more things and I won't take up too much more time.

I was talking about bison. I also want to talk a little bit about the ongoing work with our proposed wildlife regulation changes. I want to talk about this government's commitment and how committed we are to the renewable resource councils and the fishing management board. These are set out through the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and chapter 16 and it is key that we work with them, and we sure do appreciate them and their hard work. We really thank those volunteers — those people who put their name forward to sit on these boards to look at everything from wildlife change proposals to environmental issues. I think you do a great job.

Right now the department, through this budget, has been working on the chinook salmon run. We have the salmon subcommittee and some Alaska and Yukon reps here, so we have our people out there working. Work has been ongoing in

the department with the animal protection program transferred to Environment from Community Services.

We have heard the issue — and we have listened to the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes talking about recycling regulations. That is key in this department — working with that. We have a lot of remediation programs going out and ongoing. As always, they are busy with the Conrad campground and with the management of — being that the campgrounds are now parks — the territorial parks and all our other parks. I think they are working on implementation now of our extended season — the earlier opening of the campgrounds and recreational sites — and looking at the status of the habitat protection area that we have been doing.

I spoke a little bit about climate change and there is a lot that is involved in that and I do want to just pick up a little bit on our water strategy implementation that has been going on. We had a water forum earlier and we were analyzing and looking at the results from our water forum. I think we look forward to having an annual one, if not a bi-annual one, and getting all the municipalities, and First Nations and key stakeholders in water together to share results and talk about water.

I don't have much more to say on this. I just want to add a couple more points. I think it is important — one thing that makes a difference to literally thousands of people is the work to make possible the purchase of our angling or our annual campground permits.

I just want to pick up that I think that's a key thing. Yukoners love our campgrounds and they love fishing — whether they're getting a hunting licence and a fishing licence. I just want to commend the department for the hard work that they put forward on this budget and I look forward to getting into general debate.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's a pleasure to rise today and speak to the second reading of Bill No. 17, *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*. This is a part of our broader budget, which we had begun second reading on last week and completed last week.

The Department of Community Services has a number of appropriations in this bill and I look forward to discussing them with members, but let me provide a little bit of the context within which these appropriations are made and discuss some of the items that are held within this particular budget bill. As I said, this being the interim supply, it relates to our more broad main estimate bill that we discussed previously.

As I've noted previously, the Department of Community Services makes important investments in programs, services and activities that support healthy and sustainable communities. This budget and our previous budgets have prioritized investments for Yukoners and Yukon communities that will bring long-term benefits to the territory.

Ultimately the investments that I will highlight today support our government's approach to making Yukon a great place to live for Yukoners. The breadth of these programs,

services and support offered by Community Services is impressive. I would like to walk through, if I could, some of the various branches of the department that provide these great services.

In my second reading speech to the main estimates, I covered off a number of the branches but I didn't get to all of them and I wanted to ensure that each branch of Community Services is referenced specifically. I won't return again to Protective Services, although obviously that work done in the Protective Services branch is very important. It includes EMS, Wildland Fire Management, the Emergency Measures Organization, and the Fire Marshal's Office. I did cover off many of those last week so I don't want to speak too much about those.

Let me jump ahead to the building safety and standards branch. The building safety and standards branch is responsible for helping to keep Yukoners safe in their homes and the buildings they use for work, recreation and daily business. The branch accomplishes this through developing, interpreting, administering and enforcing building plumbing, electrical and mechanical standards in unincorporated communities, rural municipalities and rural areas of Yukon. In certain municipalities a lot of these functions are conducted by the municipality and so there is a lot of work that is done between and among the various orders of government.

Building safety and standards issues permits for and conducts inspections of building construction, plumbing, electrical, gas- and boiler-related work on buildings and facilities in rural municipalities, unincorporated communities and rural areas. This year, there is a significant amount of funding identified to support the branch operations of the building safety and standards branch.

With the Community Development Division of the Department of Community Services, the Community Affairs section exists. This budget bill reflects the significant investments that we at Community Services are making to support and build the capacity of local governments. The programs and services we offer help make Yukon communities great places to live, work, play and raise families.

Community Services supports the establishment and operation of effective local governments and works to foster effective working relationships between communities and the Yukon government. Communities rely on Community Affairs staff for their integrity and professionalism, which is evident in the successful partnership with the Association of Yukon Communities and work that has been accomplished with municipal governments and local advisory councils.

The government recognizes that municipalities make a major contribution to improving Yukoners' quality of life, and we are providing over \$25 million in the main estimates to directly support local governments in 2015-16. There is money as well in the budget item before us to this end. This includes, of course, money identified for the comprehensive municipal grants. We also provide significant funding for local advisory councils. We value their contribution to local governance.

Significant funds are also made through grants in lieu of taxes, also payable to Yukon's eight municipal governments. There is a significant appropriation in this budget identified as contribution to the operations of the Association of Yukon Communities.

Yukon's Community Services promotes good governance and sustainable and healthy communities, and we believe in supporting Yukon's municipalities.

The department's support for Sport and Recreation Yukon includes support for our athletes and ambassadors to major games and at local levels for building our sport and recreation facilities so our athletes and citizens have places to train, have great places to play, and ultimately live happier and healthier lives.

We have committed significant funding in this budget to repair and upgrade existing recreational facilities in our 12 unincorporated communities.

In 2014, I should note, the then Minister of Community Services announced support for the development of a new outdoor sports complex in Whitehorse. This facility is envisioned to include two artificial turf fields, an eight-lane rubberized track and bleachers. Community Services has formalized an agreement with the Yukon Outdoor Sports Complex Association so that we can move forward together on the work required to develop this important piece of sport and recreation infrastructure. We have awarded the design contract and are working with the City of Whitehorse on finalizing the location and working with the City of Whitehorse to achieve the necessary zoning requirements. This facility will provide opportunities for enhanced training and development for Yukon athletes. It will offer a new space for the territory's recreational community to host events during the summer months. Facilities like this provide sport development as well as social development and economic benefits to the community as a whole.

Yukon government will also invest considerably in the coming year to support the Yukon's participation in the 2016 Arctic Winter Games in Nuuk, Greenland. As we recently announced, we'll be providing \$100,000 to support the Arctic X Games, an alternate event that will be hosted in Yukon to provide a competitive opportunity for participants in sports that will not be reflected at the Arctic Winter Games in 2016. Yukon's leadership on the Arctic X Games has not gone unnoticed by our partner jurisdictions across the Arctic or by the athletes who will be able to compete at the highest level in both Greenland and Whitehorse in 2016.

I should note that the work to organize that event is well underway, with sport governing bodies meeting on a fairly frequent basis to ensure that their individual sport that will be hosted in the Arctic X Games are ready to go for the event next year. Obviously, we're hopeful that this event will be a resounding success, not only for Yukon athletes, but for Yukon volunteers, coaches, parents and others who participate in these types of activities.

This budget also includes a significant investment to support the 2015 Western Canada Summer Games, where I'm

confident that, again, our Yukon athletes will be ambassadors for our territory and for their sports.

During my response to the budget a few weeks ago, I had the chance to highlight some of those wonderful examples of Yukon athletes succeeding and representing Yukon in a number of national and international forums, and I would like to commend all athletes who do so.

We also recently announced a \$400,000 increase in the community recreation assistance grant funding for unincorporated Yukon communities. This funding increase begins in this 2015-16 year and helps our communities fund recreation, wellness and active living opportunities.

As I'm sure all members can appreciate, our investments in sport and recreation this year contribute significantly to making Yukon a great place to live and play.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about a branch of the Department of Community Services that doesn't often get perhaps as much attention as it deserves, but it is nonetheless a very important branch and one that often represent the heart of a neighbourhood or a community — especially in rural communities. That is the Yukon Public Libraries branch of Community Services. There are significant investments that are made in this budget to provide public library services in Yukon communities. These include funding to operate the Whitehorse Public Library here in Whitehorse on the waterfront and to support staff in our community libraries.

Circulation of physical materials remains at the heart of libraries and their use continues to expand. In Whitehorse, we estimate that over 150,000 items were borrowed in 2014-15 and that in the communities over 34,000 items were borrowed. Loans of physical materials are now complemented by the use of electronic resources such as the e-library, which continues to rise in popularity. An estimated 5,000-plus publications were borrowed electronically in 2014-15. The e-library is very successful, with some 2,000 e-books and audio books available for downloading. New titles in both English and in French are added to the collection each year. Since its launch in 2011, over 1,100 individual users have borrowed items from the collection more than 15,000 times.

Libraries play an important social role in our communities, as I mentioned earlier, and foster connections between people. Programs for all ages, public meeting rooms and Internet access are just some of the services offered by libraries. Our libraries provide a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment to relax, study, read or play. They are also a key pillar in making Yukon a great place to live.

There is a significant amount of funding noted in this budget bill for operation and maintenance funding allocated for our communities operations branch to manage public drinking water facilities, solid waste, waste-water disposal and other services that benefit unincorporated Yukon communities. This includes our recently announced increase to support recycling diversion credits, along with a significant increase to support solid-waste management.

I should note that my understanding is that, as a result of the enhanced diversion credits we provided, Raven Recycling will be reopening its public drop-off as a result of their

board's decision earlier this week. I had a conversation with the board's president yesterday and I understand from CBC's Twitter that was an announcement that was made earlier today as well. If Twitter has misled me, I apologize, but that's my understanding as of a few hours ago.

Also, Thursday's *Whitehorse Star* indicates that Raven is to restore full services as well. I thank the former Minister of Community Services, the current Minister of Justice, for sharing that copy of the newspaper with me.

Our O&M investment and operations also includes an increase to support community groundwater monitoring. In 2015-16, Yukon government is committed significant funds toward a new water delivery truck in Ross River, an important resource that serves the community.

Infrastructure development continues to be a priority of the department in 2015-16. Our department delivers infrastructure projects through our Infrastructure Development branch, along with our Community Affairs and community operations branches. One can find highlights of significant amounts in gas tax funded projects in this budget, including funding for the construction of a new lagoon for the community of Ross River, support for the Ross River solid-waste facility and upgrades to the Burwash sewage lagoon.

A new gas tax administrative agreement was signed on July 24, 2014, which provides up to \$163 million in funding from 2014 to 2024 for public infrastructure projects in Yukon communities. Eligible categories have been expanded and remaining money from the previous fund has been rolled into the new agreement. To date, over \$73 million in funding has been approved for 185 gas tax projects in various municipalities and First Nation initiatives through the gas tax fund. These initiatives are critical to our communities.

This budget includes comprehensive support for Building Canada projects across the territory. Some of the projects continue work that has been started in previous years and all the projects make a difference to our communities. Since 2007, federal, territorial and municipal governments have committed over \$265 million to core infrastructure needs in Yukon under the original Building Canada fund. The new Building Canada fund will provide approximately \$342 million to support Yukon infrastructure over the next 10 years.

We expect to see over \$29 million invested in Building Canada projects in 2015-16 in the Yukon. This funding, along with the gas tax, helps us to address our ongoing infrastructure needs, create jobs and improve the quality of life for all Yukoners. We are currently developing a new Yukon infrastructure plan and are engaging with key stakeholders across the territory. The staff from this branch have been in a number of Yukon communities already, with the remaining communities yet to have meetings scheduled. We have received significant input from municipalities, LACs, First Nations and a number of other stakeholders throughout the territory to develop the next set of plans for infrastructure for the territory.

Specific Building Canada fund highlights that will come in the coming year include: funding to support upgrades to the Carmacks waste-water plant; upgrades to the Dawson water

system, which includes funding for their force main — something that was identified as a priority by their mayor — Mayo water, sewer and road upgrades that will accommodate existing and future urban lot development; and water well upgrades in Mayo that will include a new well, water treatment and distribution of local drinking water.

Roads will be upgraded in both Pelly Crossing and Teslin. There is funding to support the replacement of three lift stations in Teslin as a part of upgrades to their water system. The Tagish Taku subdivision supply pumphouse and fill point will be constructed with funding support in this budget. There will be significant funding to support the construction of a new water treatment plant and pumphouse in Watson Lake — I believe the bids for that project have closed, although I am not sure if it has been awarded yet. There is significant funding to go to support the design and construction of a water treatment plant to serve the communities of Deep Creek, Horse Creek and Grizzly Creek. There is support for upgrades to the community water supply in Mendenhall, including well upgrades, storage tanks, filter and treatment systems and an addition to the facility to house new equipment.

There is significant money identified to support our efforts in building on our solid-waste action strategy to make infrastructure improvements to our territory-wide solid-waste management system. This will include upgrades to make our facilities more efficient.

In the coming year, Yukon will also invest significantly in flood- and erosion-control projects throughout the territory, including projects in Carcross, Mayo, and Liard River.

I realize my time is elapsing rapidly so I will conclude, but I did want to note that there are significant projects underway throughout the territory on community infrastructure. Just a few of those active projects that are underway currently: in Burwash there is a wellhead protection project underway; in Carmacks we are undertaking Carmacks waste-water collection systems improvements; upgrading roads and resurfacing and improving waste-water upgrades.

In the period of 2008 to 2016, the period that is of the previous Building Canada fund — I should note that it's often indicated by some members that Whitehorse is perhaps getting all of the attention and that communities are being ignored. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, between 2008 and 2016, communities other than Whitehorse received by far the bulk of the Building Canada funding in that previous Building Canada fund.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for second reading of Bill No. 17 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 17: *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I am pleased to be able to provide the Committee of the Whole with some introductory comments on Bill No. 17, *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

I thought I would just briefly begin by responding to comments made by the Leader of the Liberal Party in his second reading debate regarding the former Deputy Minister of Finance. I thought what I would do for the record is just

clarify the message of congratulations I provided to Stephen LeClair soon after his departure. I said: "I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to Stephen LeClair on his appointment to an important new position. Until recently, Stephen served as Yukon's Deputy Minister of Finance. He has left the territory to take up responsibilities as Ontario's first Financial Accountability Officer.

"Though I'm disappointed to see a person of his calibre leave the Yukon government, I wish Stephen all the best in Ontario and thank him for his service here.

"Stephen's new position makes him the first provincial parliamentary budget officer in Canada. As Financial Accountability Officer, he is responsible for providing independent analysis to the legislative assembly on the state of the province's finances.

"He was appointed Yukon's deputy minister of Finance in August 2014. Prior to that, he served as assistant deputy minister of the Economics and Fiscal Policy division with the Alberta Treasury Board and Finance ministry. He also served in a number of senior roles with the N.W.T. and federal governments.

"Stephen provided this message as he was leaving for his new position in Ontario:

"My short time in the territory has been wonderful and working for the Government of Yukon was all that I expected. I was privileged to work with people who take pride in the work they do. Their dedication made me proud to be a part of Yukon government. My early departure from my position came only because I was offered a unique opportunity."

Madam Chair, obviously the conjecture that was provided by the Liberal leader is nothing more than really grasping at straws. I took it more as really elementary schoolyard gossip and it was absolutely wrong.

This appropriation act will allow the public service to continue to make certain expenditures while the main estimates for 2015-16 are considered by the Legislative Assembly during this Sitting.

The interim funding requested is for the period of April 1, 2015 until June 4, 2015. The total amount for which approval is sought is \$353,979,000 and is made up of capital expenditure appropriations totalling \$96,621,000 and operation and maintenance expenditures appropriations totalling \$257,358,000.

The amounts required for this period have been derived by canvassing Yukon government departments to determine their expenditure requirements. The amounts are significant, largely owing to the fact that a large portion of commitments and expenditures are made during this period.

I look forward to debating this interim supply appropriation bill in this Legislature and for its quick passage so that the operations of Yukon government can continue.

Ms. Moorcroft: As the recorded vote at second reading on Bill No. 17, *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16* is put on the public record, the NDP Official Opposition supports the interim supply bill allowing for operation and maintenance and capital funds to be released for government operations during the period from April 1 to June 4, 2015.

Chair: Does any other member wish to speak in general debate?

We are going to move on to clause-by-clause debate.

On Clause 1

Clause 1 agreed to

On Clause 2

Clause 2 agreed to

On Schedule A

Schedule A agreed to

On Schedule B

Schedule B agreed to

On Schedule C

Schedule C agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, I move that Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be reported without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be reported without amendment.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 17, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 84: *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments — Second Reading*

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 84, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Dixon.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I move that Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to*

Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's a pleasure to rise today at second reading of Bill No. 84, amendments to the *Public Lotteries Act* and related enactments.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that regulation of gaming in Yukon is in full statutory compliance with the *Criminal Code* of Canada. The *Public Lotteries Act* currently authorizes the Government of Yukon to conduct and manage interjurisdictional lotteries, such as Lotto 649. Other lottery activities and the Yukon's only gambling hall, Diamond Tooth Gerties, are currently regulated by the *Lottery Licensing Act*.

As you and members may recall, our government recently assisted Diamond Tooth Gerties with the purchase of new slot machines. There was announcement made in July of 2014 that we would be doing so. On July 15, 2014, the announcement was made that Yukon government was providing a one-time \$1.1 million contribution to the Klondike Visitors Association in Dawson City to replace aging slot machines at Diamond Tooth Gerties gambling hall.

As the minister of the day said, "Through this investment we are helping ensure that Diamond Tooth Gerties continues to be a key tourism asset for Dawson City, as well as a significant source of revenue supporting tourism promotion by the Klondike Visitors Association" and that "Revenue from slot machines at Diamond Tooth Gerties is also a major source of funding for the crime prevention and victim services trust fund." That was the then minister responsible and now Minister of Justice.

As was noted on July 15 of last year under Yukon's *Lottery Licensing Act*, which limits licensed gambling to charitable organizations, the Yukon government receives 25 percent of the KVA's slot machine revenue, which it directs to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund. This fund provides support to Yukon community groups for projects aimed at preventing crime and supporting victims, which I'll explain more about soon.

Associated with that assistance was a review of the legislative framework under which Diamond Tooth Gerties operates. In that process, it has come to our attention that legislative changes are required and that Diamond Tooth Gerties cannot continue to be licensed through the *Lottery Licensing Act*, Yukon's charitable gaming legislation.

Under the proposed amendments contained in this bill, Diamond Tooth Gerties' gaming operations, including slot machines, will be conducted by the Klondike Visitors Association as an agent of the Yukon government, but Diamond Tooth Gerties' day-to-day operations will continue just as they do at present. By moving legislative oversight of Gerties from the *Lottery Licensing Act* to the *Public Lotteries Act*, as this bill does, we will ensure that their gaming operations are fully compliant with the *Criminal Code*.

I would be remiss if I didn't take the opportunity to recognize the excellent work done by the Klondike Visitors Association, or KVA. This not-for-profit destination-

marketing organization promotes tourism to Dawson City and contributes to economic growth in the community and the territory. In addition to its first-class operation of Diamond Tooth Gerties, the Klondike Visitors Association also operates other important historic venues in Dawson City, including the Jack London Museum and Free Claim #6. It also hosts annual iconic events such as Thaw di Gras spring carnival, the Yukon Gold Panning Championships and the Yukon international outhouse race, which attracts thousands of visitors each year to the area and creates hundreds of jobs.

The KVA's mandate includes: destination marketing, operation of attractions, and presentation of special events that increase visitation and add to the quality of life in the community of Dawson City. The Klondike Visitors Association's owned-and-operated attractions include those I listed, as well as a few others. A few examples of the events that they host are the ones I just mentioned.

Bill No. 84, the one before us today, supports this government's priority of promoting diversification in other sectors of Yukon's economy, including tourism. For clarity, these changes affect only the structural legislative framework for the existing casino managed by the KVA. The functional operation of Gerties will remain unchanged.

I also wanted to mention that both the KVA and the Yukon Lottery Commission have been fully briefed on this bill and understand the need to make this regulatory change.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the Yukon government's share of the net proceeds from the slot machines will continue to flow into the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, which has been supporting Yukon community groups since 1998. The crime prevention and victim services trust fund awards funding twice each year for eligible projects that are intended to reduce crime, prevent violence against women and children, address the root causes of crime, provide services and information to victims of crime, and provide information about crime prevention and victimization.

Most recently, in January 2015, the crime prevention and victim services trust fund awarded funding to the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations for their winter communications and outdoor skills training program and to the Carcross-Tagish First Nation for their building skills for life project. The crime prevention and victim services trust fund also provided support to the Town of Faro for its dinner nights and training, to the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon, FASSY, for their community lunch program, and to the Ynklude Arts Society for its heart will speak program. The crime prevention and victim services trust fund is coordinated by a board of trustees. The board members include community members and representatives from the Yukon government, First Nations, women's organizations and the RCMP.

I would like to thank the various department officials from Community Services for their work in preparing this new legislation, which will ensure success of Community Services' vision of a vibrant, healthy and sustainable Yukon community.

That concludes my second reading comments for this particular bill. As I indicated previously, I believe it is relatively straightforward and will ensure that we bring ourselves into line with the *Criminal Code* of Canada, which of course is important, but also will do so in a manner that doesn't disrupt the operations of the Gerties gambling hall in Dawson City, which is managed by the KVA and which will continue to be managed on a day-to-day basis in a very similar fashion as it is today.

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like to thank the Community Services and the Justice officials who worked on this bill and who provided a briefing on the bill to the opposition.

The *Public Lotteries Act* amendment is designed to resolve the discovery of a conflict with the Canadian *Criminal Code* regarding the Klondike Visitors Association's ongoing operation of Diamond Tooth Gerties casino in Dawson City. It's good that this conflict was caught by a review of the legislative framework for gaming and that it is now being resolved.

The Yukon NDP is a steadfast supporter of Yukon institutions, like Gerties, that contribute to Dawson City's status as a key tourism attraction. These process amendments are necessary to allow the Klondike Visitors Association to continue operating under its current gambling licence.

The Yukon NDP will support this bill. I do have some questions for the minister that I'll put on the record now so that he can respond either in his closing remarks or in Committee of the Whole.

The minister referred to the fact that the Klondike Visitors Association had been briefed on the bill. I would like to know whether the Yukon government consulted with the Klondike Visitors Association in drafting the amendments, and what was the outcome of that consultation if it did occur.

Do the amendments change the relationship between the Yukon government and the Klondike Visitors Association? Does it create any additional burdens?

The question of casinos in the Yukon is, as I'm sure everyone knows, a controversial issue, so I would like the minister to make it clear and to put it on the record: Do the amendments open the door to the issuing of permits for more casinos besides Diamond Tooth Gerties?

Finally, I was pleased to hear the minister speaking about the revenues that flow to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, which was enacted in 1998 when I served as Minister of Justice. I would like the minister to tell us what the Yukon government's share of net proceeds that flow into the crime prevention and victim services trust fund has been for the last couple of years.

Mr. Silver: I'm happy to stand to speak on Bill No. 84, the amendments to the *Public Lotteries Act* and related enactments — legislation. I would like to begin by thanking the Minister of Community Services for coming to speak to me personally on this piece of legislation, seeing as Diamond Tooth Gerties is in my constituency of Klondike. I would like

to also thank the officials from his department for the briefing on the bill itself.

Of course, as mentioned, the primary focus of the bill is to fix a legislative oversight that may have caused the closure of a beloved Dawson and Yukon institution — Canada's first casino, Diamond Tooth Gerties Gambling Hall.

I appreciate the haste with which the department officials were able to make the changes to the legislation and, of course, I will be in support of this bill. I think it's necessary to say as well how important the KVA is for tourism, not just in Dawson but in all of the Yukon. I would like to thank the staff at the KVA for not only just running the gambling hall itself, but also other events on a yearly basis around our community.

With that being said too, I'd just like to give a personal shout-out to the quality of entertainment at Diamond Tooth Gerties. Terri Terrai and her troupe need to be commended for the level of professionalism for Diamond Tooth Gerties and the singing and dancing. This is a professional troupe of musicians and artisans. Amy Salloway, as Diamond Tooth Gertie, is absolutely fantastic, not only as a performer but as an individual. Stephan Gallant, who does the musical production as well, is a comparable musician — world-class.

It's interesting that, when they leave Dawson, they're international. They go all over the world playing music. I know that every year they quite enjoy coming back to the Klondike, and it is quite a procession. The amount of work that goes into providing a show at Diamond Tooth Gerties is unbelievable. The dancers and Terri will show up and start working pretty soon here — probably within a week or so — and the amount of attention given to the show is unbelievable.

You can imagine how much it would take just to do the three shows per night, but as the season comes to an end, it is so important for them to be part of the community and to give back to the community. They personalize the very last show of the year, and in that personalization they involve members of the community. They come together and they have gags and the whole night is unbelievable. I don't think there is a person in town who doesn't show up to the final night at Gerties. If you can imagine how much work it takes to put together a show for the season, for the tourists and for the tourism industry, it is just as much work to then change all of those individual acts and add gags to them and special guests. It is just an amazing opportunity for folks in the community, including me — I am a regular special guest in the final show — and it is a wonderful treat to be able to work with such professionals.

On that note, Amy Salloway is our Gertie, but we also have a male performer, Jesse Cooke. He is what we call our "Mertie", our male Gertie. He is not the professional regular weekly male lead, but he does fill in on those off-days. The reason why I am bringing it up is that this is the opportunity for local musicians and artists to learn their own craft and to develop their craft and be able to share the stage with some of the best entertainers that Canada has to offer, and to learn and to grow their own talents as well. I didn't want to spend too much time talking about that, but I thought it was worth mentioning how important it is to have the KVA, how

important Diamond Tooth Gerties is to our community. I would like to end by thanking the minister for his quick work on changes to this legislation, and I will be supporting the bill.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would like to thank the Minister of Community Services for tabling this legislation. I would also like to acknowledge and thank staff of Community Services in the policy area for their work on this. As other members have acknowledged, this legislation was developed fairly quickly in response to an issue that was identified. I would also like to thank the staff of the Department of Justice that was involved in that work as well. This is an issue of — as the minister noted — addressing a non-compliance issue that goes back a few decades in terms of when it first started. Once the issue was identified, it was determined by government that we should move forward and address it in a timely manner because of the importance of being in compliance with the specific wording in the *Criminal Code*.

It was identified, as the Minister of Community Services noted, as a result of the investment that the Yukon government made last year in support of the Klondike Visitors Association. It was just shy of a year ago when I was up on Dawson for the Association of Yukon Communities conference that staff and members of the Board of Klondike Visitors Association, which runs Diamond Tooth Gerties, provided a tour to me and to department staff of the facility. They showed us and explained in great detail the issues with their aging slot machines and showed us with each machine.

They described the age of them and explained their challenges in getting parts for machines that in some cases were well past the point where they could receive parts for it from the manufacturer, not to mention that they were using very outdated technology because, as we noted in making the announcement — I thank the Member for Copperbelt South for acknowledging on behalf of the Official Opposition that funding from slot machine revenue is a very important source of funding for the crime prevention and victim services trust fund. Twenty-five percent of the KVA slot machine revenue is directed to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund and that fund provides support to Yukon community groups for projects aimed at preventing crime and supporting victims.

Through that one-time \$1.1-million contribution to the Klondike Visitors Association to replace the slot machines, it should be noted that that the annual amounts that come from that revenue are put into the crime prevention and victim services trust fund tend to be around \$250,000 per year, so this will, though not directly, go into Yukon government. The money that is then being invested into crime prevention and victim services will be certainly supported and enhanced through this investment in the slot machines and ensuring that Diamond Tooth Gerties gambling hall continues to provide quality entertainment to Yukoners and tourists alike and to remain one of the iconic tourism sites in Dawson City.

For more than 40 years, revenue from Gerties has gone toward preserving historic sites, producing local events and marketing the Klondike to the world and the new slot machines were intended to provide an enjoyable visitor

experience and of course to continue to ensure that remains a strong source of revenue, not only for the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, but in support of the other excellent work that Klondike Visitors Association does in marketing Dawson City as a destination and being a very important part of the fabric of that community.

With that, I will be supporting the legislation. I will thank the members opposite for their supportive comments toward the bill. I thank the Minister of Community Services for his work on this and again acknowledge and thank the staff of Community Services and Justice who were involved both in the preparation of the investment agreement to replace those slot machines and those who were involved in the development of this particular piece of legislation.

I would also like to finally note and thank and congratulate the Klondike Visitors Association board members and their staff for the good work that they do in running not only Diamond Tooth Gerties but the other activities operated by KVA, which include the Jack London Museum and Claim #6 during the summer season, as well as supporting annual events including the Yukon Gold Panning Championships, the Thaw di Gras spring carnival and the Great Klondike International Outhouse Race — all of which are an important part of attracting thousands of visitors each year to the Dawson City area.

With that I commend the legislation to the House.

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

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I would like to thank members for their comments so far with regard to this bill at second reading. I would like thank the Member for Copperbelt South for her comments with regard to the bill and for her questions. I would also like to thank the Member for Klondike for his comments on the bill and his reflections on the value of the Diamond Tooth Gerties facility to the community of Dawson. I too enjoy very much the entertainment that is provided at Diamond Tooth Gerties as well as the experience that it provides not only to tourists and visitors, but Yukoners like me who make the trip to Dawson a few times a year to take in the bright lights and entertainment of the Klondike.

I have to admit that I wasn't able to scribble down the questions that were asked in their entirety with regard to this bill, so I will have to defer some of those questions to Committee of the Whole. That will certainly allow us to have a more informal discussion, as Committee does, about those questions.

I did want to note that the two major groups that were consulted in the development in this bill were the Yukon Lottery Commission and the Klondike Visitors Association. In reference to the first, the commission's role in public lotteries is established through the Yukon *Public Lotteries Act* and regulations. As a gaming activity, the sale of lottery tickets is also subject to the *Criminal Code* of Canada that permits gaming under certain circumstances. The law assigns to the Yukon Lottery Commission the responsibility for conducting

and managing public lotteries in Yukon. The commission conducts and manages public lotteries through an agreement with Western Canada Lottery Corporation.

In addition to its responsibilities for public lotteries, the commission also allocates the profits from the sale of lottery tickets. Profits support the operations of the commission's secretariat, Lotteries Yukon, with the remaining profits shared with the Yukon government and distributed by the commission to numerous non-profits, local authorities and municipalities for art, sport and recreation in Yukon.

Whether it is a local music festival, a soccer team travelling outside the territory to a tournament or upgrades to trails for a community association, profits from the sale of lottery tickets have likely touched each of our communities in some way. I know that the commission is proud of those contributions that support, sustain and grow art, sport and recreation in Yukon communities.

The Yukon Lottery Commission obviously played a role in this and was consulted. We can get into the details of what was said and what the various thoughts are about the bill in Committee, but I will say that the input provided was valuable. The Klondike Visitors Association was also consulted and provided fairly simple input in response, but which I would be happy to describe at greater length in Committee.

There was a question about the amount of funding that has gone through the crime prevention and victim services trust fund. I think the minister indicated some of that answer, but we can provide further information in Committee. I should note that the fund provides support to eligible projects that include those that promote and provide services intended to reduce crime, prevent violence against women and children, address the root causes of crime, provide information about crime prevention and victimization or provide services and information to support victims. Non-profit organizations, municipal governments, First Nation governments and schools, councils or school boards are all eligible for funding under that fund. The fund can be used for wages, honorariums, rental costs, utilities, printing, advertising and program supplies, equipment and materials. Some of those items have some funding limits or restrictions.

The board of trustees reviews proposals twice a year in the spring and in the fall. The approval process is that proposals are reviewed by the Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Board of Trustees. Board members include community members and representatives from the Government of Yukon, First Nation groups, women's organizations and the RCMP. Approval of funding can take up to six weeks. The crime prevention coordinator can inform applicants of the status of their proposal upon request.

Last year, there were a number of successful groups that received funding. I listed some of them in my second reading response and I won't list too many more. They are available on-line if members are interested in them. The overall numbers in terms of the financial value of the contributions can be discussed later in Committee.

So I think I've at least touched on some of the questions and comments that have been raised by members, but will reserve the more detailed discussion for Committee in the near future and would, at this time, again thank members for their comments. This particular bill obviously isn't one that factored into our legislative agenda at any time. It was one where, from time to time, government is faced with these types of events or circumstances and have to respond quickly and nimbly. I would commend the public service, the members of the Community Services branch, as well as the Justice department, which have provided significant input to this bill. They were able to draft it, bring it together and have it ready for me to present to the Legislature in a very short period of time and they deserve to be commended for that rapid response and good and hard work.

So Mr. Speaker, with that, I would commend this bill to the House at second reading.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

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

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 84 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Is it the wish of members to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill No. 84, An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much Madam Chair. It is a pleasure to rise today at Committee of the Whole to discuss Bill No. 84, amendments to the *Public Lotteries Act*. I am joined today by Charlene Beauchemin from the Department of Community Services, who has become no stranger to this House, and Karen Wenckebach, a solicitor with the Department of Justice.

Madam Chair, I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill. It's being introduced in order to bring the regulation of gaming in Yukon into full statutory compliance with the *Criminal Code* of Canada. This bill will amend the *Public Lotteries Act* so that the regulation of Yukon's only gambling hall, Diamond Tooth Gerties in Dawson City, is placed under that act rather than the *Lottery Licensing Act*.

As you will recall, the government has been advised that Diamond Tooth Gerties cannot continue to be licensed through the *Lottery Licensing Act* because that act covers only charitable gaming operations and cannot be the tool to regulate slot machines. The government therefore is acting promptly to address this situation in ensuring that Diamond Tooth Gerties is regulated under the appropriate legislation.

Under the proposed amendments contained in this bill, Diamond Tooth Gerties gaming operations, including slot machines, will be conducted by the Klondike Visitors Association — the KVA — as an agent of Yukon government. However, these amendments will not affect Diamond Tooth Gerties day-to-day operations. The KVA will continue to conduct and manage Diamond Tooth Gerties' operations as it currently does and the public will not perceive any change.

Again, the sole purpose of these amendments is to address a regulatory anomaly around the legislative framework that governs the operations of a non-charitable casino venue.

As I noted earlier, the Klondike Visitors Association and the Yukon Lottery Commission have been fully briefed on this bill and understand the need to make this regulatory change.

The government recognizes the excellent work done by the KVA in Dawson City in promoting tourism in the Klondike Valley and Yukon overall and contributing to economic growth in Yukon. Under these proposed amendments, the government's share of the net proceeds from the slot machines will continue to flow into the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, which has been supporting Yukon community groups since 1998.

The crime prevention and victim services trust fund awards funding twice each year for eligible projects that are intended to reduce crime, prevent violence against women and children, address the root causes of crime, provide services and information to victims of crime, and provide information about crime prevention and victimization.

I look forward to getting into debate about the bill here in Committee and reviewing the questions that were put forward by the Member for Copperbelt South earlier, and I look forward to answering them in turn and providing the information, as necessary, for members of the House.

Ms. Moorcroft: I believe the minister's remarks have answered the first two questions that I put on the record at second reading, but I'll just ask him to confirm that the amendments don't create any additional burdens for the Klondike Visitors Association in the nature of its relationship with the Yukon government.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: My understanding is that it will not impose any additional burden on the Klondike Visitors Association. The best way to understand it is that we're simply picking up the current system and moving it under a different act. There's no change from the perception of the KVA; it's simply how we regulate them on the government side, under which act and the legislative framework under which they're regulated.

I should note that I know the member commented that I answered partly her questions raised in second reading about the bill. One of them was whether or not the KVA was consulted on the draft amendments. I wanted to note that we did review the draft bill with the KVA's executive director, Gary Parker, and there were no concerns raised from his perspective. This was simply a housekeeping initiative. Obviously, from the perspective of the individuals who have to do the work on that, it's a little bit more than simply that but, from the perspective of the KVA, there will be no change.

The bill also does not affect the relationship between Yukon government and the KVA or the Yukon Lottery Commission. The role of the Yukon Lottery Commission for interjurisdictional lotteries remains unchanged. KVA's operation will also remain unchanged. Its regulation is simply being moved under the proper legislative tool.

I think that covers off the questions asked by the member.

Ms. Moorcroft: The other issue I had raised at second reading was the question of casinos, which is known to be a controversial one in Yukon.

I want to ask the minister to make it clear and put it on the record: Do the amendments open the door to the issuing of permits for more casinos besides Diamond Tooth Gerties? I understand the matter was discussed at the briefing provided

to opposition members, but I just wanted to ask the minister to clarify that on the public record.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The simple answer is no. The legislation before us does not in any way increase opportunities for gaming or change the type of gaming that will occur or can occur in Yukon. The legislative changes will address only the existing casino managed by the KVA.

I would acknowledge that gambling and the ongoing activities of gambling halls, like Diamond Tooth Gerties, can sometimes be controversial and, from time to time, government is provided with input from various stakeholders in the community that they'd like to either see less or more activity in the territory.

We acknowledge that those discussions are always ongoing at the community level — that folks are always expressing their opinions about whether they would like to see additional gambling opportunities, perhaps in Whitehorse, or fewer or less opportunities throughout the territory. This bill doesn't deal with that ongoing discussion. This is simply a matter of us addressing a current issue based on a current suite of gambling that takes place at the Gerties gambling hall in Dawson City.

It's a localized situation. It's a targeted amendment to a targeted set of legislation to address those needs. Obviously, government will have to, in the future, consider whether changes are merited to additional legislation to provide for either additional or less gambling opportunities for Yukoners, but that's not a decision that has been made by the government and that's not reflected in this bill at all. It's simply a matter of dealing with Diamond Tooth Gerties and the Klondike Visitors Association.

As I indicated, Madam Chair, the way we're doing that is by making them an agent of government, which is a relatively simple change in terms of the amendments. The imperative here is that it brings us into compliance with the *Criminal Code* of Canada, which, as we learned, had not been the case for the past several decades. So it's simply a correction of the legislative oversight of this particular casino.

Ms. Moorcroft: I thank the minister for that. Finally, on the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, I'm certainly aware that the trust fund publishes its annual audited statements and that they're tabled in this Legislative Assembly. The minister indicated that all of the government's share from the Klondike Visitors Association's operation of Diamond Tooth Gerties is directly given to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund, and so I just wanted to confirm that there's no cap on the revenues that can go to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The member is correct — there is no cap. The bill speaks to a percentage of the amount.

I did want to note that it's not all of Gerties' revenue. It's only the revenue from the slot machines. Other table games — the roulette wheel, the poker and other card games that are played in Gerties, blackjack, et cetera — are not subject to that framework. It is just the slot machines that provide the funding to the crime prevention and victim services trust fund.

Over the past several years, as a result of Yukon government's portion of slot machine revenues in 2014, that amount was \$269,222.42; in 2013 it was \$277,841.80; in 2012 it was \$284,582.95; and in 2011 it was \$291,101.76. As the member correctly pointed out, those figures are available on an annual basis from the fund that publishes a report, which is tabled in the Legislature.

As well as the overall amounts, the individual projects that are funded are listed in that report and they provide a helpful summary of what the projects are intended to do. The projects tend to range anywhere from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars, but they depend on the type of project that is being applied for and they are based on an eligibility list that I have read in the House a few times, so I won't read it again.

Ms. Moorcroft: I want to thank the minister for his response and I have no further questions in general debate.

Clerk: Does any other member wish to speak in general debate?

We are going to move then to clause-by-clause debate.

On Clause 1

Clause 1 agreed to

On Clause 2

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I wanted to note that under section 2, the term "government gaming establishment" is used in a new section 17.01 and 17.03. The intent is that the definition will help to define YG's relationship with the KVA and will distinguish it from interjurisdictional lotteries, as per the Yukon Lotteries Commission. The existing term "public lottery" is replaced with the more descriptive "interjurisdictional lottery". The meaning of "interjurisdictional lottery" is the same as the existing public lottery and includes Lotto 649; however, this new definition will distinguish this type of lottery scheme from that of a gaming establishment.

The Klondike Visitors Association is given a special role in relation to the government gaming establishment. This definition ensures that the new provisions of the act will continue to operate as intended if the KVA changes its name or is succeeded by a different organization.

The term "licensed agent" is used in new section 17.01 to 17.03, amended section 18 and the consequential amendment to the *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act*. A licensed agent is the agent identified to the scheme on behalf of Yukon government and to "operate a lottery" will specifically mean the Klondike Visitors Association. A lottery scheme is already used in the act. This definition clarifies that its meaning is the one used in the relevant *Criminal Code* provision. Under 207.1(a) of the *Criminal Code*, only governments or agents of governments can operate slot machines and this must be done in accordance with legislation enacted in Yukon.

Under no circumstances can slot machines be operated under a charitable gaming legislative framework, which cuts to the core of why the bill was necessary. We had previously been permitting or licensing the activity of slot machines under charitable gaming, which obviously was contrary to the

Criminal Code. These definitions go a certain way toward providing the clarity necessary to put us into compliance with the *Criminal Code*.

I should also note that I realize that there are further changes that others would like to see made in the future with regard to some of the definitions — in particular, the Yukon Lottery Commission made some submissions around this. I just wanted to note that while we appreciated that input, we really wanted to focus on the issue at hand, and that was bringing the regulation of Gerties and the KVA into compliance with the *Criminal Code*. That is what this addresses here.

Clause 2 agreed to

On Clause 3

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Just briefly, throughout the act “interjurisdictional lottery” replaces “public lotteries”; existing section 11 uses the term “public lottery schemes” instead. That too is replaced. This change does not impact the existing law. It simply describes these sections that apply to a special type of interjurisdictional lottery that falls under the responsibility of the Yukon Lottery Commission, which includes Lotto 649 and scratch-and-win types of tickets.

Clause 3 agreed to

On Clause 4

Hon. Mr. Dixon: This section outlines what a government gaming establishment can do. The *Criminal Code* states that only a provincial/territorial government or its agent may operate certain lottery schemes and only under the authority of an act of that province or territory. This new section 17.01 provides the legislative authority required and allows the Yukon government to carry on a government gaming operation defined as the “conduct and management ... of lottery schemes in a particular place.” That place must be Dawson City and the government gaming operation must comply with the act and any applicable regulations. The restriction to a location in Dawson City and the latter section 17.02 will ensure the KVA will be licensed to operate Gerties under the appropriate legal framework and that no expansion of gaming will occur in Yukon. I reiterate this because it was a question raised, but I wanted to point to the direct section that clarifies my earlier comments.

I also should note that the new section 17.02 allows the minister to license an agent — the licensed agent — to conduct, manage and operate the government gaming establishment. This section sets out rules that govern the licences and who may have them. The amendments contained in this section stipulate that there can only be one government gaming establishment operated by KVA in Dawson City. Just as there is only one government gaming establishment, there can only be one licensed agent at any time. The KVA would be that one licensed agent. The KVA is specifically named in the act, but not the regulation, to provide certainty to YG and to the Klondike Visitors Association. If the KVA chooses not to be the licensed agent, it is unable to do so or it relinquishes its licence, the Commissioner in Executive Council can prescribe another person who can serve in that role. That can also be done if the KVA’s licence is revoked.

That’s important, because it provides the certainty that this is not expanding gaming at all, but provides the opportunity, should it occur, that gaming can continue in Dawson City specifically.

Section 17.02 also provides some flexibility in the event that KVA can no longer carry out its responsibilities for any reason. A licence can include any terms and conditions the minister considers appropriate. Terms will be similar to the terms set out in the current slot machine agreement between Yukon government and the KVA, such as the number of slot machines, the distribution of revenue and other related issues.

The KVA must run the government gaming establishment as set out in the act, the regulations and its licence. We are not anticipating the need for any regulations, as we believe that the conditions can be addressed in a licence. However, a regulation-making power will provide the ability to establish regulations, if required now or at a future date. Although we’re not contemplating regulations at this time, we insert these kinds of comments or provisions into the legislation to give us the flexibility, should something arise that we need to deal with. It gives us the flexibility and ability to deal with issues as they arise.

A licence can be modified, suspended or revoked at any time and for any reason, including the failure or inability of the licensed agent to carry out its legal responsibilities. This clause will address unforeseen circumstances that may bring into question the continued licence of the agent. Any licensed agent can, unless the regulation or its licence provides otherwise, relinquish its licence at any time. Any funds that the licence allows the KVA to keep out of the revenue or profit of the government gaming establishment are not public money or public property for *Financial Administration Act* purposes. This is added to clarify that KVA’s operations and its own finances will not be affected by these amendments.

Several points are set out in subsection 10 of this section of the act, section 4. Those include that a licence is no longer valid once it expires or is revoked or relinquished. Being a licensed agent does not make the KVA or another licensed agent subject to the FAA and the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, or the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*. An individual is not a public servant just because they work for the KVA or another licensed agent.

There is a new section as well — 17.03(1). That provides the Yukon government is not legally liable for the actions or omissions of agents, including licensed agents, where those actions or omissions relate to a government gaming establishment. In subsection 2(1), the limitation on liability extends to the government’s employees and agents, except that, as subsection 2 indicates, it does not protect agents from liability for their own actions or omissions or those of their employees or agents. In short, YG is not liable for the actions or its agent or employees of the agent.

There are couple of important things in this section that I wanted to highlight and I feel that I have just done so. The key one though, of course, is that all of this isn’t changed substantially from the arrangement that we’ve had with KVA up to date.

Even though they are becoming an agent of government, the relationship between Yukon government and the KVA at a practical or on-the-ground basis isn't changing, and the way Gerties is operating won't change as a result of these legislative changes, but it does allow the flexibility should the KVA, for some reason, be unable to continue to operate — if the KVA's board of directors all quit or something like that — there is provision for us to deal with the successor to the KVA, if necessary.

In any event, Madam Chair, as I've explained, this is localized around Dawson City. It's specifically mentioned that Dawson is the only place the gaming can occur and under this particular licence through the agent for government. Again, we aren't expanding gaming in the territory. In fact, we're explicitly outlining that it can only be done in a very clear and singular way.

Clause 4 agreed to

On Clause 5

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I just wanted to comment on this again because it came up earlier. The *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act* directs money that the government receives from the KVA's operation and lottery schemes to that special-purpose trust. This amendment ensures that, if the KVA ceases to be the licensed agent, any funds from a replacement licensed agent continue to be directed into the crime prevention and victim services trust fund.

Again, in the unlikely event — or hopefully unlikely event — that the KVA were to somehow evaporate or cease to exist, any successor that we deal with — the arrangement with the fund will remain the same. I think that's important for the trustees of the fund, who wanted that assurance to know that, even if something unforeseen happens, their arrangement won't change in the event of the KVA dissipating for some reason or other.

Clause 6 agreed to

On Clause 7

Clause 7 agreed to

On Clause 8

Clause 8 agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Madam Chair, I move that Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*, be reported without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Dixon that the Chair report Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*, be reported without amendment.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 908

Clerk: Motion No. 908, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Cathers.

Speaker: It is moved by the Minister of Justice:

THAT Darius Elias, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, be appointed Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I will be very brief in my remarks. As members are probably familiar, this is a procedural motion and, due to the appointment of the previous Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole as a minister, he cannot continue to serve in that function. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin is, through this motion, being appointed Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Motion No. 908 agreed to

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 87: *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 87, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Dixon.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I move that Bill No. 87, entitled *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 87, entitled *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It is a pleasure to rise and speak at second reading to Bill No. 87, entitled *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*. Hopefully today we can also get into Committee of the Whole on this bill.

I'm pleased to introduce this bill, Mr. Speaker. It is an interesting piece of legislation that I think will provide a significant benefit to commerce in the Yukon Territory. The purpose of this bill is to implement a modern, computerized

personal property registry to replace our current computer system, which is outdated and placing stakeholders at significant risk.

If you'll allow me, Mr. Speaker, I'll take a moment to provide some background.

Yukon's *Personal Property Security Act* and regulations, known as the PPSA, are critical to consumer and commercial borrowing and lending.

This legislation enables borrowers to use personal property, which is property other than land, to secure loans. While the average person may be unaware that the PPSA even exists, anyone who has ever borrowed money for anything other than a house has benefitted from this legislation. It is what enables lenders to register their interests in your personal property for money you want to borrow. For example, if you are trying to purchase a new car or truck — when companies are looking at credit worthiness, the PPSA registry is one of the tools they use in their review.

With the amendments made in this bill, Yukon will join six other jurisdictions, including Nunavut and Northwest Territories, in utilizing the Atlantic Canada On-Line computerized registry, which is becoming the industry standard in Canada for digital PPSA registries.

This modernization of Yukon's registry system will be a real boon for businesses that use it here in Yukon. This is because Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada relying completely on a paper-driven system, instead of an electronic or direct-user entry registry system. As it works now, lenders must complete registry documents by hand, which are then submitted to the Yukon government, where the information is data-entered by Corporate Affairs staff. This process invites risk of error and increased risk of liability to the Yukon government and is — needless to say — a burdensome task when it comes to handling that much paper.

This labour-intensive, manual-entry system also considerably slows down responses to any inquiries we might receive. Not infrequently, our registry will receive bundles of more than a thousand registrations at a time from a lender.

With the new on-line system, the process will be paperless and will eliminate the need for lenders to submit originally signed documents. Instead, once the ACOL system is in place, lenders who have made the necessary contractual agreements with the Yukon government will be able to directly enter data into the new on-line web-based registry.

These changes were previously planned to be included in a larger version of the *Personal Property Security Act* and regulations that were targeted for fall of this year. However, recent issues have given reason to address this antiquated computer system as soon as possible.

Malfunction of our system, when it occurs, means that lenders do not have timely access to the information that they require to make lending decisions, and this can have significant negative effects on borrowers and on commerce generally. As a result, to respond to this urgent need, we have drafted the essential amendments to the act so that we can adopt the ACOL computerized registry as soon as possible. The larger, more comprehensive project, which will include a

complete overhaul of the act, will be undertaken at a later date.

We are currently working on the necessary updates to the regulations, which will be brought forward as soon as possible. I note that more than 60 percent of PPSA registrations are currently submitted by lenders outside of Yukon, such as national banks and vehicle financial lending institutions. These lenders are familiar with electronic registry systems. In fact, many are already users of the ACOL system and are looking forward to seeing it implemented in Yukon.

This new web-based registry will reduce red tape significantly and provide businesses and financial institutions with a one-stop shop where both registry filings and searches can be done on-line. When we roll out the new on-line registry, we will be communicating with local and Outside stakeholders to inform them and to introduce them to the new system.

This bill supports the government's desire to utilize technology, to make more government services available on-line and to improve existing services. As I indicated, when we originally approached this piece of legislation, we had contemplated a more comprehensive overhaul of the system in general but, because of some significant challenges we faced with our current antiquated system that is tied directly to the act, we're compelled to accelerate our initiative and make some targeted changes that are included in this bill. This is not to preclude any more comprehensive review at a later date. I think indeed it may be warranted that, in future legislative sittings, we may want to consider a more comprehensive overhaul of this system, but I think that these strategic, targeted amendments to this act to allow for the implementation of a new electronic system, the ACOL system, will go a long way to addressing some of the more pressing issues faced by our system.

As I said, I believe that this bill will significantly enhance opportunities for commerce in the territory. Anyone who lends or borrows money against chattels in the territory will most certainly benefit from this, as they won't have to fill out the normal paperwork that they have up until this point, and it will shift that system to a completely web-based system. I think it's an excellent step forward, not only because it will make those lenders and borrowers have an easier time, but it will also make government administration much easier and it would reduce the risk for those clients of the system.

The discussions that I am sure we will have in Committee of the Whole will allow us to elaborate a little bit further, but I did want to note also that this is another example of the Department of Community Services policy staff stepping up in a fairly big way to expedite the development of a piece of legislation to meet a pressing demand and a need. I would like to thank the staff who have done this. This is a bill that we had initially planned to look a little bit different and to include a bit of a more comprehensive overhaul of our system but, because of the pressing challenges we have been having with our system, required us to move expeditiously.

Those staff really stepped up and provided the support and policy work that needed to be done to do this work. As

well, I would be remiss if I didn't also thank the Department of Justice officials, who provided a significant degree of assistance on this. Drafting legislation is never easy. It is usually an arduous task, and the drafters in the Department of Justice have done a fantastic job on this bill. It can be a relatively complex issue, but they are, of course, able to deliver and provide us with a bill that I think will significantly improve Yukon's administration and facilitation of commerce in the territory.

I look forward to hearing from members in the House about their thoughts on the bill and ultimately passing it during this Sitting of the Legislature.

With that, I commend the bill to the House.

Ms. Stick: I rise on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition to speak to this bill. First, I want to thank the officials for the briefings we did have on this bill, and for the work that they've done on this. The minister, I thought, clearly outlined the speed and initiative that staff has taken on this, and I thank them for that.

The Yukon NDP were prepared, with one amendment, to support this bill, because we see it as an important step forward for a way of streamlining and updating services to the public and to industry in the Community Services department. That's important, Mr. Speaker. When we hear the minister speak about the documents that have to be handwritten and then the data-entry and then getting stacks of them, it just doesn't seem reasonable that that's still how we would go about doing business. There are better ways.

Speed and streamlining should not impact our information privacy and protection. I think, in this day and age, with so much of what we hear with regard to electronics and safe storage and security, this is something that we should be concerned about. Our amendment shares the concerns raised by the Yukon's Information and Privacy Commissioner with regard to this act. I would just remind the members —

Speaker: Sorry; you said amendment. Are you proposing an amendment?

Ms. Stick: Not at this point, no, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: No? Okay, thank you.

Ms. Stick: I would just remind members of the purpose of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. It is in the very beginning. The purpose of the act is to make public bodies more accountable to the public and to protect personal privacy by: giving the public a right of access the records; giving individuals a right of access to, and a right to request correction of, personal information about themselves; specifying limited exceptions to the rights of access; preventing the unauthorized collection, use, or disclosure of personal information by public bodies; and providing for an independent review of decisions made under this act.

Those are very important. It is about our privacy and our personal information being held safe. We know that the Privacy Commissioner, as she outlined in a letter dated April 14, was not consulted on these amendments to this act. That is an important fact because that is part of her job — not all of it, but it certainly is to look at amendments and to look at

legislation with the view of protecting people's personal privacy and ensuring access to information, where appropriate.

The other tool that was available to the department is one that has been created called the "privacy impact assessment", and this tool can be used by departments to look at amendments, to look at acts, to look at new legislation or regulations and to evaluate the risks of non-compliance with the ATIPP act for any new or modified collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

There is a tool there that could have been used when looking at amendments to this act and, I would suggest, should have been used. The Information and Privacy Commissioner can review this, can make suggestions and can ensure that her job of protecting privacy, private information and access to information is done. I think that is an important part.

In the hurry to get this done — and I understand the need for that — it was overlooked. I believe the Privacy Commissioner has raised legitimate concerns over this exclusion, and she goes on in great detail in her letter as to the impacts of that.

We have seen a precedent to retain the ATIPP access to electronic personal property security registry. We have seen examples of that in Health and Social Services when looking at the Panorama program. We spent a great deal of time in the last Sitting, looking at the health information management — something act — I can't remember what the P stands for — sorry, Mr. Speaker. Health information management act — there's a P in there somewhere. Anyway, it doesn't matter. Everyone knows what I'm understanding.

We spent a lot of time on that, and it was really important legislation because, again, it was taking care of personal information, protecting that, allowing other bodies to manage it or store that, but protecting the personal privacy. It was a big part of that legislation.

The test in this legislation is whether the information is under the custody or control of the government. What the Information and Privacy Commissioner is considering is that ATIPP should apply to this legislation. Even though the information is stored outside of Yukon, it's still under government control. Nothing has changed about the information or how it's collected. The Yukon government can't be held liable for any perjury or inaccuracy regarding information submitted to the registry, whether it's paper or whether it's a web portal.

At the end of the day, we want to support this legislation. It's important; it's bringing us forward into the 21st century; it's streamlining; it's helping everyone involved in it. It's important.

So we support it, but we cannot ignore the lack of due diligence when there was not a consultation with the Information and Privacy Commissioner. What I'd like to see — in Committee of the Whole, we'll discuss amending this act before us to bring back the registry under the purview of ATIPP.

It will not create more of a burden for the department. It's not more work, but it is a protection. It's a protection of our personal information and, to me, that is critical.

I thank the staff for the work they've done on this. I thank the minister for bringing this forward.

I also thank the Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner for doing her job and for pointing out where, unintentionally — I don't know — something has been missed, and that is the step of her being able to look over the *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*. She needs to be able to do her job, and we have to give her that opportunity. It will save us in the end from having to make amendments, from having to correct things that perhaps people did not consider or think about.

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

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It is a pleasure, again, to rise at second reading of Bill No. 87, entitled *Personal Property Security Registry (Electronic) Amendments Act*.

Of course, as I have indicated previously, this bill will go a long way toward improving commerce in the territory. As I've mentioned previously, the computer system that is part of Yukon's outdated and paper-based personal property —

Speaker: Order please. The time being 5:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Monday.

Debate on second reading of Bill No. 87 accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled April 16, 2015:

33-1-160

Annual Contributions to Political Parties in the 2014 Calendar Year (Speaker Laxton)

The following written question was tabled April 16, 2015:

33-1-8

Re: Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges (Stick)