



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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33rd Legislature

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## HANSARD

Thursday, May 14, 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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<b>Hon. Darrell Pasloski</b>	Mountainview	<b>Premier</b> Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
<b>Hon. Elaine Taylor</b>	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Tourism and Culture; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
<b>Hon. Brad Cathers</b>	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for Justice; Yukon Development Corporation/ Yukon Energy Corporation
<b>Hon. Doug Graham</b>	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Education
<b>Hon. Scott Kent</b>	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Highways and Public Works
<b>Hon. Currie Dixon</b>	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Community Services; Public Service Commission
<b>Hon. Wade Istchenko</b>	Kluane	Minister responsible for Environment
<b>Hon. Mike Nixon</b>	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
<b>Hon. Stacey Hassard</b>	Pelly-Nisutlin	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation

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<b>Darius Elias</b>	Government House Leader Vuntut Gwitchin
<b>Hon. David Laxton</b>	Porter Creek Centre
<b>Patti McLeod</b>	Watson Lake

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<b>Jan Stick</b>	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
<b>Kevin Barr</b>	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
<b>Lois Moorcroft</b>	Copperbelt South
<b>Jim Tredger</b>	Mayo-Tatchun
<b>Kate White</b>	Takhini-Kopper King

### Liberal Party

<b>Sandy Silver</b>	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
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## LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly**  
**Whitehorse, Yukon**  
**Thursday, May 14, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

## DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

## TRIBUTES

### In recognition of Yukon First Nation Languages and Cultures in Yukon schools

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** It is indeed a real pleasure for me to rise today to pay tribute to Yukon First Nation languages and cultures in Yukon schools here on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dun and Ta'an Kwäch'an Council.

Language is a bridge that connects us to each other and to the world around us. Cultural knowledge and ceremonies are embedded in languages. The names, words and stories in First Nation languages represent human and natural relationships and pass along generations of wisdom and traditional knowledge. Honouring the importance of language requires more than just celebration. It requires a conscious effort to preserve and revitalize dialects in danger of being lost.

The residential school system took a heavy toll on aboriginal languages and people across Canada, including our own Yukon First Nations. Restoring these languages also restores the strength and vibrancy of First Nation cultures in our territory. It is part of our shared journey toward healing and reconciliation.

In 1991, Elder Pete Sidney stated in *Voices of the Talking Circle* that language is a gift of the Creator for the purpose of communication, and any gift of the Creator can never deteriorate. All we have to do is dust it off.

Yukon government is committed to supporting First Nations, First Nation governments, elders, students and partners as we all engage in this very important work.

Yukon students have access to opportunities to learn First Nation languages, including Gwich'in, Han, Upper Tanana, Kaska, Tlingit, Northern Tutchone and Southern Tutchone.

Today, we thank the aboriginal language teachers of Yukon, the elders who have mentored them, and the Yukon Native Language Centre.

Tomorrow, five students from the Yukon Native Language Centre will walk across the stage at the Yukon College graduation ceremony. It was such a pleasure to see this begin because I was registrar at the college when the very first Yukon native language teacher participated in the graduation at Yukon College and it was a wonderful occasion.

The five students who will graduate are Noli Eastmure and Amanda Geddes-Workman of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Connie Jules of Teslin Tlingit Council,

Darlene McGinty of Selkirk First Nation, and Erika Sheffen of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. They will join the ranks of educators sharing First Nation languages and traditions with Yukon's younger generations.

Thank you also to the many elders who have supported them along their journey of learning and who teach First Nation languages in our schools. I would like to recognize some of Yukon's champions of Yukon's First Nation languages. Some of them are here today — and I would ask you to raise your hand in acknowledgement — the first of which — I had the pleasure of shaking his hand out in the hallway — is Paddy Jim of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Paddy, welcome to the Legislature.

*Applause*

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Paddy has been a fluent speaker of the Champagne dialect of the Southern Tutchone language since childhood. He worked as a guide during the construction of the Alaska Highway and also as a big-game guide.

Currently, he is mentoring Khâ Sha Stephen Reid and — Khâ Sha, I noticed you didn't put your name down on the list of people who were here at this ceremony today — he is mentoring Khâ Sha, a Southern Tutchone language teacher who has taught at Elijah Smith Elementary School for 11 years; Jocelyn Skookum, who carries on a family tradition of teaching Northern Tutchone. Jocelyn was encouraged and mentored in Northern Tutchone language instruction by her late grandmother, Evelyn Skookum. She currently teaches at the daycare program in Carmacks. Ben Charlie — I believe Ben is here today. Hello Ben. Ben Charlie of Old Crow has been broadcasting in the Gwich'in language radio five days a week across the region for 24 years.

Ben is also — according to his MLA — an accomplished fiddler and he shares Vuntut Gwitchin music and culture with many northern communities, and we thank you for that as well. Winnie Atlin is here today, accompanied by Richard Atlin. Winnie has taught in Tlingit in our schools. She has also taught in the community and at the language nest at the daycare in Carcross. Winnie considers Tlingit to be her first language, and has been a leader in teaching this language in her community. Welcome, Winnie.

Elders Percy and Mabel Henry of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in have also been dedicated advocates in developing teaching and learning materials for the Han language. Percy has authored Han books for Yukon schools, including Han language lessons, Moosehide dialect at home and camping. Mabel has taught Han at Robert Service School and Yukon College and was involved with the First Voices language technologies and archiving project.

I would like to acknowledge language champions who have passed away who shared so much with the current generation: Bessie John — whose daughter Doris Johns has joined us here today, I believe. Bessie was a well-known elder and grand matriarch of the Upper Tanana people in the White River First Nation. The Nelna Bessie John School in Beaver Creek was named in her honour.

Josephine Acklack was a Kaska language instructor since 1987. She worked with students in Ross River for many years and she was a language mentor for several adults who achieved their language proficiency certificates from Simon Fraser University. She wrote Kaska books for children such as *My Home*, *Frances Lake Girl*, and *Living on Rabbits*.

Today and throughout the year, we recognize and honour the importance of protecting and nurturing First Nation languages.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I have a list of people who have come today to participate with these first language instructors and elders. I would like to begin by welcoming my very good friend — I believe for about 60 years — Chief Ray Jackson and Chief Steve Smith, as well as Mary Jane Jim, Timothy Cant, Frankie Jim; my very good friend and former colleague working at Yukon College, Barb Hume; Charlene Hume, Darlene Jim, Glenn Kane, Mickey Beattie, Frances Asp, William Asp, Florence Griffiths, Janet Burns, Lawrence Blake, Sharon Shadow, Jessica Messieur, Kelsey Jim, Wayne Jim, Enya Jim, Jason Jim, Kristina Kane, Barb Hobus, Sheila Quock, Vanessa Lutz and, as I said, Khâ Sha Stephen Reid. I also noticed David Joe — a former classmate of mine at F.H. Collins school — sitting there.

I'm sorry if I have missed anyone and I am going to depend on other members of the Legislature to introduce you if I have missed you. It's very important that all of you are here today so that we can pay tribute to First Nation languages and cultures in our schools. Thank you very much.

*Applause*

**Mr. Tredger:** Mr. Speaker, I too would welcome people to the gallery. As I was sitting here listening to the minister speak, I was struck at how far we've come. When I first started to teach in Alberta, I was told not to let the kids speak Cree. What an honour and what a pleasure it is to stand in the Legislature and celebrate First Nation languages.

I am pleased to rise to tribute Yukon First Nation languages on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition and the Third Party. I would like to acknowledge the role of the elders for their leadership and their persistence, for their patience and for their understanding.

It is a long journey and I thank you for leading us on it. I would recognize the individual First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations and, through the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Native Language Centre, for the efforts they have put into First Nation languages.

I will read a brief part from the Yukon Native Language Centre because it captures much of what language and native language is about: "The Yukon Native Language Centre promotes an awareness of the richness and beauty of Yukon First Nations Languages and an appreciation of the fundamental role they play in the transmission of culture and values from one generation to another."

The Yukon Native Language Centre looks to elders and recognizes their essential contributions from each language group to "provide vision, wisdom, and guidance which inform and direct all our activities." They strive to work "in

partnership with First Nations communities and individuals to provide training, research, and program support." A major goal of the Yukon Native Language Centre is to assist the First Nations "in implementing their self-determined goals for preserving and enhancing their ancestral languages."

Many languages in the world are on the verge of extinction. Yukon native languages are endangered. When we lose a language, we lose a world view and we lose a culture. We lose some fundamental human diversity and human dignity, and we lose a valuable resource to Yukon people and our communities.

Many of us have heard that the Inuit have many words to describe snow. The language of Yukon First Nations contains many elaborate terms to describe and call notice to the Yukon landscape. I had the pleasure of watching and listening to an elder on the Pelly River describe and name many ways to see the river and the salmon in it. He would point to what looked to me to be the river and point out, "Over there — see, a big male salmon is under that tree." There was a name for that — a Northern Tutchone name. "Over there, there are many salmon swimming." There was a name for that. He went on patiently explaining, showing and naming — the way the river was changing, noting the variations that I would never have noticed had he not pointed them out.

This is not only true of the river or the salmon run, but year-round it is also true in the forest or on the hillside through the seasons. Thus, a walk with a native language instructor or an elder becomes a lesson in culture, in paying attention, and a lesson in life. A walk allows us to notice and name, and those nuances become part of us and part of our culture — observations and experiences gathered over generations, transmitted by and through an intricate language. Each name was to call attention — a naming and a noticing — notice this; notice that. This is important.

I must commend the Yukon Native Language Centre and CYFN, as well as individual First Nations, for their efforts over many years. It has been at times a struggle to stop the loss of languages. There was a period of interviewing and recording — a time to start listening to the elders, to record their stories and the nuances of their language. The languages and stories of elders were transcribed and kept. There were efforts to create a written language and enable translation. It was long years of work and I thank the elders for all they have done; for their willingness to share; to make sacrifices; to make trips to Whitehorse; to go wherever they needed to go to ensure that language, stories and cultures were preserved and shared, not only for the present, but for future generations.

This has stabilized many of our languages and from this base, the Yukon Native Language Centre, CYFN, and the Department of Education have worked together to expand our language into our schools, into our colleges, into our governments and throughout our communities. The Member for Klondike and I had the pleasure of working with native language instructors in our schools. We have seen the positive influence it has, not only on the students, but on teachers and on the entire community. It has been an honour to work

closely with native language instructors, going on field trips, learning in context and being taught new ways to teach.

I think back to Rachel Tom Tom, who was a Northern Tutchone instructor in Pelly Crossing at Eliza Van Bibber School when I was there. I said, “What do we need to do?” She said, “Well, we need to teach.” I said, “Okay, how do we do that?” She said, “Well, we need to get comfortable.” Sounds good to me — I like being comfortable. We got a wall tent, put a stove in the wall tent and she would make bannock and tea and we held classes there. Pretty soon the elders started dropping in and it opened my eyes to the real possibilities and the potential for the language and how it changed things. I thank and pay tribute to Rachel for all she taught me.

I would like to acknowledge the native language instructors who are in our schools. Sometimes that has been a lonely position. Again, I commend them for their persistence, for their commitment to language and their continual efforts to refine their knowledge. In some cases they had to learn the language — continual self-improvement and their efforts to pass that language on.

More recent developments — the Member for Klondike noted that there are interactive computer programs now. The Han language is being taught that way. The Northern Tutchone language is being taught that way. It’s neat to walk into a classroom and see a group of kids learning their language from a computer. It took me a little while to adjust to that, but it is working.

I would like to pay tribute to all who are involved; all who have struggled to bring back First Nation languages. Thank you. Your effort to preserve, enhance and transmit Yukon First Nation language and culture has made and continues to make our world richer, more diverse and a more sustainable place.

*Applause*

**Mr. Silver:** I’m not going to go on too much more — those were two very eloquent speeches by the Minister of Education and from the Member from Mayo-Tatchun — but I did want to add to this conversation and also welcome to the gallery today Georgette McLeod. I had a wonderful opportunity to teach with Georgette’s mom, Bertha, at the school. I just want to mention that Georgette is absolutely a mentor among peers and she has done more in our generation for culture and heritage than many who I’ve ever seen. I know that we could be introducing the visitors during the introduction of visitors portion, but I believe Georgette McLeod’s name and Bertha McLeod’s name should be recognized as well when we talk about culture, history and First Nation languages. So please if everybody could help me in welcoming Georgette McLeod to the gallery.

*Applause*

### **In recognition of Yukon Francophonie Day**

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** [*Member spoke in French. Text unavailable.*]

Mr. Speaker, as minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate, I rise today to recognize the ninth annual Yukon Francophonie Day on May 15. Tomorrow we will all be celebrating Yukon’s French language and culture, and we’ll be paying tribute to all francophones in Yukon for their multitude of contributions, which have and continue to enrich our territory.

The Yukon francophonie flag will fly in front of the Yukon government main administration building as well as at Whitehorse and Dawson city halls.

Newcomers and visitors to Yukon are always somewhat surprised by the strong presence of French in the territory in the private sector, in the cultural scene or at the government level. Indeed, French can be heard and seen everywhere across the Yukon, especially around the capital city of Whitehorse.

Since the adoption of the *Languages Act* back in 1988, the Government of Yukon has made gains in delivering programs and services in French. Indeed, the French-speaking community has been growing very steadily since. In recent years, the Yukon government has been working toward increasing communication with the francophone community, while creating a more strategic approach to delivering French language services in our territory.

We value our collaboration with the Association franco-yukonnaise. It has contributed to the success of many initiatives. The active offer campaign with the “Bonjour Yukon” logo is one strong example of our partnership with the francophone community.

Recently, in the area of arts and culture, we were very pleased to be able to work in close collaboration with the francophone community and in consultation with artists from various disciplines to develop a cultural project, which was recently approved by Canadian Heritage, with the goal to support artistic development — raising the profile of francophone artists and culture in Yukon and northern Canada through a number of various local initiatives and strategic partnerships.

Francophones are indeed an intrinsic part of Yukon’s social fabric. They are members of a very dynamic community which contributes greatly to our economy, to the development of our territory, its quality of life, and the uniqueness that we as a territory boast. As minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate, I very much have enjoyed and valued working with our partners and I look forward to continuing our collaborative relationships with Association franco-yukonnaise and meeting with its members at the various community events and meetings that we attend each and every year.

As I mentioned earlier, tomorrow at 2:00 p.m., there will actually be well over 200 Yukon students from schools who will be performing line dancing at the Rotary Peace Park in celebration of Yukon Francophonie Day. I know at Whitehorse Elementary School — École Whitehorse Elementary — a school where my son also takes part — they too will also be joining just beforehand on the lawn of the school and participating in events in celebration of Yukon

Francophonie Day. In the evening, starting at 5:00 p.m., all Yukoners will be invited to take part in a very special gathering at MacBride Museum to mark Yukon Francophonie Day, representing and recognizing the growth of education and French first language, as well as French immersion programming throughout the territory.

I would like to invite all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming — and there are many individuals representing the francophone community here today. I would like to point out a few — and my apologies if I have missed some. There are many of you in the gallery and I would like to welcome all of you here to today's special tribute.

Starting off with a number of community members, representatives from AFY and from French language programs with our own French Languages Services Directorate, we have: Abbé Jean-Augustin Somé; Hélène Lapensée; Marie-Stéphanie Gasse; Louise-Hélène Villeneuve; Bruno Bourdache; Luc Laforté; Angélique Bernard, the president of Association franco-yukonnaise; André Boucier, vice-president; Christian Klein, administrator; Isabelle Salesse, executive director; Roch Nadon, assistant director manager of arts, culture and youth; Nancy Power, director of communications and community relations; Frédéric Nolet, director of economic development; Édith Bélanger, manager of tourism; Sophie Delaigue, manager of immigration; Sandra St. Laurent, director of the francophone health network; Pierre-Luc Lafrance, director of *Aurore boréal*; Patricia Brennan, project manager for seniors; and Olivier De Colombel, community relations manager. We also have: Yann Herry, coordinator of our french language programs at the Department of Education; and, of course, from our own directorate, Patrice Tremblay, our director; Sarah Cloutier-Hébert; Marie-Alexise Dangréau; Sylvie Painchaud; Catherine Huot; Emilye Thibeault-Maloney; and Danielle Smith, who is also one of our STEP students here as well.

There is indeed a lot to celebrate here today, and I would like to welcome all of you to the gallery here and thank you very much for your ongoing commitment to strengthening french language services in our territory and all that you do to contribute to the development of our territory here today.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** Monsieur le président, je suis fière de prendre la parole au nom du NPD du Yukon pour célébrer la Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise.

En tant qu'anglophone bilingue, je suis fière de refléter un Yukon qui valorise les contributions culturelles et sociales de la communauté francophone.

Mes parents, comme beaucoup d'autres, ont reconnu que la langue française est une des deux langues officielles du Canada et qu'elle est une partie important du tissu culturel, historique et linguistique de notre pays. En mille neuf cent quatre-vingt-deux, ils ont décidé de m'inscrire à la maternelle en immersion française.

Cette décision a changé la direction de ma vie. Et me voilà, à 38 ans, en train de parler en français dans l'assemblée législative du Yukon.

La communauté francophone vibre. Elle continue à croître. Nous reconnaissons les contributions faites par des francophones dès les années mille-huit-cent.

Les francophones ont joué d'abord un rôle important dans la création et le développement de nouvelles collectivités yukonnaises, incluant Dawson et Mayo. Par la suite, ils ont joué un rôle actif dans la vie sociale et politique du territoire qui émergea de la Ruée vers l'or.

Nous trouvons aux quatre coins de notre territoire des endroits qui commémorent leurs contributions. Le Lac Lebarge, le Mont Coudert, le Ruisseau Lépine et la Colline Girouard.

Malgré l'immigration de francophones au Yukon depuis le début du dernier siècle, leurs droits ont dû être gagnés.

Au début des années mille neuf cent quatre-vingt, les franco-yukonnais ont commencé à s'organiser pour défendre leurs droits linguistiques et mettre en place des services et des institutions indispensables à la protection de la langue et à l'épanouissement de la culture francophone.

Ce qui était au départ l'initiative de quelques individus dévoués s'est rapidement transformé en entreprise collective énergique. En mille neuf cent soixante-dix-neuf, les francophones ont formellement créé l'Association franco-yukonnaise, qui agit à la fois comme porte-parole officiel et leader du développement de la communauté franco-yukonnaise.

Aujourd'hui, la communauté franco-yukonnaise est reconnue et visible. Elle est une partie intégrante de nos collectivités.

Au dernier compte, plus de dix pourcent de la population identifie être de descendance francophone, et encore plus parlent français comme langue seconde. Le Yukon a donc le plus fort pourcentage, après le Nouveau-Brunswick, de francophones et de francophiles dans l'ensemble de la francophonie minoritaire canadienne.

De plus, le bilinguisme français-anglais est de plus en plus présent au Yukon. Cette croissance constante, tant en nombre qu'en pourcentage, démontre l'attrait de la langue française dans le territoire.

Sur ce, j'aimerais encore une fois souhaiter à tous et à toutes une excellente Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise, et vous remercier pour votre contribution au Yukon.

*Applause*

### In recognition of Les EssentiElles

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** [*Member spoke in French. Text unavailable.*]

Mr. Speaker, I am really honoured to rise today to pay tribute to Les EssentiElles on their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For some 20 years, Les EssentiElles has worked successfully toward the promotion of women's equality in the Yukon. Thanks to their hard work, many staff and volunteers have worked to raise awareness of issues of importance to Yukon women. In doing so, they have helped to change social attitudes and behaviours.

The group has grown tremendously over the past 20 years — and that is an understatement, to be sure — and so has its capacity to: deliver programming, provide leadership in the non-profit community, advise on policy development, and provide support to its members. As the representative organization for French-speaking women, the group has spearheaded many awareness campaigns in French on different themes affecting Yukon women's equality. It has worked toward promoting social justice and the awareness and prevention of violence against women. Its work also continues to enhance francophone women's involvement in community development and wellness.

More recently, Les EssentiElles has engaged men and boys in combatting violence against women and girls through the White Ribbon campaign. Les EssentiElles has also helped to inform other initiatives, such as the Yukon government's work to enhance French language services in the health care sector.

When a society addresses issues of women's social, economic, and political equality, it has an effect, not only on the health of women, but on the health of an entire community. Les EssentiElles' work in addressing the status of French women has very much positively affected the equality of the entire Yukon. Government is really proud to support Les EssentiElles in their valuable efforts to advance women's equality in the social, economic and legal spheres.

I would like to invite everyone to join me in congratulating Les EssentiElles for 20 years of great leadership in representing French-speaking women in the Yukon. Indeed, thank you for your dedication, which is really very much making the Yukon a better and healthier place to live.

I also want to point out that there are a number of individuals representing Les EssentiElles, but there are three in particular that I know: Maryne Dumaine, who is the director of Les EssentiElles; Alexandra Mauger from the organization as well as Stéphanie Moreau. I would like to point them out and thank you for joining us.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** Monsieur le Président, aujourd'hui nous célébrons aussi le 20<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du groupe Les EssentiElles. En collaboration avec d'autres groupes féministes, Les essentielles ont fait avancer les droits des femmes depuis 20 ans déjà et ce, en français.

Mr. Speaker, today, the NDP Official opposition also celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Les EssentiElles.

It's incredible to think that, in conjunction with other women's groups in the territory, Les EssentiElles has been advocating and advancing the rights of francophone women for 20 years, entirely in French.

Fondé en 1995, Les EssentiElles est un organisme à but non lucratif, qui représente les intérêts des femmes francophones du Yukon. Le groupe travaille activement à l'amélioration de la qualité de vie des franco-yukonnaises en s'efforçant de répondre à leurs besoins.

Les décisions, actions et relations de Les EssentiElles, sont guidées par leurs valeurs. Ces valeurs sont autonomisation, équité, solidarité et féminisme. Elles démontrent l'autonomisation en encourageant la confiance en soi chez les femmes et en valorisant l'expertise des femmes. Elles démontrent l'équité en offrant une approche individuelle en fonction des besoins et des moyens. Toujours avec un souci pour l'inclusion, c'est-à-dire que leurs programmes et services sont ouverts à toutes les femmes francophones du Yukon.

Elles démontrent la solidarité en travaillant avec d'autres organismes qui ont des objectifs similaires à leurs buts. Elles favorisent une approche collective avec l'accent sur les besoins de la collectivité.

Together, women's groups in Yukon have made women's issues truly accessible to all Yukoners. Presentations and information given by women's groups are entirely bilingual and we as government can learn from their example.

I was driving home the other day listening to 92.5 CJUC, a local community radio station in Whitehorse, and the program was entirely in French, hosted by women who were talking about the campaign against sexualized assault. They made the campaign relevant, both in conversation and by how they delivered the message.

On behalf of the Yukon NDP Official Opposition and the Third Party, I thank all the volunteers and the staff — past, present and future — of Les EssentiElles who continue to advocate for the rights of women.

Au nom du NPD du Yukon, merci aux bénévoles et employées qui ont fait de ces 20 ans un succès. Merci pour votre engagement dans notre communauté et bon succès pour les prochaines 20 années à venir.

*Applause*

### **In recognition of Dawson City International Gold Show**

**Ms. McLeod:** I am very pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon government to recognize the annual Dawson City gold show, which is taking place on May 15 and 16. One has only to visit the Klondike Placer Miners' Association website to discover that placer mining in the territory has a rich and vibrant history steeped in the stories of gold seekers from around the globe and their adventures working the ancient stream beds that carve our Yukon hills. The territory's placer mining industry is founded on family operated businesses — a way of life that continues today for many operators.

A working placer mine involves everyone, from children to grandparents, with some operations spanning generations, and some dating back to the Klondike Gold Rush. Today, Yukon placer miners lead the world in safe and efficient gold recovery, while making significant contributions to our economy. In 2013, 177 placer leases produced 59,462 ounces of gold, valued at \$69.4 million, with the 2014 numbers expected to be somewhat similar. The forecast is strong over the medium term, with approximately 55 ounces of production anticipated each and every year.

By hosting northern Canada's largest placer mining and consumer trade show, the Dawson City Chamber of Commerce provides the ideal opportunity for miners to assess new products that could make a difference at their placer claims. It is also the perfect place for miners and suppliers to get together to share their experiences and come up with strategies for the coming seasons.

The Yukon Geological Survey also attends the gold show each year to share their expertise. Throughout the summer, YGS geologists will meet with miners on their placer claims to provide expert guidance related to the site's geology and potential. In addition, the geologists will document work history on the claims, which will provide a record to assist the industry in the future.

The Yukon government is proud to have a supporting role in Yukon's placer industry, partly through the Yukon mineral exploration program. Earlier this month, 15 placer projects were granted more than \$416,000 to help locate, explore and develop their projects to an advanced exploration stage. It is estimated that this will leverage another \$1.2 million in investment.

These projects will also help document and map Yukon's geology, which benefits the entire mineral industry. The Yukon government's commitment to the placer mining industry is strong. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Minister of Economic Development and the Minister of Environment all look forward to meeting with placer miners and the Klondike Placer Miners' Association while at the gold show this year.

We will all continue our work for the benefit of the industry, our economy and all Yukoners. I introduced a motion earlier this session that was inspired by placer miners and residents of Dawson City:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Klondike Placer Miners' Association and individual placer miners to:

- (1) improve Yukon's placer mining regulatory regime;
- (2) protect and preserve Yukon's free-entry system for mining exploration;
- (3) upgrade placer mining roads in the Klondike region and some of the major resource roads where needed; and
- (4) create new resource access roads to further provide opportunities for Yukoners.

These are issues that are important to placer miners and important to our government, as we work to assist this crucial industry. Gold mining is part of our identity as Yukoners. Most of us have held a goldpan in our hands — some have even dreamed of striking it rich — however, placer miners do more than dream and they need more than a goldpan, Mr. Speaker.

To all of you working in the creeks, the Yukon government thanks you for your continued contribution to Yukon's economy and to its rich culture and history.

**Mr. Silver:** I am happy to rise on behalf of the Liberal Party and also the Official Opposition to pay tribute to the 2015 Dawson City gold show.

As mentioned, this is the largest industry and placer mining consumer trade show in North America. As well, this will be the 29<sup>th</sup> annual gold show hosted by the Dawson City Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure and privilege to attend many gold shows over the years, and it is always a fantastic event and a very fun weekend. Every year, I would join teachers and students, actually — and what a wonderful opportunity to showcase the industry to the students and also for the students to showcase their family members to their teachers and to their other peers — as we all know, the community goes further than just a classroom — and to showcase the important work that the families do in placer mining. The gold show provides a number of business opportunities to showcase their products and services and for Dawsonites and Yukoners alike to meet, interact and get your flowers for the season as well.

The keynote speaker for this year's event is Larry Berman, the co-founder of ETF Capital Management and the Independent Investor Institute. Mr. Berman will be speaking on his experiences as an investor advisor and I'm keen to hear his insights on the current mineral markets.

Mr. Speaker, placer mining is an important historical and economic driver in Dawson and the gold show is an excellent opportunity to showcase our industry. With modern technology, sound regulations and public education, the placer mining sector can continue to thrive in the Yukon and continue to contribute to a prosperous Dawson community. The Yukon Liberal Party is extremely proud of this great, great industry.

This year's show will also mark the second annual Bill Bowie night on Friday, May 15 at the Palace Grand. I will be cooking steaks for the ministers at that event. For those of you who don't know Bill Bowie, he was a founding member of the Dawson City International Gold Show, a long-standing member of the Dawson City Chamber of Commerce, a volunteer firefighter and, honestly, one of the nicest and brightest men whom I have had the privilege of knowing. The dinner and auction was a great success last year and I'm happy that the gold show will continue to honour his legacy.

The Dawson City gold show encompasses the diverse and interconnected sectors of our regional economy with mining at its hub. Celebrating the gold show has become a springtime tradition, a place to chat, network and to share ideas with fellow miners and prospectors. The gold show is an international showcase created by locals and it is an institution in the Klondike that I am extremely proud of. I look forward to seeing you all there this weekend. To any of the members attending this year, I hope that you will come out to the Bill Bowie dinner and auction tomorrow and, if not, well, I guess we're just going have to get caught up at Gertie's sometime during the weekend.

### **In recognition of International Museum Day**

**Mr. Elias:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to International Museum Day, celebrated on May 18. This



celebratory day was established in 1997 by the International Council of Museums and is recognized worldwide.

This year's theme is "Museums for a sustainable society", which highlights the roles that museums play in preserving and interpreting the past and providing information that helps to make us better global citizens. Yukon is rich with museums, First Nation cultural centres and interpretive centres that contribute significantly to our unique culture and heritage legacy as well as our quality of life.

Over the years, we have seen tremendous growth in the heritage community, including a number of museums and cultural centres that are here in the territory. The number of clients receiving funding under the Yukon government's museums assistance program has also increased from nine in 2002 to 19 today.

During this time, the annual funding envelope has also increased from approximately \$500,000 to where it is today in support of operation and maintenance and special project funding to each of these institutions. During the annual heritage awards ceremony held in February, the Minister of Tourism and Culture announced a 20-percent increase for each of the 11 museums and seven First Nation cultural centres over the next two years. With this funding, the overall budget supporting museums and cultural centres in Yukon in the next two years will have grown more than 300 percent since 2002 — specifically, growing to \$1.69 million in this fiscal year and \$1.86 million in the next fiscal year.

This funding is part of an ongoing dialogue with museums to assess and enhance funding programs to better meet their needs. This important funding allows for the continued sustainable operation of these organizations that lead the work to protect, preserve and interpret Yukon's heritage.

Mr. Speaker, International Museum Day is a great opportunity to explore the many wonderful heritage attractions here in the Yukon. One of the ways that Yukoners can explore these attractions is through the Yukon gold explorers passport contest. The contest begins on June 1, and participants can visit various heritage attractions and enter draws for prizes for real Yukon placer gold. I encourage all Yukoners to visit these sites during International Museum Day and throughout the year to explore the diverse and unique collections that make up Yukon's fascinating history.

In closing, I wish to thank each of our museums and cultural centres and the many hard-working individuals who are dedicated to strengthening the Yukon's rich heritage for the benefit of residents and visitors in our territory.

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I know that during the tribute made by the Minister of Education, he mentioned Chief Steve Smith of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Chief Kristina Kane from Ta'an Kwäch'an Council. I would also, just for the record, like to recognize that Khà Shàde Héni Danny Cresswell from Carcross Tagish First Nation and Chief Brian

Ladue from Ross River Dena Council were also present; unfortunately they had to leave — I know Chief Ladue had to catch a plane — but I would like to belatedly welcome them to the Chamber today and acknowledge their presence for the record.

*Applause*

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** There are a number of individuals joining us here in the gallery today to witness the tabling of some mining-related documents that I will be doing shortly. Joining us in the gallery are: Sue Craig, who is a current member and past chair of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board as well as the owner of Tintina Consultants; Ron Light, a member of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board, general manager of Minto mine and Capstone Mining. Joining us as well is Melleen Light, who is currently working at the Minto mine with her husband Ron and a number of other individuals. Keith Byram, a member of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board and the president of Pelly Construction has joined us here. Amanda Leslie has joined us, as she provides communications support through her company Mosaic Communications, not only to the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board, but also to Victoria Gold Corp. and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun with respect to their comprehensive cooperation and benefit agreement. Samson Hartland, who is the executive director of the Yukon Chamber of Mines, has joined us, as well as Kells Boland. On top of being the new chair of the Yukon Energy Corporation, Kells also chairs the transportation committee for the Yukon Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few individuals who aren't here who have had input and very strong influence on the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board that I will be tabling.

I would like to quickly recognize them: Chair Mark Ayranto from the Victoria Gold Corporation; Mr. Clynton Nauman from Alexco Resource Corp; Ms. Eira Thomas from Kaminak Gold Corporation; representing the Yukon Chamber of Mines on the board, Marc Blythe; representing the Klondike Placer Miners' Association on the board, Mike McDougall; and from Casino Mining Corporation, Paul West-Sells. For those individuals who are here and those who aren't able to be here, I would like members to join me in welcoming them and thanking them.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** I would like ask the House to join me in welcoming some incredible animal advocates. Two just had to duck out prior to tabling the petition, but Jordi Mikeli-Jones is here and so are board members from Kona's Coalition. Thank you so much for the work that you do and I will read this soon. Thank you for coming.

*Applause*

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

## TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** I have three documents for tabling here today. The first is the *2014 Yukon Minerals Advisory Board Annual Report*. The second is the *Comprehensive Cooperation and Benefits Agreement* — or CBA. This is the CBA committee 2014 annual implementation report between Victoria Gold Corporation and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun. The final document is the Yukon Mineral Development Strategy Early Engagement handout.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

## PETITIONS

### Petition No. 21

**Ms. White:** I have for presentation the following petition. It reads:

THAT in light of incidents of systemic long-term animal cruelty, such as that recently observed in the “Justice for Jane” campaign, and a visible increase in the incidences of animal cruelty, abuse and neglect within Whitehorse and across Yukon, including dog poisonings; excessive pet reproduction and the overpopulation of pets; high rates of shelter intakes and abandonments; the high rate of errant dogs in communities; deficiencies in disease control, as demonstrated by a low level of vaccinations and the prevalence of parvovirus; and excessively, irresponsible pet ownership;

THAT there is concern about prevalent, unrestrained and widespread dog fighting and dog thefts; and

THAT there is a deficiency of public education in Yukon regarding responsible pet ownership;

THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Yukon to review the *Animal Protection Act* and the *Animal Health Act* and conduct a public consultation regarding irresponsible pet ownership and animal abuse and cruelty in Yukon.

The petition has 268 signatures.

**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

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to review and amend the *Human Rights Act* before the end of its current mandate to protect the human rights of trans people by adding “gender identity” and “gender expression” under section 7 of the act as prohibited ground for discrimination.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urged the Government of Yukon to review its legislation, programs and services and make

amendments or policy changes required to ensure the human rights of trans people are fully protected.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to review the *Vital Statistics Act* and introduce any amendments required to ensure the human rights of trans people are fully protected.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to follow the advice of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board by withdrawing support for the four last-minute amendments slipped into Bill S-6.

**Speaker:** Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: YESAA process

**Ms. Hanson:** Bill S-6 will go to third reading on May 25, with the unwavering support of the Yukon Party government and their federal Conservative colleagues. To date, the Premier has ignored all the warning signs. He has shown no sign of listening. First Nations have warned there will be a court challenge to unilateral changes to YESAA.

The Premier tried to mitigate the damage by offering up a bilateral accord. That offer fell flat on its face the first time the Premier delivered his canned speech, and again when he walked out of the parliamentary committee hearings without listening to First Nation or industry views.

When Bill S-6 passes, any project coming to YESAB faces being challenged in court. Projects will be put on hold while court challenges occur. Mr. Speaker, what is the Premier doing to prepare the Yukon’s economy for the inevitable shock that will occur when the Yukon’s entire regulatory process is tied up in completely avoidable —

**Speaker:** Order please. The member’s time has elapsed.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Again for the record, we would say that this government supports amendments to federal legislation that will allow our environmental assessment process to be consistent with environmental processes in other jurisdictions, which allows this jurisdiction to remain competitive with other jurisdictions, which creates a greater opportunity to attract investment dollars to this territory, which create business opportunities and good job opportunities for Yukoners.

**Ms. Hanson:** The Premier is ignoring the question, just like he ignored the conditions that led to the Yukon Party recession, just like he is ignoring the harm that will come when Yukon’s assessment legislation is bogged down in the courts. The Premier says that he feels that First Nation governments have been adequately consulted. He says he feels that his bilateral accord would help smooth relations, but the Premier’s feelings can’t change the facts, and the facts are that

First Nation governments have said they will fight this in court.

As the Premier has repeated over and over, YESAA doesn't just review mining projects — it reviews all projects. That means that every project moving forward toward assessment in Yukon will be doing so under a cloud of potential litigation. That doesn't give me the same comfort it apparently gives the Premier.

How does the Premier expect investors to generate capital when any project's assessment in Yukon could be challenged in court and tied up for years?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Again the Leader of the NDP is wrong. I have stated for the record many times that we have not commented on the adequacy of the consultation that occurred between the Government of Canada and Yukon First Nations. What I have said is that, all the way back to 2012, this government, through transparency and disclosure, provided all their comments to First Nations that they did provide to Canada.

To comment on whether there was adequate consultation between the First Nations and the Government of Canada would be disrespectful, and I have not done so. Contrary to the accusations of the NDP leader, Mr. Speaker, we have to remember that this is federal legislation. We were asked to comment and provide our recommendations, which we have done, as I have stated. We shared those comments and recommendations with all First Nations.

We again believe that these amendments are good for Yukon because they will ensure that we have a greater chance of seeing investment dollars come here that will create jobs, allow Yukoners to stay in this territory, have their families here and have great careers in this territory.

**Ms. Hanson:** This Premier keeps saying that this is federal legislation. But you know what? The effects of these unilateral changes will be felt right here at home. In fact, it's this Premier who submitted the two most controversial amendments to this federal legislation and since he was elected, the Premier has wiped out any basis for trust between Yukon government and Yukon First Nation governments — trust that is necessary for successful intergovernmental relationships and that is necessary for the success of Yukon's economy.

The Premier must think that Yukon First Nation governments are truly naïve if he expects them to trust him after he supported and proposed amendments to legislation that contradict the fundamental principles of Yukon First Nation final agreements.

The day after Bill S-6 passes and the Premier sits down with First Nation leadership and says he wants to work together, why would they trust him? Why would they trust him?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I believe that the opposition is deliberately creating fear within the public. As I have stated before, I have offered to First Nations the opportunity to move forward with a bilateral accord. It has happened in the past. The federal government has passed legislation. Leaders in this territory have then sat down —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I know that the Leader of the NDP doesn't have the respect to listen to the answer. We listen to the question. We have in the past and we can in the future sit down and find an implementation of these amendments that will work for all Yukoners.

#### **Question re: Employee Assistance Program contract tender**

**Ms. Hanson:** Earlier this week, my colleague, the MLA for Copperbelt South asked about the Yukon government's inconsistent use of contracting rules to support Yukon contractors by rewarding their local experience, knowledge and culture. Section 53(3) of the contracting directive says — and I quote: "Where ranking criteria are used, they may include the methods ... to maximize the full value of local community and Yukon content in carrying out the work."

Some departments use section 53(3) in contracting and some don't. The government is really all over the map. The minister was short on commitments but he did say, "Supporting local business is something that we always strive to do through our tendering process."

Why did the tender for the employee assistance program for Yukon public servants fail to recognize local experience and local knowledge?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** This government has approximately 6,500 contracts each and every year that we issue. It represents 40 percent of this government's annual expenditures that are made through contracts with private businesses. The way in which we procure items can be just as important as what we procure, and a key underlying principle of our procurement is open competition and we're working to support that principle and encourage competitive bids for goods and services wherever possible, which makes Yukoners' tax dollars go further and do more.

Again, I commented on a specific project that is out there right now, the F.H. Collins project, which has over 20 local contractors working on-site as well as 20 local vendors that are benefiting from that job. That is just one of the 6,500 contracts that we do per year.

Again, the member opposite has a very specific question to one specific contract and, as I mentioned, we have over 6,500 annual contracts that we manage. Perhaps if she would like to write a letter, I could get back on a specific contract, but I can assure members of the House that we strive to ensure that local contractors, in a competitive manner, are able to take advantage of business opportunities with the Yukon government where possible.

**Ms. Hanson:** One specific contract deals with 5,000 public servants. Yukon public servants trying to cope with something in their life may access the employee assistance program, whether it is substance abuse, post-traumatic stress, or dealing with death and grief. EAP programs are a vital triage, providing short-term counselling and referral to longer term supports. For 25 years, local company Nimco and Associates has run the EAP program and has seen thousands of government employees across the Yukon. I have had

testimonials from public servants as to the quality of the job that Nimco and Associates has provided. There has been unanimous praise for the compassionate, one-on-one support they performed and their knowledge of local services and the Yukon context.

The Yukon government recently awarded the EAP contract to the Toronto-based Toronto Stock Exchange-listed, multinational HR corporation, Morneau Shepell. Why would Nimco and Associates, after decades of quality work, get shut out of —

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

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Mr. Speaker, the Yukon government has entered into a new contract with Morneau Shepell, the successful bidder resulting from a request for proposals for EAP and CISM services — that is, critical incident stress management services.

Services with the new provider began on May 1 of this year. Mr. Speaker, ethical practice provides for preparation of clients for transition or adjustment to new circumstances, such as a change in service provider. Consequently, a one-month contract extension was given to the former service provider to continue providing services until the new service provider contract came into effect. Assessment, referral and short-term counselling for employees and their families will continue to be provided. In addition, under the new contract, CISM services for the prevention of PTSD are also being extended to YG contractors and volunteers who, in the course of their work, are exposed to traumatic situations.

Local professional counsellors will be used as well as remote counsellors, including those with highly specialized expertise. The projected annual cost of this new contract is over \$400,000. We will continue to work with both the previous contractor and the current contractor to ensure there is a smooth transition and that people who are receiving services currently don't see any change or a negative impact on the services that they receive. We will continue to provide these important services to Yukon public servants.

**Ms. Hanson:** They are already receiving and feeling the negative impact.

EAP is a type of service where relationships are important and not recognizing experience and local knowledge is wrong and there is something very wrong here.

Nimco and Associates has provided quality service for 25 years, has established important relationships with other service providers, are Yukon-based, and provide critical incident stress management. According to the contract registry, a company called Chrysalis Human Development conducted a review of the employee assistance program in 2014 for the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Speaker, I have two questions: Will the minister release this review to the public and will the minister explain how this 2014 review guided the tendering of the new EAP contract?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** It's clear from the questions asked throughout today that the NDP, if they were in government, would have interfered in this contracting process — either

interfered with the contracting process at a political level or would have had officials do so. That's not something this government will do. We respect the role of the process outlined in legislation and in practice of government.

With regard to the review she is asking about — in 2014, PSC conducted an EAP program review to aid in preparation of an RFP for a new EAP services contract, as the existing contract was due to expire March 31 of this year. The objectives of the review were to evaluate program services, current trends, usage trends and costs over the past nine years, with a view to ensuring the program remains relevant and effective into the future. The review highlighted the many strengths of the program, including 24/7 access, local in-person access, options for communities outside of Whitehorse and service provider staff who understand the Yukon context.

These strengths were reflected and continued in the RFP requirements. The review highlighted some other aspects for future consideration, which were also reflected in the requirements set out in a subsequently issued RFP for the EAP.

We'll continue to provide these EAP services to Yukon public servants. We know they're very important and we'll work to ensure that there's a smooth transition between the previous provider and the current provider.

#### **Question re: Dawson City Airport**

**Mr. Silver:** About a year ago this time, the Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture had returned from a meeting in Dawson where he had heard concerns about a gravel runway. It was limiting the number of tourists Air North could fly in and out from Alaska, for example.

The minister stood in this House and stated that the government was to pave the runway. He also told a local newspaper. His statement was — and I quote: "...meant as a message to Yukoners and the tourism industry that the government takes their requests seriously." A year later, we know how seriously the government took this request: There is no money in this budget to pave Dawson's runway and there is no money in next year's forecast either. We have a new minister but no new runway.

Mr. Speaker, why has the new minister backed away from the old minister's promise?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Just to inform members of the House, I did send an e-mail to the Member for Klondike last week regarding maintenance at the Dawson runway over the weekend. It was surfacing and an application of a substance that would firm up the runway to allow for the Holland America passengers to come in on Air North. I'm pleased to report that work was completed on Saturday evening, ahead of schedule, and the runway was reopened with no issues that I was made aware of from that work.

One of the things with respect to paving the runway in Dawson City — it's a significant capital expense, as members can appreciate. I believe the number is close to \$10 million. There's also an ongoing O&M component of approximately half a million dollars a year.

Currently, Transport Canada is assessing the approach slope and we're working with them, as requested, on that. What that will determine is whether or not this equipment can land there. I'm sure all members would agree that, before spending that amount of money on capital and ongoing O&M, we wait to hear back from Transport Canada to ensure that the approach slope to the Dawson airport is sufficient to accommodate the equipment that Air North is trying to run there.

**Mr. Silver:** The maintenance the minister just referenced will not allow Air North to bring more people into Dawson this summer or next. A year ago, the former minister promised to pave the Dawson City runway. A week after, his colleague from Watson Lake also introduced a second motion asking the government to pave the runway, just in case the public had not heard it the first time.

We know this is expensive, Mr. Speaker. Capital assets are expensive. Soccer fields are expensive. Lots of things are expensive.

A year later, the flights to Dawson are set to begin and, again, plans to pave the runway have not been advanced by this government.

Why did the government make the promise in the first place if they had no intention to follow through on it?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** I think this government would look very foolish if we paved the runway and invested \$10 million in capital and \$500,000 in ongoing O&M if Transport Canada ruled that the approach slope was not sufficient to operate that kind of equipment. Perhaps the member opposite didn't hear that in the first response.

We conducted some maintenance over this past weekend on the strip at Dawson, and Air North will be ready to fly in the jet. My understanding is that the first jet is coming in on May 21. The Minister of Tourism and Culture, in particular, and I have been working with companies like Air North and Holland America to address not only the current situation but — once we hear back from Transport Canada — what the future options are with respect to that airport.

We're waiting for the Transport Canada assessment of the approach slope to be completed at which time we'll be in a better position to make a decision on what we do going forward at the Dawson Airport.

**Mr. Silver:** The former minister said that his motion was to send a message about how serious this government takes the requests from the tourism industry and, a year later, I guess we're having our answer — not very seriously at all.

I know the issue was raised at a meeting with their federal minister, Jason Kenney, some time ago. He said that it was a good project as well, and he suggested that Yukon apply under the Building Canada fund for funding. It's very disappointing to see that these runway plans have been put on the backburner even though industry and their federal counterparts have also thought it was a good idea. It's this government that's holding it up.

It's very disappointing to see the lack of potential — for these flights from Alaska cannot be fully realized because of a

lack of infrastructure. It looks like more lobbying is required to see this project through.

Can the minister explain why there is no money for this budget this year or next year, and if they're waiting for some kind of regulations, then why did they make the promise in the first place?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** What's disappointing is the fact that the Member for Klondike can't seem to think on his feet. I guess the Liberals would pave the runway without an assessment being done by Transport Canada.

Transport Canada will be doing this assessment based on safety issues. They are assessing the approach slope at the Dawson runway. Those individuals in this House who have flown into that runway recognize that there are a number of very steep slopes in and around the airport, and I think safety is obviously a concern to Transport Canada; it's a concern to us.

Yukon Liberals would pave that runway without an assessment. They would spend \$10 million to pave it. They would spend \$500,000 per year in O&M — and perhaps no 737 service there anyway. I guess if that's the type of government that Yukoners could expect from the Liberal Leader and the Member for Klondike, they may want to think twice on the next election day.

#### **Question re: Francophone school board litigation**

**Ms. White:** Monsieur le président, c'est la Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise, et l'éducation en français se trouve dans l'actualité. Aujourd'hui la Cour suprême du Canada s'est prononcée sur la poursuite impliquant la Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon. Dans sa décision, le Cour suprême a ordonné un nouveau procès et a renvoyé le dossier à la Cour d'appel du Yukon.

Today, as we celebrate francophones' contributions to Yukon, it would be a great chance for the Yukon Party government to put actions behind words when it comes to French education.

Will the government go back to court and contest this case with the commission scolaire in a new trial?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** The Supreme Court decision just came down this morning, today, and this government will take some time to review that decision.

However, at this point, from a cursory view, it doesn't appear that anything would be gained by going back to court. In fact, there's no reason for the territorial government to go back to court.

During the last few years, when both my colleagues here served some time as Minister of Education, we have improved our relationship with the CSFY a great deal. A number of the issues that were issues some years ago when this court case started are no longer issues, so there is no intent on the government's part to pursue legal action in any way.

**Ms. White:** Le choix de la confrontation au lieu de collaboration de la part du gouvernement du Yukon Party est un manque de respect pour la communauté franco-yukonnaise. Les batailles juridiques accumulées par le gouvernement coutent cher au public. Cette attitude de confrontation n'est

pas constructive et gaspille du temps et de l'argent qui pourraient servir à améliorer notre communauté.

This government is forcing the conseil scolaire to invest even more money in a case they shouldn't have to fight. In the end, francophones and all Yukoners are picking up the tab for this government's confrontational attitude. How much has this government spent so far on fighting the commission scolaire?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I don't know where the member opposite is getting her information — if she's dreaming it up or if she's inventing it just to create a difficulty here. We're not in any confrontational situation with CSFY. In fact, we've been working with CSFY on an ongoing basis. There are a number of things that have been completed in the last few months even. We've concluded discussions on a funding formula. CSFY has completed its own school calendar.

I realize the Leader of the Official Opposition doesn't agree with it, but she doesn't agree with anything. I'm not surprised and I'm not surprised that the member opposite has taken her cue from the leader.

There is no confrontation with CSFY. We have every intention of continuing our ongoing discussions with them. Hopefully we'll reach resolution on any outstanding issues.

#### **Question re: Access to abortion services**

**Ms. Stick:** Reproductive choice, including the choice to have a safe abortion, is a human right protected under international law. Yukon has one of the highest abortion rates in the country, yet Yukon women seeking an abortion have limited options.

Referral for a surgical abortion must be obtained through a family physician or community nurse, and they are only available up to 12 weeks at the Whitehorse General Hospital. Women without a family physician must go to an ER or a walk-in clinic for a referral. Some women must see more than one provider to get that referral. After 12 weeks, limited capacity means women are sent Outside.

What is this government doing to ensure Yukon women have timely access to abortion?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Certainly access to health care is more than just about seeing a doctor. It's about receiving quality care when needed, by the appropriate provider in a manner that is sustainable.

The department continues to work with the Yukon Medical Association to ensure an adequate supply of health care professionals for our territory. Health and Social Services has a physician recruiter working closely with the Yukon Medical Association. The department continues to explore options for additional collaborative care practices and innovative, team-based delivery models that will certainly serve to meet the needs of health care for Yukon residents.

The department continues to work with the Yukon Hospital Corporation and with the YMA on providing excellent health care for Yukoners.

**Ms. Stick:** It's true: Yukon women do deserve the best care possible and they do deserve the best abortion services also. This government does not have a clear strategy to ensure women throughout the territory have unimpeded access to

that. Dating ultrasounds are necessary for both surgical and medical abortions. Neither the Dawson City nor Watson Lake hospitals house this. They are only available in Whitehorse. This means our women in the rural communities must find a way into Whitehorse for a dating ultrasound. They often may have to return to their home communities to await an abortion schedule and then come back to Whitehorse for day surgery, which may include extra days for pre- and post-op care. It can take two to five weeks for the entire process.

What immediate actions will this government take to improve access to abortion for women in rural communities?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** As I indicated in my first answer, access to health care is really about more than seeing a doctor. It's about receiving that quality care when needed by the appropriate provider in a manner that is certainly sustainable. This government will continue to work with our recruiter. We provide excellent services across the territory through the Yukon Hospital Corporation and through the department. They certainly have a great working relationship with the Yukon Medical Association.

We will continue to explore options for additional collaborative care practices and innovative team-based delivery models that will serve to meet the health care needs of all Yukon residents.

**Ms. Stick:** We do not have a clear health strategy that will address sexual and reproductive health for women in this territory. In fact, the first and only study of women's access to abortion in the Yukon comes from a 2014 graduate thesis. It found that there are barriers to accessing abortion close to home and in a timely manner.

These gaps could be addressed by a strategy that might include an abortion clinic equipped to provide that access to dating ultrasounds, therapeutic and medical abortions, abortion care and contraceptive counselling. These clinics exist in other communities, in other jurisdictions — communities of similar size.

Mr. Speaker, will this government consult local stakeholders and women about the need for such a clinic located near or in —

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

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** As the Minister of Health and Social Services has already been speaking to this matter, we on this side of the Legislature have been working for many years to expand the access to health care in terms of expanding the number of health care providers, in terms of expanding the number of health care centres that we have available in the Yukon, and the delivery of specialist services as well, throughout every one of our communities.

I can say that, when it comes to women, I'm very pleased with the work that has been ongoing. Patients can actually now visit one of two clinics — a Yukon sexual health clinic or the Yukon women's midlife health clinic — when it comes to sexual, reproductive, as well as menopause health-related concerns.

We have available a collaborative health care model being made available through a nurse practitioner as the

primary care provider who works collaboratively and consultatively with physicians and with a variety of other health care providers. We have a funding agreement with the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, whereby we contribute to ongoing O&M to the centre for the purpose of accommodating a rural pregnant moms program and so forth.

We have also spoken at great length — we are also working with the midwives' association here in the territory, expanding the delivery —

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

### Question re: Affordable housing

**Ms. White:** There are a few signs that summer is coming. The sun stays up late; the RVs are settling in the Walmart parking lot; and Yukon social assistance clients are about to be evicted from their long-stay billets at Yukon hotels to make room for the influx of tourists to the territory. It is hard as an advocate for a strong, affordable housing system to come to terms with the fact that putting Yukon's low-income tenants up in hotels has become a part of our housing continuum instead of a last resort. Tenants living in hotels just don't have the basic support facilities like a kitchen, which you need to live healthily for an extended period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like an update from the Minister of Health and Social Services as to the status of long-stay hotel residents this year. How many Yukoners has the government housed in long-stay hotel rooms this winter and what was the cost to house those Yukoners in those hotel rooms?

**Hon. Mr. Hassard:** I think it is important to remember just how much money this government has spent in housing over the past few years. I believe that it has been almost \$150 million since 2002. This government is committed to helping those people in need of housing and we work hard every day to look after those people.

**Ms. White:** I was asking the Minister of Health and Social Services how much money his department spent keeping people in inappropriate housing. Let's think about it for a moment. What would the Salvation Army shelter look like if the hotels suddenly closed one fall and the government couldn't use them as long-stay hotels and as low-income housing? What's more, hotels have been known to charge the highest possible rate to the Yukon government in order to maximize their profits. Long-term stays in hotels should become a last resort — an exceptional resource to deal with sudden changes in the housing market. Instead, under the Yukon Party government's watch, it has become an essential part of the Yukon's housing infrastructure.

Does the Minister of Health and Social Services believe that it is acceptable for his government to consider a hotel room to be a long-term housing solution?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I would certainly like to take this opportunity to thank the men and women who work in social services. I have a fairly significant background in that area and it is tough work and I commend them for the job that they do.

Certainly Health and Social Services remains focused on supporting people who are homeless or who are under-housed and who require additional services and supports to maintain the housing that they are looking for. The successful partnership between Yukon Housing Corporation, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, and Health and Social Services to provide an emergency shelter for youth demonstrates this commitment.

We have seen recent announcements with the Salvation Army that the member opposite spoke about, as well as the Fourth Avenue sixplex that we are opening for individuals who might be considered hard to house. Those investments are certainly very important in our community and this government stands behind those investments. It is unfortunate that the members opposite continue to vote against them.

**Ms. White:** I wonder how much money has been spent by the Yukon Party government in the last 13 years to keep social assistance clients in inadequate housing.

We all know that the situation is unsustainable, so why is the Yukon Party government making Yukoners on the lower end of the housing continuum and on social assistance make hotel rooms a permanent home? Hotel rooms are not homes and they should only be used as a last resort. Yukon is faced with an affordable housing crisis that has been years in the making thanks to a Yukon Party government whose inaction and cancelled affordable housing projects have made it more difficult than ever for low-income tenants to find safe, affordable housing.

When will the Yukon Party government have a plan to phase out the use of expensive, long-stay hotel rooms for real affordable housing that Yukoners deserve?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Certainly addressing homelessness is a challenge faced by many jurisdictions across Canada. We are certainly not alone in this endeavour and that's why Health and Social Services continues to work with Yukon Housing and other community partners to provide long-term housing solutions and support services for vulnerable Yukoners, particularly persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

This government has made over \$150-million worth of commitments in social housing. That's certainly something that I can stand behind; that's certainly something that my colleagues stand behind. We've seen time and time again that with each one of those investments, the members opposite continue to vote against them: Salvation Army, the sixplex on Fourth Avenue, St. Elias group home and Sarah Steele, just to name a few. We stand behind those investments. We stand behind addressing homelessness, as it is a challenge across Canada. I would urge the members opposite to start voting in favour of these investments.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BILLS

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

**Clerk:** Third 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 third time and do pass.

**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 third time and do pass.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** It's a pleasure to rise today for the third reading of Bill No. 84, entitled *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*. Members will recall from my comments at second reading and debate in Committee of the Whole the context with which this bill is being brought forward and the content of the bill as well. 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 6/49. The other lottery activities in Yukon's only gambling hall, Diamond Tooth Gertie's, are currently regulated by the *Lottery Licensing Act*.

As you may recall, our government recently assisted Diamond Tooth Gertie's with the purchase of new slot machines. Associated with that assistance was a review of the legislative framework under which Gertie's operates. It has come to our attention that legislative changes are required and that Gertie's cannot continue to be licensed through the *Lottery Licensing Act*, Yukon's charitable gaming legislation.

Under the proposed amendments contained in this bill, Gertie's gaming operations, including slot machines, will be conducted by the Klondike Visitors Association, as an agent of the Yukon government, but Gertie's day-to-day operations will continue just as they do at present.

By moving legislative oversight of Gertie's from the *Lottery Licensing Act* to the *Public Lotteries Act*, we will ensure that their gaming operations are fully compliant with the *Criminal Code*. I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to recognize the excellent work done by the Klondike Visitors Association. This not-for-profit destination marketing organization promotes tourism to Dawson City and contributes to the economic growth in the community and territory. In addition to its first-class operation of Gertie's, the KVA also operates other important historic venues in Dawson City, including the Jack London Museum and Free Claim No. 6. It also hosts annual iconic events such as the Thaw di Gras Spring Carnival, the Yukon goldpanning championships and the Great Klondike International Outhouse Race, which attract thousands of visitors each year to the area and create hundreds of jobs.

Bill No. 84 supports this government's priority of promoting diversification in other sectors of the 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 Gertie's will remain unchanged.

I also wanted to mention that 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 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 communication and outdoor skills training program and to the Carcross-Tagish First Nation for their Skills for 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 Yukon for their community launch program, and to the Ynklude Arts Society for its "heart will speak" project

The crime prevention and victim services trust fund is coordinated by a board of trustees. Board members include community members and representatives from the Government of Yukon, First Nations, women's organizations and the RCMP. I wish to thank the various departmental officials from Community Services for their work in preparing this new legislation, which will help ensure the success of Community Services' vision of vibrant, healthy and sustainable Yukon communities.

Building on that thanks, Mr. Speaker, I want to note in particular the officials in the Department of Community Services who have done the yeoman's task of the policy work that has gone into this bill, as well as the officials in the Department of Justice, who have conducted the drafting of the bill. It is no small task to do a piece of legislation, and I would like to thank, on behalf of my colleagues, those members of the public service who have committed time and effort to complete this bill. I would also like to thank those groups — including the KVA and Lottery Commission — that have provided input on this bill, and for their continued work on matters related to lotteries in the Yukon.

The next step, once this bill is passed and assented to, will be to enter into a new licence with the Klondike Visitors Association, which will allow that organization to act as an agent of government, thereby allowing them to come into compliance with the *Criminal Code* of Canada, all the while



ensuring that Yukon citizens and visitors alike continue to enjoy the gaming opportunities that are available in Dawson City at Diamond Tooth Gertie's casino.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I will commend this bill to the House and look forward to seeing the support of all members of this House to pass this bill during this legislative Sitting.

**Mr. Barr:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party regarding Bill No. 84, *An Act to Amend the Public Lotteries Act and Related Enactments*. We will be supporting these changes, as we do support the good work of the Klondike Visitors Association, which includes Diamond Tooth Gertie's. We do realize that this regulatory change will bring compliance with the *Criminal Code* of Canada. Just to acknowledge all of the work that does go into this by the affected parties — Lotteries Yukon and the officials drafting this legislation — and for that, we wish KVA a great season and I will see you up there sometime this summer. We do support this change.

**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. Hanson:** Agree.

**Ms. Stick:** Agree.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Agree.

**Ms. White:** Agree.

**Mr. Tredger:** Agree.

**Mr. Barr:** Agree.

**Mr. Silver:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results of 18 yeas, nil nays.

**Speaker:** The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.  
*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 84 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare that Bill No. 84 has passed this House.

**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):** Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 18, entitled *First 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. 18: *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — continued

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

#### Women's Directorate

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** It is my pleasure to rise today in the Assembly to present the Women's Directorate operation and maintenance and capital budget for 2015-16.

Before I speak to the budget specifically, I do want to point out that the Women's Directorate is celebrating 30 years of public service this year. In fact, it became a free-standing department back in 1985 and has since grown tremendously in terms of staff and budget and impact. We are really fortunate, I believe, that while many other status of women offices in other provinces and territories have experienced a reduction in funding or support, this department continues to enhance support to Yukon women and children through strategic investment partnerships and through high quality service.

I certainly want to say thank you to each and every one of our staff members. It has been a real privilege to work alongside this small but very effective team over the years.

I was asked to take over this portfolio when we were re-elected in 2011 and, of course, it was a portfolio that I had served in the past as well. Indeed I want to say thank you to staff of the Women's Directorate for their expertise and for their passion and for the experience that each of them brings to the table in being able to help influence and exemplify change throughout the organization.

The budget before us continues to invest in emerging and important areas when it comes to investing in Yukon women and children, and through investments in community-based programming, partnerships and policy development, we remain committed to providing support for high quality

programs and services that make a difference in the day-to-day lives of Yukoners.

One such service that I am pleased to introduce is a new women's legal advocate position that will be based in a non-Yukon government organization and will provide legal information and support for women navigating the legal system. Service supports for women will also be enhanced. These changes were recommended in the *Sharing Common Ground — Review of Yukon's Police Force — Final Report* and by the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues.

The Women's Directorate — and I would also like to thank the Department of Justice and my colleague, the Minister of Justice for being able to collaborate on this unique initiative. Because of those efforts and this partnership, we are pursuing a three-year pilot project with the funding flowing through the Women's Directorate budget. Funding will total \$95,000 for this fiscal year and \$93,000 for the following two years. The annual funding provides dollars in support of the position itself, in support of travel to ensure connection with and service provision for all communities, and annual training dollars for front-line service providers. This budget also reflects a one-time capital investment that will provide for some office equipment and renovations for this particular position wherever it may be housed. This three-year pilot project will be evaluated in years two and three, of course with an additional investment of dollars in respect to that evaluation and so forth.

This funding will bring the total amount of annual transfer payments agreements to all women's organizations and First Nation governments to over \$800,000 a year. The Yukon government also continues to support Yukon women through a variety of other investments. Since 2007, we have invested significant amounts of dollars on expenditures in support of affordable family housing for single parents and children.

In fact, the Women's Directorate did support the family housing initiative in Riverdale, as well as the development of Betty's Haven, second-stage housing for Kaushee's Place.

The Whitehorse affordable family housing initiative has really provided a lot of much-needed relief for single-parent families who require a healthy, positive housing community to call home. Likewise, Betty's Haven is also of great use and provides housing for up to 18 months for women who are victims of violence.

Since 2004, we have invested over \$4.5 million in community-based programming and service delivery for front-line support. For this, we have provided \$1.9 million through the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund, and a further \$2.3 million through the women's equality fund, which we have seen grow over the recent years. This has also meant that delivery of programming delivered by First Nation governments as well as women's organizations throughout the territory have been able to offer high-quality programs and supports to women and their families.

A few examples include the support of the Elizabeth Fry Society, Les EssentiElles, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, the Status of Women Council, the Food Bank Society

of Whitehorse and Yukon Women in Trades and Technology. Community-based programming has expanded opportunities for women and girls to learn about promising careers in resource industries like mining, and also to gain practical skills in high-demand sectors like construction.

Over the last 30 years, the Women's Directorate has advanced its mandate of increasing the legal, social and economic equality of women and families in the territory. As I've noted in the past on many occasions, the Women's Directorate continues to focus its efforts on domestic and sexualized violence against women and girls, with particular attention on aboriginal women, as well as enhancing gender-inclusive and diversity analysis within the Yukon government.

We have and continue to play a key leadership role regionally and nationally when it comes to working in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and First Nation organizations to address violence against aboriginal women. In 2004 — and it doesn't feel that long ago, Madam Chair — the Women's Directorate championed and advanced the focus on aboriginal women's issues at the status of women ministers forum, envisioned a national policy forum on aboriginal women and violence in 2006, and funded strategic investments to help First Nation governments and aboriginal women's organizations develop that community-based programming.

This leadership included establishing a full-time position at the Women's Directorate, now called the aboriginal women's policy and program manager. In addition, the Government of Yukon has participated actively in all four national aboriginal women's summits and held territorial summits for Yukon women in 2007 and again in 2012.

These summits provided key recommendations that have helped close to half a million dollars of funding flowing from the northern strategy trust back in 2010, plus an additional \$450,000 in funding from the Government of Yukon — again, in 2013 for three years.

As a government, we remain firm in our position of calling for a national public inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls, as reiterated in the Legislature just a couple of years ago and then reaffirmed by our Premier at the Council of the Federation meeting in August of 2014. The Government of Yukon has been very actively involved in assisting national aboriginal organizations plan the national round table that was held earlier this year in Ottawa. The Yukon government sent a very strong delegation to Ottawa — again, representing aboriginal women's organizations, self-governing First Nations, chiefs, as well as representatives from the Department of Justice, Executive Council Office, the Women's Directorate and others — again, speaking to the work when it comes to prevention and awareness, community safety plans and placing issues.

Today I am very pleased that work continues to advance way beyond the national round table. Provincial, territorial and federal governments, as well as national aboriginal organizations, have all committed to a second national round table to be held by the end of 2016. Also, what has also been committed to is a prevention and awareness campaign at the

national level and a forum to explore best practices and better coordinate and share information on policing and justice responses. We recognize that all families and all communities want action and concrete improvements in all regions of Canada. Certainly here in the Yukon we are committed to further dialogue and collaboration with our partners to ensure that we build on those achievements, such as the Yukon Sisters in Spirit initiative, which was really first kicked off at the national level and then carried forward in the Yukon in collaboration with many Yukon families of those impacted by those murdered or missing aboriginal women here at home — again, to better respond to the unique needs of aboriginal women and their children.

In Yukon, we are very pleased to provide support to aboriginal women's initiatives through the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund. This fund supports innovative projects that address issues of importance to aboriginal women and First Nation leaders. Some of the highlights of those projects include the recent hosting of Walking With Our Sisters, a commemorative art installation honouring the lives of missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada and the United States. I know that members of the Assembly certainly took part in that commemorative installation and it was a very powerful and very moving event for each and every Yukoner who had the privilege of being able to see literally hundreds of moccasin vamps sprawled and spread across the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre, representing the lives of many aboriginal women and children who have lost their lives to violence over the years.

I would like to thank the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Society and the many volunteers and supporters of the very important initiative that took place.

Other initiatives that have been supported include enhancing Selkirk First Nation's capacity to respond to violence against women, expanding the highly acclaimed Women of Wisdom project at the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, and continuing to support A Safe Place program at the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre.

Complementing these projects, the Women's Directorate is also providing an additional \$150,000 to help three Yukon aboriginal women's organizations to implement the 2012 recommendations that came about as a result of the recent summit that was held here in Whitehorse.

Noteworthy progress has been made on the Together for Justice initiative with the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society through this support. A protocol agreement between the RCMP and women's organizations has really transformed working relationships and trust between the RCMP and women in the community.

I am really proud to be able to support innovative projects such as this that continue to make a difference in the lives of aboriginal women and girls. This work has been so successful and highly applauded by many organizations across the territory that this work has really inspired an expansion of this particular protocol agreement to all parts of the territory,

involving the Yukon women's coalition and the RCMP — more to come on that front later on this month.

As you are aware, Madam Chair, Yukon has one of the highest rates of intimate partner violence in the country. Both police-reported and self-reported data show that women are more likely to be victims of specific forms of violence, such as sexualized violence and stalking. We continue to focus on preventing and ending violence against women and girls in the Yukon. Preserving the dignity of victims and holding offenders accountable are central, enhancing reporting and supports to those who need it. We are very focused on improving our social response that we as a government have responsibility for.

We are moving ahead with our own violence prevention project. A Yukon government team is leading a project to improve the ways that we as an organization can respond and prevent violence against women and children, focusing on a comprehensive and integrated approach that improves key services to women and families through victim services, child protection, a kindergarten-to-grade-12 education, corrections, probation, health care and recreation.

Our focus is preventing violence in the first place by changing attitudes and behaviours within the largest employer in the territory and focusing on the other areas as the employer, service provider and an agent of social change.

We are working to develop tools to respond more effectively to domestic violence and providing education supports to staff and work units that are impacted by the effects of domestic violence here in the workplace. The cost of intimate partner violence in Canada costs everyone dearly, and it therefore takes a collective response from each and every one of us — organizations and governments alike — to do what we can to help bring an end to violence.

I see that my time is getting smaller and smaller, so I am going to try to focus on other items. We have, through the status of women and women's directorate offices across the country, developed gender-inclusive analysis within our policies and programming as a result of our international commitments with ratification of the United Nations *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. In fact, in 1995, at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, Canada adopted the UN's Beijing platform for action, which requires all member states to seek to ensure that, before policy decisions are taken, we do our analysis of their impact on women and men respectively.

As members are aware and as we talked in the Legislature last time we met, the Government of Yukon refers to this process as a gender-inclusive and diversity analysis. We have been actively offering analysis services since the mid-1980s — since the Women's Directorate was first formed — and we continue this good work. As I spoke to the Assembly last time round, we did present to status of women ministers from across the country in June of last year on lessons learned from a five-year evaluation on the gender-inclusive and diversity analysis conducted by the Women's Directorate. We are the second jurisdiction in the country to undertake an evaluation

of such services and their impact. I can speak to this initiative at greater length, but I do see that my time is running low.

I do want to say, in closing, that I am very proud of the work that the Government of Yukon is doing to support not only women and girls in Yukon, but women and girls on the national and international front. The Women's Directorate continues to fulfill its mandate to deliver programs and services that help to advance economic, legal and social equality for women throughout the territory. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to this budget and look forward to questions arising from my colleagues across the way.

**Ms. White:** I would like to take the opportunity to thank the official who is here in the House today and also her and her colleague for the briefing that we had. It's always important to thank the Women's Directorate for the work that they do and also the work that they do with their partners in the communities.

It's interesting — the more time you spend in a job like this, the more history to get to learn. It's one of those really exciting things to know about the many achievements around gender equality that happened under previous NDP governments. We were just talking about the anniversary of the Women's Directorate, and I have had fascinating conversations with Eleanor Millard who was a big part of making that happen. She talked about when she first got elected in the 1970s and how it was the "Wild West". She talked about the effort it took to get the Women's Directorate and that was an accomplishment that she was really pleased with.

Under previous NDP governments, we established pay equity for women employed by the Yukon government. We removed the wage disparity between men and women, which I think is fantastic. They created the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues. They introduced the program and built the facility for the Teen Parent Centre initially and they established even the victims of crime fund. It is neat to look back sometimes at programs that I now take for granted and don't realize what part of the history we played in that establishment.

I am not going to touch on everything that the minister just did. I am going to start by focusing on the new women's legal advocate position and just try to get a more clear idea of how that is going to work. I have in front of me the expression of interest that people were able to access on-line. I was wondering if the minister could tell me — in the description it just says that the Women's Directorate is seeking an organization in Whitehorse to provide the physical space, administrative support and supervision to a new women's legal advocate position. The objective of the women's legal advocate position is to fill a gap in services for women who require support to navigate and make decisions on issues that have legal implications. It says to please note that this position is not a lawyer.

Underneath it, we have got the budget: \$60,000 for the salary; \$15,000 for travel to rural communities; \$10,000 for training Yukon service providers; \$10,000 for any renovations

that the host entity might require; and for year two and three, a \$7,500 amount for evaluation. You can tell I am not an application writer or a grant writer, because I look at this and think, whoa, this is kind of an intense thing.

The one question I have is under core duties. It says: travel to rural communities on a regular schedule to provide information and support. Yesterday, we got back the MLA expense report and we have rural MLAs who travel around the territory. I know that in my five or six community visits, including the cost of fuel, hotel stays and restaurants, it was almost \$2,500. When we say, "travel to rural communities on a regular schedule to provide information and support", I wonder what the director is looking for in that and how they expect that for the cost of travel for fuel, stays, and overtime — what would they imagine \$15,000 will cover?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I would like to thank the member opposite for her question. I'm really quite excited about this initiative. As I mentioned, this is really as a direct result of one of the recommendations that came from the police review. It was to provide and give consideration to the creation of a legal advocate that came about in 2010 and the recommendations that came thereafter in 2011.

It is a very unique initiative and this is one of the reasons it's being provided on a pilot basis — to be able to determine and evaluate the effectiveness in the way we are going to provide this service and whether it works or not.

I remember back during the police review that particular concerns were voiced by women in association with the criminal justice system; in particular, how to access services and the necessary information to make those informed choices, particularly for those who are often in vulnerable places, whether it's because of child custody issues, social assistance or, in some cases, being in a more isolated community.

Women expressed at that time that they considered a lot of factors when deciding to report to the police or to seek services from a support agency, and that more information earlier in the process would help them make those appropriate choices for their safety.

I want to go back and — because of those sentiments that were reflected during the review and during the recommendations that were made by the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues — with some funding that was dedicated, we commissioned the *Gaps, Needs and Options: Legal Advocacy for Yukon Women* report. With that report, and through engagement with community service providers and YACWI, there were identified some unique challenges for women, particularly those women who have experienced sexual assault and domestic violence. We all know the rates of violence in this territory and in the country.

Going back to the decision, for example, when it comes to reaching out to the RCMP or another service provider, whether it's Victim Services or an emergency shelter, because of violence it's very difficult and a very important decision, and one that has oftentimes legal implications. Making the case for those individuals to be better equipped with all the options, consequences and outcomes of every path right at the

outset, earlier in the process, the findings pointed out that there were a number of gaps in the services for women and that some available services were not well understood by service providers working with women, thereby compromising the effectiveness of the referral process when services are not well or fully understood.

Through collaboration and better understanding of all of the services currently being delivered, overall services can and ought to be strengthened. There was also a compelling case for this particular position.

Through the consultations also made duly available through YACWI, it was also communicated that those services are appropriate; that they are culturally relevant and are accessible to women throughout the territory. Again, with service providers — the current ones that we have in place — it was also duly noted that there are many services available, but we need to do a better job in terms of being able to communicate the work of each of those individual service providers again by being able to access that information earlier on. From that work, YACWI had come up with a couple of recommendations. The first one was to create this particular position that we're speaking to in a non-governmental organization based here in Whitehorse and, secondly, to develop improvements to the current services that are made available.

With that, we have been able to come together with the Department of Justice because of the very important work that they do on behalf of women and we were able to partner together to announce funding for this three-year pilot for a new position and to also work to improve the delivery of services within our current complement of services. The new position will support women living in Whitehorse and rural communities by providing legal information, support and referrals for women, and navigating the various legal and social service systems; also establishing and maintaining a strong network of collaboration and referral processes with many of the critical agencies like the RCMP, Victim Services, the Department of Justice and so forth.

One of the other key components of this was to initiate and coordinate regular training opportunities for local service providers who require up-to-date information on legal processes — the point being that this one position is not going to be responsible for all, but would be better able to coordinate and better able to provide those up-to-date training opportunities for the current service providers, which will help improve the delivery of services for all Yukon women throughout the territory. Of course we'll be overseeing the implementation of this project through the Women's Directorate and Justice, and funding of course is flowing through our budget about which we are speaking today.

It's a pilot project as I mentioned. We'll be carrying out an evaluation in the second and third years of the initiative. We are at the point in the particular process that we will be awaiting proposals to be made available by organizations who are interested in hosting the women's legal advocate position within their existing program and service delivery mode — again, the whole point being, being able to work to strengthen

services in the Yukon by working to strengthen the connections among those who are providing services and ensuring that women have relevant and timely access to information early on to make informed decisions, which ultimately will result in better delivery of services and better outcomes for individuals, families and our communities overall.

I'm really pleased with the work that has been undertaken thus far by the two departments. Again, when it comes to travel for example, it's going to be very important that this individual is able to connect with the communities by being able to provide training opportunities on various services and to be able to help to improve service delivery among our current providers throughout the Yukon as well.

In addition to travel, there is a whole host of other modes of communicating, whether it is electronic — there is Skype — or the many different processes available depending on the community and so forth. Flexibility is really paramount in all of this, particularly when it comes to delivering this service, and that was really one of the points. One of the key thinking pieces by YACWI was to be able — by being able to solicit the services of an organization already in existence, there would be some creative thought in terms of how to better or best provide this service in a very creative and flexible environment. The thinking is also being able to leverage resources within that organization as well, so if there is outreach being undertaken, we would be able to take advantage of current connections with that service provider.

It's a pilot project. We'll be working in close connection with the advocate and the office itself on a monthly basis to really identify where the challenges are, where the opportunities are and how we can work best to improve those services being made available.

**Ms. White:** So just to follow up on the last part of the comment there, is it fair to say that the organization that will possibly host the women's legal advocate may be expected to try to find and then match money to help assist in the training?

One of the questions I had was, what did the minister and the director — kind of like the best-case scenario — was the hope that they would visit all communities one time or multiple times or would they visit some communities multiple times and other communities not at all? If the travel allowance is viewed as being inadequate, will the government increase the funding for travel at a later point? Will that be something that can be renegotiated or is it going to be set at \$15,000 for the three years? I guess I'm trying to get an idea of what the vision is. Are we talking about visiting Haines Junction, Dawson City, and Watson Lake or are we looking at going as far as Old Crow and Beaver Creek and Ross River? I am just kind of trying to get an idea if it's one time — because I imagine to a certain extent that there's hope for what this position will be able to do and I'm just trying to understand and get a broader understanding of what the core duties of travel to rural communities on a regular schedule to provide information and support looks like.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** As I mentioned earlier at the outset, I think the key words are to be responsive and to be flexible,

incorporating that element of flexibility in this particular position. We have issued the expression of interest. There are some criteria outlined in the expression of interest and they speak to a demonstration of how the advocate will complement and leverage current service program offerings for those women navigating those systems, and how it would be a good fit within their organization and the services they're already providing.

In terms of a requirement to match funding — no, there's no requirement as such. Because we haven't had a position like this in place before, we'll be watching very closely and, should there be clear concerns or, within the first year, there has been significant uptake in a specific community or communities and it requires additional travel dollars, those are the things we'll be keeping a very close eye out for. It will be all part and parcel of working with our steering committee and overseeing some of those initial results.

We wanted to incorporate that, and that was part of YACWI's thinking as well, when they deliberated — and they deliberated a lot — almost two years — in terms of going out for research and hiring a consultant and travelling to all the communities — and then having that initial report and then going out again to the community and hearing feedback from key stakeholders, women's organizations and others, on how best to deliver this service.

It was their thinking at the time that, through an NGO, a current provider would certainly instill a lot of creativity and responsiveness, and be able to promote flexibility as well.

We will be watching very closely some of these initial results and seeing how well the individual does collaborate with those service providers throughout the territory. I don't have a template in terms of this expression of interest. The clear successor of this expression of interest must entail three visits to Haines Junction on any given year. I suppose that this is the kind of information that will be coming out in terms of the applications from the expression of interest. Obviously there is going to be a large emphasis on training as well — training existing service providers who are also doing a lot of outreach and have nurtured a lot of those particular relationships over the years as well. In that sense there will be some leveraging taking place of those existing current connections with organizations, those service providers and the women on behalf of whom they are already delivering services.

Helping to build capacity among our service providers, being better able to help the delivery of services among those current providers — and that is something that doesn't just fall on the shoulders of the advocate, but we as an organization in the government need to improve on them. That was duly noted in one of the two recommendations made by YACWI. That work is underway and we are really excited about this particular position. We are excited to see the proposals coming forward and, who knows — there may be other elements that the Women's Directorate and the Department of Justice haven't even thought of — that was really to be able to instill that creativity and to be able to breed that flexibility in that process.

I thank the Women's Directorate and the Department of Justice for working diligently and being very focused on this initiative — getting this expression of interest out in a timely manner and very much putting these dollars in this year's budget to good use.

**Ms. White:** I appreciate the minister's answer and I hope that the department is flexible and responsive to the needs of this position, as the hope is that this position will be to the territory. I am curious as to which groups are represented on the steering committee and who they represent in that two-year conversation. Maybe I'll let the minister answer that before I go on.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** This is work that is underway right now — to put together a formal steering committee.

Right now the thinking is to have the Department of Justice representatives, as well as the Women's Directorate and YACWI members on board to ensure that we have aboriginal women represented on the committee. There could be others, but that is what the initial thinking is on the steering committee — to have it representative of those who are doing the work directly and also having YACWI involved, as they have been all along for the past three years or so.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for her answer. In previous debates we talked a lot about the Women's Directorate's gender-inclusive analysis policy and program training and just how far we as a territory have come in this process. It's one of those really interesting realities that all issues are women's issues and that we need to use that gender-inclusive lens when we look at postings or advertising. It's super important to say that the Women's Directorate took up the challenge through its gender-inclusive analysis policy and program training. I am not sure if it's still only offered twice a year or if it's offered more often. That is one question: Is it still only offered twice a year in the one-day workshop for Yukon government employees?

We talked about the Auditor General's report from 2009 of the federal government and how we could learn from what those recommendations were. It was noted by Status of Women Canada that all players within government share the responsibility for making gender-based analysis sustainable. I still wonder if the departments and agencies and the Women's Directorate are being sufficiently supported in ensuring gender-inclusive analysis and that it is integrated in all our work. Is it integrated throughout the policy-making process from policy development to Cabinet submissions? I know that we were talking about gender analysis being used for Cabinet submissions, but I am wondering if it is being used in other parts of government.

Status of Women Canada has a whole departmental action plan for intersectional analysis. What are we doing here in the Yukon to support the Women's Directorate's good work in this area? How are we making sure that we use our gender analysis blends in all departments — from policy development? We know that we are using it on Cabinet submissions, program implementation and things like advertising within the departments.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I would like to thank the member opposite for her question. This GITA — I will just shorten it up instead of going through the long title here — is very, very critical. As I mentioned at the onset, our evaluation of this analysis was the second, I believe, and still is the second in the country to do just that — what we have done.

We learned a lot from the evaluation itself. We learned about the successes — that the work does make a difference. Effective advice — we got a lot of great feedback in terms of the training — well-respected — how it increases the confidence and the level of the work being undertaken by respective departments. Really, when you look back on the past five years, there is greater consideration of gender and cultural diversity. I don't need to go over some of what we already talked about in the last Fall Sitting, I think it was, but we also know that there were some challenges identified and there were nine key recommendations made from that particular evaluation, inclusive of the training not just for the new and incoming employees, but for the more experienced employees — so a different suite of training to be provided, depending on where that particular employee is and the work that employee is providing and so forth — and providing that ongoing support, providing those tools in terms of how to follow up with those individual departments, how to better track advice being provided through the Women's Directorate and again, really taking a whole-of-government approach.

It's not a surprise. It's something that, when we met as ministers of status of women last summer in N.W.T. — these are very similar challenges being experienced by other provinces and territories in the country. Where we go from here is absolutely key.

I know that the Women's Directorate has been working with other departments — but really looking at an action plan as to how now to come up with a strategic framework and move forward for the next three years in terms of how we implement those recommendations and looking at both the informal approach as well as the formal approach. In terms of offering the tools and the training provided, what that looks like, how often that looks like to whom, and so forth — that work has been underway ever since the evaluation was completed. I do know that we're getting closer to having an action plan in place but we're not quite there yet.

The Women's Directorate had a great strategic planning meeting — a gathering — recently and I was able to spend the morning with our staff to really reflect on where we were 30 years ago — never mind 12 years ago — and where we are today and some of the challenges. Having a smaller organization, not unlike what we have with French Language Services Directorate — but by being able to work smart and work hard with the dollars that are allocated and being able to exert influence in the organization and really gleaning from those smaller successes, building on those successes, being able to grow that to other departments by having those tools and training opportunities available. It's not unlike the template that we're using with French Language Services Directorate as well.

It's not easy work. It requires a shift in culture as well as a shift in thinking. It's not for everyone but, as an organization, it will take time.

I'm really pleased with the work that has been undertaken — coming up and going through with an evaluation, looking at how we're doing and being able to ask our key stakeholders, then taking that information and reflecting that into an evaluation report, then coming up with those concrete recommendations — so it's showing leadership unto itself. Where we take that, of course, and how we better track that advice — whether it's verbal advice over the phone or in committee work or tracking more formal kinds of advice, like the member opposite referred to — whether it's Cabinet submissions — again, how far do we go or how not to go, incorporating that work into the work of DMRC and PRC. There is also the Legislative Overview Committee and many various ways of being able to do that.

The good news is that work is underway to come up with a three-year action plan. We are really able to be able to share that information and that proposed approach with the whole of government because, if it's just the Women's Directorate saying "there shall be this", you need to have buy-in from all of the respective departments, taking advantage of that expertise and recommendations that are coming forward from those individual employees who are working on a daily basis in support of very important initiatives that have significant impact on all women and girls — and all Yukoners, for that matter.

That's going to be absolutely critical — taking that draft, being able to share that with the whole organization and being able to move that work through the respective various levels. I do applaud them for that work. This is but one of many initiatives being undertaken in the Women's Directorate at this time. There's significant work going on that the Women's Directorate continues to take a lead in for the Government of Yukon, being thoughtful, being appropriate, and being very effective in its work.

I just want to thank our officials for their expertise and really reflect on the work that they have been able to do and succeed at by taking it, honing in and being able to focus on some key deliverables this year, also looking to the way forward to be effective and responsive at the same time.

**Ms. White:** We're really excited to hear about the Women's Directorate's gender equality indicators project and the website that is due in October 2015. We think it's fantastic. Just looking at the Women's Directorate website, a lot of the data available is a few years old or — in some cases, it's many years old.

I think it's important that efficient and effective government policies and programs require a strong evidence base to support effective policy development, management, implementation and, most importantly, evaluation.

This evidence base allows us to recognize systemic and structural inequities within our society, which frequently disproportionately impact women. It enables us to respond and it provides us with relevant benchmarks, targets,

indicators and measures to charter progress in our fight against gender-based inequality, discrimination and violence.

Collecting evidence, setting goals and charting progress can also make a powerful statement of the importance of gender equity by our government to the Yukon public at large and I think that's just one example of how government can lead by example.

When a society knows that a government is committed to taking an issue seriously, it helps increase public awareness of the merit of that very issue. For these reasons and many more, we are pleased to hear about the development of the gender equality indicators project.

So I have a couple questions. I wonder whether or not this project will involve the collection of new information or if it will focus on the amalgamating information that already exists. Will the director be going out to look for other indicators? I also wonder whether or not one of the purposes of this project will be, once the first wave of information is collected, to identify the gaps in information. For example, as was mentioned this afternoon, there is no collection of data on access to abortion in the territory. There is no data collection on the access to contraception or other critical components of women's sexual and reproductive health in the Yukon. If these gaps are being identified, what will this government's next steps be in closing these large gaps? This is about health and it's about women's access to health.

As the collection of good and useful information is only as good and as useful as it is actually used, is there a plan for how this website will be accessed, used and put into action both within the directorate and throughout all government departments? Will it be promoted? Will it be required? Will there be training on the website?

We look forward to seeing the website up and running. We also look forward to seeing this website kept current, relevant, comprehensive, used and evaluated on an ongoing basis. So my question is this: Are we going to have additional information collected and then, if we see gaps, how will we address them?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I would like to thank the member opposite for her question.

We are really excited as well about this gender equality indicators project, which will provide an updated and current statistical profile of equality on many different fronts through an interactive website. I think the key is "interactive" — to be able to be fluid and to update on a routine basis; to be able to utilize and to share that information on many different fronts, including social media — Facebook and so forth.

The website is going to highlight a number of different areas and also an opportunity for highlighting specific areas that are in need of improvement. It will be launched this fall and complimented by an interactive timeline, including some audio clips from Yukon women who are being interviewed throughout the territory.

We are looking at those indicators identified in the areas of health, education, economic security, leadership, childcare, safety, arts, athletics — and so it goes — so, pretty comprehensive. We have begun the development of this

interactive website that will provide what we feel will be comprehensive information and some analysis on gender equality over time, with some highlights from key initiatives that we have been delivering on behalf of the Government of Yukon through the Women's Directorate. It will provide updated, accurate information on changes to the status of women for the purpose of being able to monitor, adjust and focus our programming and services for the purpose of better meeting the needs of Yukon women and girls.

When you look at the work that has been undertaken and you look back in 1999, when the Women's Directorate published *Counting Us In: A Statistical Profile of Yukon Women*, and then in 2014 — last year — it marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Counting Us In*. When you look to this year, it is very timely — marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women's Directorate — but also marking a significant amount of time since that initial report was provided back in 1999. We will be able to revisit the statistics from that report and provide updated current statistical profiles of women's equality.

We have undertaken some audio interviews, as I mentioned, with a number of Yukon women, in order to assist making it even more interactive and to provide that qualitative information on equality over the past 30 years. Those clips will be utilized in the interactive website.

We are working closely with the Bureau of Statistics, ensuring that the production of statistical analysis and the presentation for the website is user-friendly, accurate and relevant. It will help support our organization — the Government of Yukon — to assess how equality has progressed in the territory and what areas do require additional focus. On the GITA, there are many departments and many external agencies that rely on the Women's Directorate to provide accurate, up-to-date information on those indicators.

This really complements the use of this particular project — complements that work being undertaken on GITA as we speak. We are excited to be able to launch that later on this fall, just in terms of how situations are also different, for example, among various populations in our territory.

Yes, there are many different indicators that we are looking at. We will be collaborating, and we have been collaborating with individual departments that provide health care, education, services and supports in support of economic security, employment, leadership, wellness, sports, arts, political development, and so forth. We will be continuing with that particular work with those respective departments, including violence against women, women within the justice system, poverty, housing — and the list goes on.

We have been allocating some dollars over the past year, I believe. I think that we have requested around \$40,000 for this particular project to go toward research in terms of fact sheets, printing, web development — again being able to highlight the work of the Women's Directorate by being able to also better showcase the connection between our work, women's equality in the territory — and it dovetails really with indicators relevant to our policy work and it fulfills our



objectives from our policy outreach initiative plan to expand that as well.

I am quite pleased with the progress being made on this particular initiative. We are excited about this, but, yes, it will not be stagnant; it will be ongoing and it will be great to see some progress being made. That work in terms of the data collection, the research, the web design, and in terms of collaborating with individual departments and agencies, and then eventually marketing and some promotion of the website itself and documenting other marketing materials as well — that will be key in making this a great success and being able to extend the reach of this initiative to not just within the territory, but hopefully across the country as well.

The one thing I did want to mention is that obviously this information will be very much inclusive of Statistics Canada as well, keeping in mind that information is not always readily made available instantaneously. That information may be two years old — again, working with the information that we do have from all those various levels and making best use of that information.

**Chair:** Would members like 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. We are continuing with general debate on Vote 11, Women's Directorate.

**Ms. White:** In this year's budget, we have \$300,000 under the women's equality fund and that is divided between eight women's organizations. Can the minister tell me what the purpose of the women's equality fund is? What does it do for those organizations?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** The women's equality fund was initiated in 2007. In fact, I was the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate at that time. It was in response to organizations and growing capacities among those respective organizations from all corners in support of their work toward women's equality. It has been administered by the Women's Directorate. At that time, I believe, in 2007 it was standing at about \$175,000 and it has since been increased to \$300,000, at which it is currently and about which we are now discussing.

Since 2007, we have had just over \$2.3 million flow to organizations focused on advancing issues of importance to women in Yukon. As the member opposite just mentioned, right now there are three-year funding agreements, which kicked off in 2013 and end next year. We have eight organizations currently receiving funding — up to \$50,000 per year for three years.

I think I have mentioned this on many occasions, but we have worked and continue to work on a variety of various funding sources that we have developed over the years in support of organizations in their good work. I have specifically spoken at great length about aboriginal women and the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund

— the PVAAW fund. There is also, in addition to that, the \$450,000 that we have been providing over three years, every year, in support of aboriginal women's organizations in support of their work. There is ongoing work with the Department of Justice or even through the community development fund and there are other funding sources available as well on a project-to-project basis.

It is the first time that we have made providing ongoing operation and maintenance funding in support of those organizations that are in good standing, by the way. It has been able to assist those particular organizations. There have been many examples over the years — Les EssentiElles, we have talked to earlier today. They just celebrated 20 years. When we were first elected, that group did not receive any funding from the Yukon government. Likewise, the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society did not receive any funding. The Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and so forth — the Elizabeth Fry Society did not receive funding.

We have been able, through this resource, to provide some core funding in support of the ongoing operations of those organizations. In turn, when you take a look at the group — for example, Les EssentiElles — they have been able to take that and they have been able to help leverage other funding sources available through Canadian Heritage and many other sources, whether it is through Yukon government or other orders or levels of organizations or government.

I know that increasingly through the Yukon women's coalition and through working among the organizations that are working in an integrated fashion and are very strong — you didn't necessarily see that because, in the past — just for the simple reason that perhaps those organizations were not around back then, or in fact they weren't receiving smaller amounts of core funding than the women's equality fund has received. It's a great fund, and I know that there was a review of that fund a few years ago — I think it was about three or four years ago. There were some recommendations — some tweaking — made. I think that the project funding initially being made available — now there is more of that being made available specifically to those organizations versus the project funding. That was one of the recommendations.

We will continue to work with the organizations and continue to be responsive to the work that they are doing. The quality and level of capacity in that work has been great. It's great to see that capacity grow. The connections with all the various communities grow, even in the prevention public awareness campaigns. We are seeing organizations coming out with some quality, organized, innovative and creative ways in terms of reaching out to the public and helping to change those attitudes and behaviours that we continue to see among some in our territory and in this country.

Many organizations are working on many different fronts and have many different focuses, different priorities as outlined within their strategic plans. That is another item that we have continued to work on with organizations that provide that capacity to set the path forward in terms of three years out, not just a year out, and beyond in support of their work. It

is very interesting to see how this fund has evolved over the years and we are very proud of the level and the quality of work that is flowing from each of these organizations.

**Ms. White:** I think the minister and everyone in this House will agree with me that those eight groups that get the money through the women's equality fund are essential in our communities to support different initiatives by the women's community. They definitely are part of that social safety net that we've become dependent upon to make sure that people don't fall through the gaps.

In talking about it as being core funding, it has been mentioned by multiple groups that, if it is supposed to be core funding, it is not core funding at all. It is not adequate to — I mean it covers a portion of wages, so however you juggle the money, it doesn't cover all of one pot. It has come to a point where I think the phenomenal people who are in the executive director positions of these organizations — a lot of what they do is they try to find different pots of money to access to make sure that they can keep their services going.

If I had the choice between them concentrating on services that they offered and programs that they run and information campaigns that they did or that they had to constantly be chasing down money to make sure that they didn't have to close their doors or that they could continue offering those programs — then I make the humble suggestion right now that I would like to re-evaluate the program and make sure that the core funding — if that's what it is — is actually adequately addressing these organizations and their requirements.

I'm just going to put that out there. I don't think there would be anything greater than core funding for each and every one of these groups and actually have it cover what was required under the core funding requirements.

The women's advocate is listed at \$60,000. As I understand it — and I'll look for clarification — that amount has not changed in a number of years. My first question with that is: When was that number last adjusted? I'll just start with that. When was that number last adjusted?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Just going back to the funding of organizations — I appreciate where the member opposite is coming from and I do take to heart some of her comments. We have worked pretty hard over the years to be able to better expand the capacity of women's organizations in the territory. I know that just prior to us, the Yukon Party, being elected in 2002 — at that time there were only two organizations that were receiving funding. I think at that time the Status of Women Council was receiving about \$13,000. I think we were just talking about that.

Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre — I can't recall exactly, but it was about \$40,000 maybe. I can't recall the exact numbers.

Let's say — if it was \$50,000, it has grown to \$300,000 now and, of course, I always say that there is room for improvement, but we're very blessed. As I mentioned in the onset, there have been a lot of different status of women offices across this country that have seen a reduction in funding over the years. We've really made good efforts to

expand the number of funding programs made available to organizations such as these.

As a result, we're seeing some incredible work being undertaken by not just one or two organizations, but now we've seen those organizations expand to eight core organizations from the two that we saw about 13 years ago. That's a really good thing. We have to keep that in perspective.

Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre provides a great deal of services as well, and takes a leadership role within the community on many different fronts. I also wanted to say that organizations like Yukon Women in Trades and Technology receives additional dollars from the Department of Education, for example. I don't have that off the top of my head, but they receive very similar funding in addition to that. They are starting to extend their reach through their good work. Yukon Women in Mining — they're developing great relationships with many different companies in the private sector and many different organizations.

We have met over the years on a number of different fronts with the Canadian women's coalition. They were here recently for the Canadian teachers' conference that was held here recently, talking about violence in the classroom and trying to find ways of expanding those program offerings that mesh with many of the different initiatives that are being undertaken by those organizations.

Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre receives \$60,000 per year. I believe it's an annual contribution. I believe the last time it was increased — and again, I don't have this and I don't want to put out any wrong numbers — but I think it was maybe 2007 or around that time. I'm not entirely sure.

We have been working on expanding the women's equality fund from \$175,000. First, we were the ones who brought in the program, which expanded from two organizations and now we have eight core organizations. Then we were able to increase that funding from \$175,000 to \$300,000 recently, in addition to making other funding opportunities available to those organizations.

I'm proud of the work that is part of this particular funding program. I want to also say thank you to the Women's Directorate for being able to strengthen the collaboration among those different funding programs available through the Women's Directorate, assisting each of those organizations in being able to best make available those funding resources to women's organizations and finding other means of assistance through other government orders, whether First Nation governments or the Government of Canada.

One of the things I also want to note is that, a number of years ago, the Status of Women Canada removed the reference to advocacy. We have not removed that word "advocacy" and we don't have any intention of removing that word "advocacy." It's a primary core function of these organizations to bring issues to light and to be able to advocate on behalf of Yukon women and girls.

There are elements that we continue to support, whereas other programs have seen it appropriate — according to that particular government — to remove those elements in support

of advocacy and research, in terms of providing those core programs like the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, the women's advocate and by being able to leverage those additional resources.

**Ms. White:** The reason why I am focused on the women's advocate position is that is an incredibly valuable asset to the community. I know that — maybe not so much when we are in the Sitting because I don't get to see quite so many people through the office for case work, but on a regular basis I depend on the expertise of the person who fills that position because of her ability to understand and navigate through the systems. I know that, without her help, there would be a lot of people who would be caught in flux.

The reason why I am highlighting it is the fact that it hasn't changed in quite a number of years. I just accessed the budget from 2011, and it hasn't gone up at least since the last election. Because this hasn't had adjustments and it's for a very particular program, it means that it hasn't gone up with inflation. It means that the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre is not only trying to make money appear out of places for the regular programming that they offer, but they have also taken it upon themselves to make sure that there has been a cost-of-living increase with that position. They make sure that job comes with benefits because, to be perfectly frank, when we have people within the NGO community who have all this experience and they are these champions, they are in those positions because they care about the jobs they are doing because, really, they would make substantially more money if they went to government. I just want to make sure that we don't lose that knowledge base in the NGO community because we are not making sure, as a government, that we are adequately funding those positions.

There is no real question. I am just going to leave that comment there, but I do appreciate everything that has just been said. I just think that, on a yearly basis, when I get an envelope that says that mine has gone up with the cost of living by whatever percentage it is — and despite the fact that there have been overall increases in the transfers from Canada — we are not even sharing that wealth. We are just not making sure that people can keep up with the increases.

There has been lots of talk within the women's community about there being a critical need for an aboriginal women's advocate in rural communities. This has been identified as a critical need in some communities. How is the Women's Directorate better supporting aboriginal women and their access to advocacy in rural communities?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Just going back to the women's advocate — and again, I do very much value and appreciate the work being undertaken by the women's advocate as housed with the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. Indeed, in addition to enhancing resources for not just Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre — but we have been able to enhance the capacity through funding being made available to organizations that haven't necessarily received funding over the years.

In addition, as I was speaking at greater length about the women's legal advocate — a new initiative being undertaken

in this year's budget in collaboration with the Department of Justice. We know that this work will really complement the work being undertaken by the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. It will help accentuate the work that is being undertaken by that organization, but through the legal advocate and being able to provide that one-on-one assistance, by being able to train.

Maybe the legal advocate is housed within the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. I don't know if there is an application underway through the expression of interest currently out. There is an opportunity there to be able to provide that assistance in addition to what is already being provided, so it should help alleviate some of the work that is being undertaken by those organizations, such as the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre.

In addition, we have other services being provided that weren't there years ago, like the Child and Youth Advocate and so forth. Duly noted — and, of course, we will continue to work with the centre and continue to work to improve where we can and where we're able to within our fiscal finances.

In terms of our budget, I also just wanted to remind everyone in the Legislature that, when we were first elected, our budget was around \$450,000 and that funding has grown to \$1.8 million, where it is today. Yes, the fiscal framework has grown overall for the Government of Yukon and so, too, has it for the Women's Directorate. We also reinstated the Women's Directorate as a stand-alone agency, as it was not by the previous government. I will just leave it at that.

In terms of aboriginal women's organizations, there are a number of initiatives being undertaken. I know that primarily by those three core groups — Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society. They have really taken on a leadership role. Not only are we providing funding through the women's equality fund — the three-year agreements — but we've also been able to provide funding through \$200,000 made available through PVAAW, the Prevention of Violence Against Aboriginal Women.

Also, by looking at the National Aboriginal Women's Summit — the first one that was held in 2007 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador — we were able to take that set of recommendations and take it back home. We hosted two subsequent summits here — one in Watson Lake, one in Whitehorse — and collaborated with probably over 150 aboriginal women from around the territory at that time. We reflected on those recommendations at the national level, and then we were able to come up with our own Yukon-made recommendations based on a number of key pillars. Those recommendations were then backed up by some funding resources as well.

At that time — I think it was in 2010 — through the northern strategy funding, there was some \$450,000 made available and that really comprised a number of great initiatives, the Yukon's Sisters in Spirit initiative, for example — an initiative that was really started at the national aboriginal women's organization, NWAC. They started off with the Sisters in Spirit initiative and we carried on with it,

and that is really what has enabled that organization — the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council to be able to carry on and to identify those 39 various women who have gone missing or were murdered and to work directly with those families and to assist the RCMP in their work and so forth.

At the end of those projects, there was another summit that was held — Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit — in 2012 and, at that time, we reflected upon the work that had been done, the recommendations that have been made and, then again, we prioritized where we need to go from there. There was a subsequent report provided, and the Yukon government then — because the northern strategy funding had ceased to exist through the Government of Canada — was able to situate dollars within our general reserves, and we again recommitted \$450,000 over the next three years.

That funding will be going — we're actually into the last year of the three-year program and it has gone again in support of fulfilling those recommendations that were made out of the 2012 summit. One of those recommendations — carrying on with the good work of the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society and the Together for Justice initiative, for example. It has been a huge game-changer for not only aboriginal women in southeast Yukon and the RCMP.

It has really changed up the trust and level of engagement between those two organizations. It's something now that the Yukon women's coalition has taken as a great and successful initiative, and has been able to expand that now. I know the RCMP has been working pretty hard with the Yukon women's coalition to expand that initiative to other communities as well. I commend the RCMP M Division for their work and for the superintendent's leadership in working with the women's organizations. A lot of that was started with the Yukon police review and working to expand and be able to implement each of the 33 recommendations that were made at that time.

From there, there have been other initiatives. I recently went to a conference that was hosted by the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, and it was "leading our way" — an amazing theme. One of the initiatives identified, coming out of those two respective aboriginal women's summits, was coming up with a mentorship program available for women and girls. To see this come to fruition after talking about this for years was fantastic to see. First, it was a huge room filled on a Saturday morning, the same morning that happened to be the Yukon Native Hockey Tournament. There was a huge turnout and it was comprised of elders, youth and women of all ages and different backgrounds. To be able to see the homework and the level of work that had gone into this initiative before the summit had been hosted, matching up the mentors with the mentees — 10 months later, we're only into probably month two or three but, at the end of the 10 months, we'll see how well that will help instill leadership among aboriginal women, which is key to advancing women's equality throughout the territory. That will result in good things for all of Yukon, not just women and girls.

That's another example of a very creative initiative that was seen to be a priority and was a vision of the Whitehorse

Aboriginal Women's Circle. Now we're seeing it come to fruition. It's a great thing, indeed.

There are a number of different fronts going on, a number of different offices that have evolved with these organizations coming to fruition and expanding the work they are doing. I know that when I refer to the women's legal advocate, one of the precursors, conditions or requirements under that particular position, when you look at the expression of interest, is to provide culturally relevant, sensitive programs or services, I should say. That was something that was deliberately recommended by the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues. They also said that in order for it to be as effective as possible, it should be centrally located within Whitehorse but, through travel and through being able to help provide some dollars in support of training assistance, it also places great emphasis on these culturally relevant services being made available by whichever organization provides this service. This is absolutely key in being able to move this forward.

There is a lot of work being undertaken. I could go on at great length about some of the innovative projects being undertaken — even through PVAAW. Those are more individual projects and are expanded beyond those three core organizations. There is work being undertaken by many different communities beyond those organizations in support of programs and in support of initiatives that are driven by aboriginal women. They are being delivered by aboriginal women with the full support of the aboriginal women in those particularly communities.

**Ms. White:** I am going to talk about a whole bunch of different things right now in hopes of getting these on the record before we end the day today. I think there are so many things in the territory that we are missing. My hope is that the website that is coming out in October will help do some of the research into some of those gaps.

One thing that I think is definitely worthy of conversation in this department — and I know that some of these could get referred back to Health and Social Services — but I think it is really important that when we are talking about the Women's Directorate and we are talking about the advancement of women's equality, gender issues and rights and access to services, that these are really relevant in this.

There is a great research paper that was done on mitigating the misconceptions of contraception in the territory. It is a master's report and it is one of the only reports done in recent years in Yukon on women's access to contraception. I am just going to read from different parts of this. Under the background of contraception and unintended pregnancy, it says: Women in remote and northern communities do not share equally in access to health services, unless contraceptive care and the benefits flowing from fully realized reproductive rights. By extension, remote and northern women may also be at a higher risk of unintended pregnancy. However, the experiences of Yukon women are not included in the most recent studies on contraceptive use among Canadian women in 2002 and 2006 respectively. Moreover, access to Yukon

health care has traditionally been viewed in the narrow terms of wait-times.

The reason why this is relevant is that, if we look at the bigger scales, 80 percent of Canadian women use contraception; 30 to 40 percent of all pregnancies are unintended; and abortions per 1,000 live births in Canada is 13.7 and in Yukon it's 19.1. That difference is huge. Part of that is having the access to, not just contraception, but to the contraception that is right for the woman who needs it.

There are five key tenets of access. They are availability, accommodation, accessibility, affordability and acceptability. We all know that having a doctor in the territory is sometimes an exception to the rule. It sometimes makes you feel like you found a unicorn if you can actually get a family doctor. We know that there is high centralization of medical and health services in Whitehorse. We know that they have limited hours of operation.

I think it's important to mention that, earlier today when the minister referenced the Yukon sexual health clinic, it is being offered but they're only open on Tuesday between 1:30 and 4:00, and that's with appointments. They're open for drop-in between 5:00 and 7:00 on Tuesdays, and on Wednesdays they're open between 9:30 and 4:00, and they're closed between 12:00 and 1:00 for lunch.

If we're going to depend solely upon this one walk-in clinic, or this one clinic where you have to make appointments, unless it's two hours on a Tuesday night, I think that we're going to miss giving women the services that they need.

When you go through the study — and I really recommend that you do — in finding 6, it says that one-quarter of respondents had an unintended pregnancy in the five years preceding the study. Over half reported always using contraception at the time of said pregnancy, and 80 percent of pregnancies were considered mistimed. Among demographic indicators, aboriginal women were more likely than non-aboriginal women to have experienced an unintended pregnancy in the past five years — so that was 39 percent versus 23 percent — as well as to be less satisfied with their current method choice of contraceptive care. That often has to do with the conversations that you can have with your doctor about what's right for you and what's not right for you.

Access to contraception affects all sorts of things. I was totally flabbergasted at this year's stats result when it was talking about STIs in the Yukon — sexually transmitted infections. I was shocked because I could not believe our rate in Yukon compared to the rest of Canada.

For cases of reported or found chlamydia, we have 654 compared to 299 on average per 100,000 people in the rest of Canada. That is huge. For cases of hepatitis C — sexually transmitted — we have 44 out of 100,000, compared to 29 nationally. So having access to reproductive health and contraception, being able to have a conversation with your doctor — I mean, I'm lucky I have a family doctor — bless his soul — it is an awkward conversation. I am a 38-year-old woman and I think he is probably 35. When we have that

conversation, it's not super comfortable, but it's probably more comfortable for me to have it with him than it is to go to the hospital and hope that I get to see someone who might be a female doctor, and hope that they can give me the time to have that conversation about what it is that I am looking for.

The study that was done about access to contraception in the territory — I think it's really important because, when we limit women's ability to access contraception, and the right contraception, what we do is we inadvertently increase the numbers of unintended pregnancies.

I think that it was an interesting thing today during Question Period because, in both ministers' responses to our questions about access to timely services for abortion services, neither minister said "abortion" in response. I think that, when we talk about it, it's really important to recognize that women's control over their reproductive health is an undeniable human right. Any form of discrimination that impedes a woman's ability to control her fertility, access to reproductive health services or access to safe abortion is prohibited under international law.

There are all sorts of things that make it harder in the territory. There is only one surgical abortion provider currently working in the territory. It means that you have to go to the hospital and you get checked in for day surgery. Any medical abortions are only available through a family physician in Whitehorse and they also require a dating ultrasound before you can be referred.

This government has repeatedly said that it has a commitment to expanding services for women who are pregnant and choose to give birth, but why is it refusing to extend the same commitment to women who are pregnant but choose not to give birth? For some reason, early this afternoon, the minister brought up both this suite at Victoria Faulkner and midwives in response to a question about abortion. It's important to know that the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre rural pregnant mothers suite is not for women who are pregnant and do not plan to give birth. It is for women who are pregnant anywhere in town to give birth. Midwives also support women who are pregnant and plan to give birth, not women who are choosing to access abortion services.

When you look at the combination between contraception and its availability, knowing that — one that is probably most recommended is the Mirena and it runs at \$500, so if you don't have a health service that will cover 80 percent of that, \$500 is sometimes a limiting factor of people having access to something that might be best for them.

We need to improve the referral systems; we need to increase the availability of medical abortions and we need to offer surgical abortions for up to 20 weeks in a local abortion clinic in the territory, because sending a woman out for this procedure — I know in conversation that this has not been an easy decision for anyone who makes it — and sending them away from their support system and sending them alone to do it is making it even worse.

We talked yesterday — and I appreciate that the minister came in at the end — but trans — asterisk — issues are

gender issues. If we have someone who is transitioning from man to woman, it's a woman's issue; and if we have someone who's transferring from woman to man, it's a woman's issue. The thing is that the longer we take to make the changes to our legislation and the longer we take to make the changes to our policies and the way we deal with things, the longer we make people who are already dealing with more in their lives than we can expect have to wait.

Seven Canadian provinces and territories currently have explicit protection against discrimination based on gender identity. Although the Yukon Human Rights Commission currently accepts complaints based on gender identity, it is important to make this protection explicit, says Al Hubley, the Commission's chair in a statement. I'm quoting from him: "The experiences of individuals who identify as transgender are unique," he wrote. "A lack of change rooms at public recreation facilities is but one example of a barrier transgender individuals may experience in participating in activities in our community. Trans people are one of the most disadvantaged groups in society. They regularly experience discrimination, harassment, hatred and even violence. People who are in the process of transitioning are particularly vulnerable. Many of the issues they experience go to the core of human dignity and should be explicitly protected in our act."

I was having a conversation with a friend of mine who said that sometimes when he went to the Canada Games Centre, he was able to change, and sometimes when he went to the Canada Games Centre, he wasn't.

It said that having explicit protection under the act would make navigating the systems that are barriers to him right now feel a little bit safer. It is about access to services and the ability to not get buried in a bunch of case law — dragging things out when you are trying to access those services and you are trying to be included in the community. Yesterday in debate we talked about a lot of those issues and those limitations.

I think that the Women's Directorate has the ability to lead in informing those conversations, because I know that with a strong minister like herself at the table, she is able to advocate for equality; she is able to advocate for gender issues and for women's rights. I know that she has that ability and I am glad for that.

We have talked recently about midwifery and it's important — that ability for women to choose. It is all about reproductive health again. We have, on the flip side, someone who is ready to take that next step. We know that there are limitations for women coming from communities. We know that they have been denied travel expenses to meet with their midwife, although they still have to have their babies in hospitals. We would like to know what kind of timelines we're looking at. We know there is a group that has been discussed and it is moving forward, but we really believe that the Women's Directorate has the ability to advocate for this. We hope that we won't just add to the studies that we have — the ones from 2007 and previous. We hope that midwifery is in the forefront of the discussions and especially because it goes back to women's reproductive health, which is an issue.

We know there are limitations based on our ability to access that.

In April, on Equal Pay Day, I highlighted another Statistics Yukon statistic. It was super, super surprising to me. The Yukon Bureau of Statistics for 2012 and the tourism employment report show that, in the tourism sector, the average hourly compensation for female workers was \$5.36 less than for a male worker in the same year. That discrepancy, that disparity — I'm not sure how we look at that and how we resolve it, but to me that is something that we should be looking at. My hope is that maybe, on the new website, we can be looking outside of government services and publicly report on income equality, on pay grade, on employment type and status and job security for all, so that we know that women are not being limited.

I want to know what the Women's Directorate is doing to track the pay gap in the Yukon government and then in the Yukon Territory. What role does the Women's Directorate play to ensure equal pay in both the Yukon government and the Yukon Territory?

I realize that I have just about taken up my time, but I know the minister will come back with answers. I thank her very much for an engaging debate today and a great conversation. I thank the official who is here, and I look forward to the responses at a later date.

Madam Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Ms. White that the Chair report progress.

*Motion agreed to*

**Mr. Elias:** Madam Chair, 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. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, and directed me to report progress.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

**Mr. Elias:** I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

*Motion agreed to*

**Speaker:** This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

*The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.*

**The following document was filed May 14, 2015:**

33-1-113

*2014 Yukon Minerals Advisory Board Annual Report*

(Kent)

**Written notice was given of the following motion  
May 14, 2015:**

Motion No. 997

Re urging the Canada Border Services Agency to restore hours of operation at the Fraser border crossing (McLeod)