



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 226

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HANSARD

Monday, November 2, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake

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

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

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 2, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes which have been made to the Order Paper: Motion No. 307 and Motion No. 981, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motion No. 884, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake; and Motion No. 1020, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, have been removed from the Order Paper as the actions requested in the motions have been taken in whole or in part.

Also, Motion No. 923, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake, and Motion No. 1028, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party, have been removed from the Order Paper as they are now outdated.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of the Royal Canadian Legion poppy campaign

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise today to pay tribute to the members of the Royal Canadian Legion as they launch their annual poppy campaign this month.

Each November, Canadians pin a poppy on their lapel in memory of those who fought and died for Canada. The poppy is recognized around the world as a symbol of a common history of sacrifice and commitment. The flower's symbolic value can be attributed to the famous poem, *In Flanders Fields*, written in 1915, over 100 years ago, by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian physician and World War I soldier.

Today, we continue to wear the poppy to show our respect and support of our Canadian troops and veterans. Last year, more than 18 million Canadians wore a poppy to honour and thank our country's veterans. Citizens who wear a poppy choose to take part in a demonstration of national pride and respect, and support the important funding efforts of the Royal Canadian Legion.

The poppies provided by the Royal Canadian Legion are free. Money donated in exchange for a poppy is used to support veterans in need and their dependents. These funds help provide financial assistance to serving and former Canadian Armed Forces members and fund grants for food, heating costs, clothing, medicine and emergency shelter for veterans, among several other incredibly worthy causes.

Yukon's Legion Branch 1 and Branch 254, of which I am a proud member, support Yukon communities through donations to the Yukon Hospital Foundation and sponsorship of youth organizations.

Just wearing a poppy is a great way to show your appreciation and respect for veterans and those who are serving today. It is our duty to make sure the actions of those who dedicated their lives and died for our safety, freedom and independence are never forgotten. Each year, as Canadians and Yukoners, we must do our part to ensure that we honour the past, respect the present and promote the future.

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition to speak of the importance of the remembrance poppy. In this modern age, it is far too easy to remove ourselves from the reality and the cost of war. We are inundated with images and five-second sound bites of world conflicts packaged up and delivered to us by the media. We have been given a window into war that, more often than not, we shut and walk away.

This ability to turn on, turn off and tune out has removed us even farther from the true cost of war. It undervalues the efforts taken by our current 68,000 full-time soldiers and the 26,000 reservists — not to mention the thousands that came before them — to support freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights around the world. This ability to flip that switch distances us even further from our veterans.

The two weeks leading up to Remembrance Day are about opening that window. The poppy is a visual cue to stop and remember. They remind us to not only acknowledge the sacrifice of those who lost their lives, but to acknowledge the sacrifice of those who answered the call of duty and walk among us.

You can disagree with war. You don't have to like it or support it or even want to talk about it, but none of that should ever take away from the important symbolism of the poppy and why we wear it. The poppy doesn't symbolize the political decision to engage in armed conflict. It symbolizes the men and women who have borne the cost of those decisions. The symbolism in the legend of the poppy was borne out of the lived experiences of John McCrae. He fought in the second battle of Ypres, in the Flanders region of Belgium. This is where the German army launched one of the first chemical attacks in the history of war.

The Canadian position was attacked with chlorine gas on April 22, 1915, but the German forces were unable to break through the Canadian line and it amazingly held for over two weeks. In a letter written to his mother about the experience, he wrote: "For seventeen days and seventeen nights none of us have had our clothes off, nor our boots even, except occasionally. In all that time while I was awake, gunfire and rifle fire never ceased for sixty seconds...And behind it all was the constant background of the sights of the dead, the wounded, the maimed, and a terrible anxiety lest the line should give way."

On May 2, his close friend, Alexis Helmer, was killed during battle. During the burial service that he performed, he

saw how poppies quickly grew around the graves of those who died. The next day, while sitting in the back of an ambulance at an advanced dressing station, he wrote the poem that still symbolizes for us today the loss, the heartache and the cost of war.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Lest we forget.

Mr. Silver: I rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus to pay tribute to the Royal Canadian Legion and to the first day Canadians honour and remember our veterans and all who have served Canada during war, armed conflict and peace, and commemorate their sacrifices.

Throughout the world, the poppy has become associated with remembrance and symbolizes the memory of those who died in order that we may be free.

During the First World War, Flanders in Belgium saw some of the most concentrated and bloody battles. There was complete devastation. Buildings, roads, trees and natural life simply disappeared. Where there were once farms and homes, there was now a sea of mud, a grave of the dead and the men who are still fighting. The only other living thing that survived was the poppy. Flowering each year with the coming of the warming weather, the poppy brought life, hope, colour and reassurance to those who were still fighting.

Canadian physician Major John McCrae's poem, *In Flanders Fields*, may be the most famous one of the Great War. The day before he wrote it, one of his closest friends was killed and buried in a grave decorated only with a simple, wooden cross.

Wild poppies were already blooming between the crosses that marked the graves of those who were killed in battle. Unable to help his friend and other fallen soldiers, John McCrae gave a voice through his poem *In Flanders Fields*.

Mr. Speaker, we wear the poppies before and on Remembrance Day in memory of those soldiers and to show our respect and our support for the Canadian troops and veterans and to commemorate their sacrifices. Remembrance Day services will of course be held across Canada. I will be attending the one up in Dawson City.

In recognition of Complex Regional Pain Syndrome Awareness Day

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, an old friend, one of the old Cochrane Road gaggle that I grew up with, reached out and asked that his friends wear orange. As many of you know, I'm kind of partial to orange, but I wear it today — or we wear it today — as a way of paying tribute to the 1.2 million people around the world who are trying to cope with complex regional pain syndrome, or reflex sympathetic dystrophy.

November 2 is the first national Canadian complex regional pain syndrome awareness day. On behalf of all members of this House, we have been asked to share some awareness of this difficult and painful syndrome. To do this, I thought I would share some of my friend's thoughts as a way of increasing our awareness and sensitivity. November is also designated as NERVErember awareness month.

Like many people here, I had never heard of complex regional pain syndrome. Then again, six years ago, I had never heard of myotonic dystrophy and I do know that when a loved one is diagnosed with one of these serious complex conditions, it is life-changing.

My friend described a period of time following his wife's knee replacement surgery when things just did not seem to be getting better. His wife was an active woman — like him, an avid horse rider — and had been initially told that she was too young for knee replacement surgery, but it became the only option. Sometime after, she developed strange patterns of pain and she was finally diagnosed after two years with a rare condition called complex regional pain syndrome.

Something like one million folks are affected by this condition, which is caused by some sort of trauma to the body. Whether that trauma is something as simple as hitting your thumb or your hand with a hammer or, in this person's situation, a major joint replacement, it seems to tell the pain receptors that send a signal to your brain to get stuck in the full "on" position. When your body is in pain, a whole series of processes start to take place to help you deal with whatever is causing that pain. The affected part swells to protect the injury. Blood flow is increased to that region to assist with the healing. But remember, there's really no injury. The receptors are just stuck in the "on" position, so all that swelling and blood flow don't help the situation and just causes more issues.

After watching his wife endure the pain, my friend says he wracked his brain to find a way to describe what she is feeling that would relay just a little bit of the agony that is her day — her day and so many others.

This is how he describes it: Imagine you have a crushing sensation in your leg. Maybe it doesn't seem so bad. Well, maybe imagine you are laying on the pavement outside your house and one of those rollers that they use to pack the pavement is slowly — very slowly — starting at your toes, running up your leg, over and over and over again. The lightest touch is painful — the brush of your clothes, the bump from your grandchildren rushing to hug you, even the thought of someone getting close to the affected areas is painful. You

become hypervigilant and very protective of your personal space.

As for the cold, burning sensation, he said that if someone has had a frostbitten limb, they know the sensation of burning that the cold brings. For those who have not, imagine standing in a tub full of dry ice and not being able to jump out. Just stand there forever. The difference in frostbite is that a person goes numb, but with this complex condition, they are not so lucky. All of these things, of course, precipitate other things to happen: your body no longer regulates its temperature properly; you get the sweats — water-running-down-your-back sweats; your feet freeze; and you get overheated on a cold fall day. It is a syndrome we would not wish on our worst enemies. Many diseases are rated on the McGill pain scale, which goes from one to 50. Cancer pain is rated at 28. The score for complex regional pain syndrome is 42. For my friend, his wife and so many more, seeing the numbers is one thing. The worst part, beside the fact that it is invisible, is that it never goes away. It might never go away.

Complex regional pain syndrome is not well-recognized in Canada. Even though some doctors are now diagnosing it sooner, many patients are not seen soon enough during the six-month window when there is an 80-to-90 percent success rate. Others are diagnosed, but do not receive the proper treatment. Why? Because in medical schools, complex regional pain syndrome is not taught. By better educating the medical community on this rare disease, we can hope that every newly diagnosed patient will be able to have successful treatment. In complex regional pain syndrome, early diagnosis brings the best prognosis. It begins with promoting awareness in the medical community about how to recognize and diagnose it. For family doctors it is important that they are able to recognize early symptoms of the syndrome in order that they can make a quick referral to a specialist. For doctors in various specialties, it is essential that they not only diagnose in a timely manner, but also provide prompt access to treatment within the critical zero-to-six months of onset.

There is a Canadian NGO called PARC devoted to educating and informing the public and the medical professionals about complex regional pain syndrome. You can find more at www.rsdcanada.org/parc.

Orange is the colour that has been chosen as a symbol of complex regional pain syndrome because orange is the colour of fire. As my friend said: “For you and me, we get to take the orange stuff and put it back in the closet when the day is over, but for the sufferers of this syndrome, they never get to forget that crushing, burning sensation.” Let us hope our commitment to increased awareness will change that.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Petitions.

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to declare National Aboriginal Day, celebrated each year on June 21, a statutory holiday in Yukon so that it can be celebrated as such beginning in 2016.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to withdraw Bill No. 93, the *Act to Amend the Oil and Gas Act*, until it has:

(1) conducted a full and meaningful consultation with Yukon First Nation governments;

(2) engaged Yukon citizens in a review of the proposed amendments; and

(3) released a “what we heard” report.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to take immediate action to address the community nursing crisis by:

(1) hiring the appropriate number of community nurses to fill all vacancies;

(2) limiting the number of nurse-alone hours;

(3) improving workplace conditions to improve nurse retention; and

(4) working with the Yukon Employees Union to better support community nurses.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to acknowledge that its divisive approach to working with Yukon First Nations on issues like Bill S-6, oil and gas development and the Peel land use planning commission’s final recommended plan:

(1) has a negative impact on Yukon’s economy, as reflected by a projected third year of territorial gross domestic product decline; and

(2) undermines the stated intent of the Government of Yukon’s commitment to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s calls to action.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to address working conditions for Yukon’s nursing community.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, the City of Dawson, Kaminak Gold Corporation and other stakeholders to provide all-weather road access to the Coffee gold property.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to recognize that its inability to work with Yukon First Nation

governments on mineral development and its inability to address regulatory uncertainty is having a negative impact on Yukon's GDP.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Oil and gas development

Ms. Hanson: The government has again brought forward amendments to Yukon's *Oil and Gas Act*. The government did provide a discussion document but not the actual wording of proposed amendments. The government did not release a "what we heard" report reflecting feedback for its discussion document.

Provisions that were not in the discussion document showed up in the proposed amendments. Vague discussion papers and not reporting public input hardly constitutes consultation. Why did the discussion document on the *Oil and Gas Act* not accurately reflect the amendments that it has tabled in Bill No. 93?

Hon. Mr. Kent: The Yukon government supports and is responsible for oil and gas legislation that provides certainty, transparency and safety to people, their property and the environment. Amending the *Oil and Gas Act* is a priority for us as changes are necessary to ensure the legislation is modern and competitive with other jurisdictions.

There is, of course, a memorandum of agreement on oil and gas — established a First Nation working group in 1997 to work in partnership on the development of a common oil and gas regime for public as well as First Nation settlement land. The MOA working group met on two occasions to discuss the proposed amendments. After meeting, there was an amendment regarding negotiation of benefits agreements that was dropped from the current bill. In response to First Nations' concerns, this amendment was deferred to enable further dialogue on the subject.

Just to conclude, it is my understanding that a "what we heard" document summarizing comments that were received through the consultation process is posted on the EMR website.

Ms. Hanson: As elected representatives tasked with reviewing legislation, we asked for a briefing. We asked government officials if First Nation governments were consulted on the proposed amendments to Yukon's *Oil and Gas Act* and we were assured that First Nations had been consulted. It is ever more apparent that there will be no economic certainty in Yukon without respectful relationships with Yukon First Nation governments.

Is the Premier confident his government has met its obligations under First Nation final and self-government agreements to consult First Nations on its proposed amendments to Yukon's *Oil and Gas Act*?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I too wanted to point out that a briefing of the opposition was conducted during the consultation phase on potential changes to the *Oil and Gas Act*. As I mentioned earlier, we have an MOA working group

that met on two occasions. It includes YG and First Nation representation. It did meet, as I mentioned, on two occasions to discuss the proposed amendments. There was one amendment that caused particular concern. I heard from not only CYFN, but also a joint submission from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin and Na Cho Nyäk Dun. One of those concerns, as mentioned, was with respect to negotiations of benefits agreements. In response to First Nations' concerns, that amendment has been deferred to enable further dialogue on the subject. Of note, comments were not received from the Kaska First Nation, which maintains a strong interest in the oil and gas resources of their asserted traditional territory.

There is a "what we heard" document that is posted on the EMR website. We work with First Nations on a variety of issues all the time. As I have mentioned before, each and every Cabinet minister on this side of the House has ongoing dialogue with First Nations. We have seen some incredibly positive results from that work, including the work with Carcross/Tagish First Nation on land development in that community, as well as wind energy development in Kluane.

Ms. Hanson: The government is elected to represent Yukoners, not to ignore them. This government has failed to build social licence for oil and gas development in Yukon, and they have not been transparent and accountable in the process of building the amendments to Yukon's *Oil and Gas Act*. Several First Nations have expressed concern with the Yukon government's apparent intention to push ahead with oil and gas development, no matter what the cost.

Courts have recognized the importance of respecting the spirit and intent of First Nation final and self-government agreements. Is the Premier prepared to risk losing another court case because he does not understand what the "honour of the Crown", the "duty to consult", and "informed consent" mean?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As members opposite will recall, this government was completely transparent about our intentions for developing Yukon's oil and gas industry in our response to the select committee's report. We have accepted all 21 recommendations made by the committee in the report, and we are making great progress on a number of those recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that no projects will go forward without the engagement and support of affected First Nations. Since we have talked about unconventional gas production only in the Liard Basin, those First Nations include the Kaska First Nations — the two in Yukon being Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation, as well as the Acho Dene Koe First Nation, which has a transboundary asserted claim in the southeast Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, ultimately we want to promote economic prosperity and job creation; therefore, we remain open to responsible shale gas development opportunities in Yukon, but as I mentioned, only in the Liard Basin. We want Yukoners to have jobs, successful businesses and opportunities built on a robust and diverse energy sector.

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Ms. White: The government's appeal of the Peel watershed land use plan has had one silver lining and that is the growth of community solidarity against the Yukon Party's approach. Many people came from far and wide to gather in Whitehorse at the time of the appeal. It was an honour to participate in the water ceremony and hundreds attended the community feast. We continue to hear clearly from citizens, but what we haven't heard is any clarity from the government regarding the cost of this legal battle.

Last spring, with the help of some access-to-information documents, the cost of the government's Peel-related legal and communication strategies was estimated to be around \$430,000. That number is no doubt higher after this summer's appeal.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister confirm that the government has now spent over half a million dollars on its legal and communications battle against the final recommendations of the Peel land use planning commission?

Hon. Mr. Kent: The numbers that I have in front of me are for the legal costs associated with the trial, which was at the Yukon Supreme Court level. I can confirm for members, as others have done in the past, that the legal costs for Hunter Litigation Chambers, who was our legal representative at the time, were \$53,271. We will be in a position to release further costs for the amount that was accrued during the appeal process once that process comes to completion, which I understand could be in the very near future.

Ms. White: That leaves an awful lot on communication strategies.

The Yukon Party has said that — and I quote: "...seeking clarity on the land use planning process is a priority on a go-forward basis..." but this Yukon Party government is not going forward. It's only going to court over and over again, seeking to get out of its commitments. The Government of Yukon made commitments under the constitutionally protected final agreements of 11 Yukon First Nations. The commitments involve government-to-government collaboration. Sadly, it is all too apparent that Yukon's current territorial government is either incapable of, or simply rejects, government-to-government collaboration with Yukon's First Nation governments. The Yukon Party's decision to not honour commitments made under the UFA is stalling economic diversification in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier confirm that the so-called "clarity" he seeks involves rejecting his obligations to the *Umbrella Final Agreement*?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As I've said previously with respect to the Peel watershed and the court case, we feel that elected governments need to make decisions when it comes to Crown land in the territory and that is something that we feel was jeopardized by the decision made by the Yukon Supreme Court at the time and that's why we chose to appeal.

As I mentioned, we're anticipating hearing results of that appeal very shortly. That said, this also gives me an opportunity to further explain to Yukoners some of the positive working arrangements that we have with Yukon First

Nations. Of course, the *Land Titles Act, 2015* was tabled last week. We heard very strongly and clearly from the Kwanlin Dün First Nation about the benefits and opportunities that changing that act will bring to them. I mentioned in an earlier answer the work with Carcross/Tagish First Nation — not only work to develop recreational lot opportunities for Yukoners, but additional residential lots in the Carcross area, which is being driven by the First Nation and their development corporation. As part of a recent agreement signed with the Kluane First Nation, not only will that community see wind energy developed, but also recreational lots will be developed on the shores of Kluane Lake.

These are great opportunities and great examples of work that we continue to do with First Nations, day in and day out.

Ms. White: In 2003, prior to leaving the office, the chair of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council wrote a letter criticizing the government's handling of the Peel plan. He wrote — and I quote: "The council believes that the regional land use planning program is in trouble. A number of negative precedents may have been set that undermine the trust and public confidence required to sustain an effective land use planning program."

Mr. Speaker, there are competing interests for Yukon's land base, which is precisely why there is a land use planning process. Economic certainty in Yukon depends on clarity of land use planning. The current Yukon Party approach to land use planning is creating economic uncertainty. When will this government recognize that its attack on land use planning and disregard of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* is bad for Yukon's economy?

Hon. Mr. Kent: What our government is doing is seeking clarity about the Yukon Supreme Court ruling on the Peel plan. That was done through our appeal, which was heard in Whitehorse in August of this year. We broadened the scope of the appeal so that all relevant facts could be considered by the court. Given the significant implications of the decision, the Yukon government is seeking to confirm that the decision does not unduly constrain government's ability to make decisions on Crown land. That's not just about our government; it's about future governments as well. We have a number of these land use planning processes that need to take place. We feel that governments need to be able to make decisions on the final plan and not the commissions that were put in place.

Again, I'm very happy to highlight some of the economic diversification opportunities that we continue to see here under this government. Just last week, on the IT side, we increased the ICT or the IT envelope by \$2 million, so that will provide additional opportunities to grow that sector. We see tremendous growth and opportunities in the tourism sector. The recent release of the national ad campaign has been tremendously well-received from individuals I have talked to. I'm sure the Minister of Tourism will be able to talk about that later on this afternoon in debate as well.

Mr. Speaker, on top of the work that we continue to do to promote resource extraction and those types of industries, we

are also looking to diversify the economy in other areas as well.

Question re: Mining regulatory uncertainty

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, before the session began, the Premier said the government has mostly completed its platform commitments and should be congratulated on a job well done. When he was asked what was left to do in the next year, his response was, “Not a lot.”

When your corporate tax revenues have dropped by 50 percent in just two years, I would argue that there is a lot of work left to do on our economy. The private sector is shrinking and paying less tax.

The Yukon Party platform made a number of promises about improving the mining permitting process in the Yukon and unfortunately has made little progress on achieving any of them. Its botched attempt to improve YESAA has resulted in a lawsuit and other initiatives only began at the tail end of the mandate, as the government coasted on high mineral prices instead of fixing the problems that we already knew existed. The government was well-aware, for example, of regulatory overlap when it comes to mining permitting. Why has it waited until the last year of its mandate to do something about this?

Hon. Mr. Kent: One of the important initiatives that are currently underway with respect to mine permitting is the mine licensing improvement initiative. It's a cooperative effort being led by the Yukon government involving assessors, regulators, First Nations and industry to improve the timeliness, clarity, transparency and effectiveness of the mine licensing system.

This work will establish common standards, simplify processes and clarify the roles of regulatory agencies so as to provide certainty for companies that want to do business in the Yukon. We are currently engaged with First Nations to discuss how they want to be involved in decisions regarding mining activity and how they derive benefits from mining. The proposed changes in no way lessen environmental protections or oversight of mining activity, but instead improve the regulatory system's ability to ensure environmental standards are met.

Again, building on the theme of earlier questions, this is just another example of how we are working with First Nations to ensure that when we emerge from this current downturn, we are in better shape, whether it is on the regulatory side or infrastructure or First Nation relations or incentives. This is part of our overall plan to make sure that we can attract those important investment dollars that are critical to a successful mining industry.

Mr. Silver: I would argue it is a little late to be beginning these initiatives. The mineral development strategy is already months behind schedule and, as the minister said, the mining licensing improvement initiative began late in the government's mandate and will produce no results by the time of the next election. The government knew about these problems when it took office, yet, as we see, they have not got the job done yet.

Why did the government wait until its 14th year in office to address duplication and overlap when it comes to the *Quartz Mining Act* and the Water Board?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government continues to focus on those areas where we have the ability to improve the economic situation for the territory. Of course we do not have control over commodity prices, but what we can do is continue to invest in infrastructure such as telecommunications infrastructure — with the recent announcement of the redundant fibre optic cable — investments in energy infrastructure and investments in transportation infrastructure, such as bridges, roads and airports. We continue to work on improving the regulatory and permitting process, as the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources just discussed, and how we are working in hand with First Nations and industry. We continue to invest in education — the creation of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining and the purchase of a mobile trades training trailer to allow people in the communities to begin learning about the trades. We also have a new vision for education in the territory.

What this government has is a plan — a plan that we are implementing and a plan that will be successful for the long-term prosperity of all Yukoners.

Mr. Silver: The Premier failed to answer that question on his rush to his soapbox.

The reality is the government coasted on high mineral prices for many years and did not do the hard work necessary to keep us competitive. They got an earful from the mining industry during the recent consultation about regulatory uncertainty. Let's recap their efforts to date. A botched attempt to fix YESAA, cooked up in a back room with the former federal Tories, has landed the government in court. The mineral development strategy is already behind schedule and will not be ready for the Geoscience Forum as promised. The licence improvement initiative — something promised in the Yukon Party's platform; his own platform — did not get underway until the last stages of the government's mandate and will produce no results in four years.

Why has the government failed to deliver on all three promises it made to improve the regulatory road map for our mining industry?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I find it interesting that the Member for Kondike would go down this track. As I mentioned last week during a question from him with respect to the mineral development strategy, First Nations had shown additional interest and that is why that document will not be ready as we hoped for during the Geoscience Forum. It will be delayed somewhat, but I think that is a good thing because we're able to get more input from First Nations.

When it comes to the mine licensing improvement initiative, we are currently engaged at a working table with Yukon First Nations, talking about different aspects at that table. I mentioned we are working with assessors and regulators there as well.

The Member for Klondike criticizes us when he feels we don't engage with First Nations. Now he is criticizing us when

we are engaging with First Nations. It is very disappointing to hear that narrative from the Member for Klondike. Clearly he doesn't understand the value of working with First Nations and the importance of doing that hard work. Even though there may be delays associated with it, in the end it will be well worth it.

Question re: Alaska Highway corridor functional plan

Ms. Moorcroft: Last week the government released the Whitehorse corridor functional plan public engagement report. This "what we heard" document assessed what Yukoners thought about this government's approach to Alaska Highway corridor planning.

The results are mixed. Forty percent of respondents agree and 40 percent of respondents disagree that the proposal on addressing traffic congestion and travel times meet the needs of all users of the corridor. This is just one of several examples where there was clear division among the public on the proposed changes. This needs to be addressed.

What will the minister do to change the draft functional plan to respond to the public's concerns?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As mentioned, the Yukon government heard from Yukoners. We'll now use that feedback to refine the draft plan. There won't be any roadwork undertaken until we have reprioritized the plan and engaged further with some stakeholders, with the exception of any work deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those Yukoners — over the course of the 60-day public review, we received a total of 488 survey submissions and 62 e-mail submissions. There is a "what we heard" document available on the Whitehorse corridor website as well.

When it comes to the corridor, there are a number of segments in there. I will be asking the department to prioritize safety concerns in those segments, and then we will be in a better position to move forward with a revised plan after engaging further with some of the stakeholders that commented or would be more affected by that.

Ms. Moorcroft: There isn't a consensus that these changes are necessary or even balanced, and that's something that the government should be striving for.

Overall, more respondents disagree than agree that the draft plan reflects a balanced approach between community, environmental and economic considerations. This was not just limited to individual concerns. The City of Whitehorse expressed concerns that the proposed Alaska Highway corridor changes might reduce tourist visits to downtown and suggested the plan could better promote the city's support for walking, cycling, public transit and other forms of active transportation.

What will the minister do to ensure that a more balanced approach between community, environmental and economic considerations are fully met?

Hon. Mr. Kent: What I mentioned in my first response is that we've heard from Yukoners, we have heard a variety of

views of Yukon individuals and organizations, and we're going to use that feedback to refine the draft plan.

There won't be any roadwork undertaken until we have reprioritized the plan and engaged further with some of the stakeholders, with the exception, as I mentioned, of any work that's deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

That is one of the things I'll be tasking the department to do — identify serious safety concerns that are within the segments of the Whitehorse corridor.

I think all Yukoners realize the importance of this segment of road, not only for citizens of Whitehorse, but indeed all Yukoners and all those who are travelling through our territory, whether it's tourism traffic or commercial traffic.

As I mentioned, this is one of the busiest spots on the Alaska Highway that we have in the Yukon, and we want to take the time to do it right. Again, I want to thank all those who participated and provided input into the development of this important long-term plan. We're not done yet. There is still further engagement required.

Ms. Moorcroft: This is one of the largest capital projects in Yukon's history. Several respondents expressed concerns about whether twinning the Alaska Highway and the proposed \$200-million price tag was justified. The minister is speaking as though all that is needed is refinements to the plan. Is the minister not willing to listen to Yukoners who say that the government has not proved that this plan is justified?

Hon. Mr. Kent: It's also important to note for the member opposite that even the initial planning that she speaks of was over a very long term — a 35 to 40 year time horizon based on the initial plan. As I've said, we heard from Yukoners and we'll now use that feedback to refine the draft plan. There is no roadwork that will be undertaken until we reprioritize the plan and engage further with some of the stakeholders — as I mentioned, with the exception of any worked deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

That is what I will be tasking the department to do — identify any specific safety concerns that are within the Whitehorse corridor — and then we will be able to make a longer term plan for moving forward.

As I mentioned, this was always contemplated to be a very long-term effort — over 35 to 40 years. It certainly isn't something that we have a Management Board submission on, ready to go tomorrow, by any stretch of the imagination. We're going to take the time to reprioritize, as I mentioned in each and every one of my answers here today.

Question re: National Aboriginal Day as a Yukon statutory holiday

Mr. Barr: Almost one in four Yukoners identify as being First Nation, Métis or Inuit. As it stands, Yukon considers Discovery Day, which marks the beginning of the gold rush and Yukon's modern history, as a statutory holiday. Given the central role that aboriginal Yukoners play in both our history and present-day Yukon, people have told us that National Aboriginal Day on June 21st should join Discovery Day as a chance to celebrate another aspect of Yukon's rich

cultural history. Will the government agree to make National Aboriginal Day a statutory holiday in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly Yukon Territory is a beacon throughout this country for the accomplishments and progression that have occurred along the roads of independence and self-government and truly down the path toward reconciliation. This territory has a rich culture and rich history. A rejuvenation of First Nation languages occurs right now as we speak.

Many of us participate in National Aboriginal Day. Every year I certainly enjoy, with my wife Tammie, going down to the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre and enjoy a full day's celebration. I encourage all Yukoners to recognize the importance of National Aboriginal Day and to participate in truly celebrating the rich history and culture of our First Nation heritage here in this territory.

Mr. Barr: I guess maybe that was a nay. There are numerous benefits to a statutory holiday on National Aboriginal Day, which, by the way, has already been recognized by our neighbours in the Northwest Territories. With only four stat holidays to Alberta's and Newfoundland's seven, we would not be breaking the bank. While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls for a holiday to celebrate truth and reconciliation, this could be a step toward achieving that goal. Most importantly, we would give all Yukoners the chance to celebrate Yukon First Nation culture together, as the Premier stated.

Can I count on the government's support for our motion to make National Aboriginal Day a statutory holiday in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly, as I articulated in my first response, National Aboriginal Day is certainly a day of significance, but I have to also admit — and I am surprised the member opposite doesn't recognize this — that many of the First Nations have their own special day that recognizes their First Nation. We continue to participate in and to advertise our National Aboriginal Day. There are festivities that occur not only in Whitehorse, but in communities across this territory. It is a day of celebration. It is a day to recognize the true work that has gone on — starting decades ago with *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*.

I just participated in the ceremony recognizing 10 years of final and self-government agreements with Kwanlin Dün First Nation. We tribute the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Carcross/Tagish First Nation on the 10th anniversary of their final and self-government agreements. We recognize all the work and the visionary leaders who worked in getting us to the point we are today. So much work has been done, but there is still so much work to be done.

Question re: Hotels, long-stay

Ms. White: Winter is here. This is the time of year when many under-housed Yukoners end up returning to long-stay hotels for shelter. The Yukon government pays tens of thousands of dollars through social assistance for housing that is often sub-par. Can the government tell this House how many Yukoners will spend this winter in long-stay hotels?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Once again, I am happy to stand here and tell people that I am so proud of all of the work that has been done by this government in the housing market. All across the continuum of housing we have made significant investments. We continue to work with all other levels of government and NGOs. It really is good to see just how much we have done and continue to do. We looked at over 153 new units for seniors housing in the past 10 or 12 years — in excess of \$100 million since this government has been in power. It really is quite astounding what we have done for housing here in the Yukon.

Ms. White: I wonder how many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on long-stay hotels. After three years of waiting, the regulations for the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* were finally released, but they will not be adopted until the new year.

Unfortunately for Yukon's most-precariously housed, the new regulations will do nothing to improve the conditions of their housing. This is because the government has decided to exempt their shelter from the regulations.

If not the minimum rental standards set by the new regulations, what standards apply for tenants who stay long term at hotels for up to six months a year?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is quite right. We did in fact bring forward changes and a new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* very recently and the regulations pursuant to that act just earlier this year. She is correct that they will come into force on January 1. I know that many landlords and tenants across the territory are looking forward to those regulations coming into force.

It's important that both landlords and tenants understand that there are a new set of rules for the territory and that they affect both the expectations for landlords as well as expectations for tenants. We look forward to providing information once the regulations are in place to both of those groups to ensure that they are aware of the new rules.

What the new rules will mean is clarity for both groups, and I think that's something that would be welcome from residents, tenants and landlords across the territory.

Ms. White: The government is paying out of the public purse for rental accommodation that does not meet the minimum standards of its own legislation. This government's position is that some people do not need safe passage out or adequate ventilation and for some people, overcrowding is okay, so if any tenant wants safer conditions in housing where regulations do not apply — where many vulnerable people with many challenges live — then the burden of dispute is placed solely on them.

Mr. Speaker, why does the minister think hotel tenants do not deserve the same protections as other tenants?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, the rules and regulations that apply to hotels are indeed different from the ones that apply to residential landlords and tenants. That's not a new thing. We are confident that the new legislation — the new regulations — will provide all Yukoners with assurances about the safety of their accommodations and the safety of their homes, whether they are rental or not. It's important that

there is consistency, it is important that there is clarity and it's important that both landlords and tenants alike understand the new regulations as well as the minimum rental standards.

All of this will come into effect on January 1 and we look forward to collaborating with landlords and other stakeholder groups to ensure that there's adequate information in the public about what those new standards are and what the new minimum rental standards will be. But we're very happy with the work that has been done to date on the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* and the subsequent regulations that will come into force in a matter of weeks.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 20, entitled *Second 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. 20: *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Department of Tourism and Culture

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It is my distinct honour to be able to be back here in the Assembly to introduce the Department of Tourism and Culture's supplementary budget for this fiscal year. This budget continues to build on the many achievements made by our department, which continues to contribute to the growth of our tourism industry and Yukon's economy overall, as well as the overall quality of life that we

as Yukoners have come to enjoy — and of course our visitors enjoy — through the many initiatives that we sponsor and host in collaboration with our many partners.

One of the department's significant achievements this fiscal year has been the continuation of the Yukon Now marketing program and of course the production of five new original television commercials to market Yukon. Just recently, in the last week and a half, I was honoured to join the cast and crew and many Yukon stakeholders in the unveiling of the five new Yukon tourism television commercials. Of course the commercials, as we are all aware, are a key part of Yukon Now — a \$3.6 million joint territorial-federal investment — and in fact, makes up the single largest investment ever made in Yukon's tourism marketing. Investing in this area is key in helping build further awareness of Yukon as a travel destination and to generate revenue for Yukon businesses overall. Making Canadians aware of Yukon as a place to travel is a fundamental step in encouraging them to make the decision to visit, and this is really the primary objective of Yukon Now.

I want to congratulate and take the opportunity to commend all the various Yukoners who contributed to the development of each of the six television commercials — in particular, the 165 Yukoners who contributed as cast or crew in the development and the 45-plus local vendors who also assisted. Approximately 75 percent of the total budget for making the commercials was spent here in the Yukon. We are really proud of the fact that Yukon Now has and continues to involve Yukoners in many ways and perhaps more so than any other marketing initiative has to date, representing the hard work of Yukon stakeholders and partners.

Madam Chair, as you may recall, the commercials are a direct response to industry and the vision that was shared by Yukon's tourism industry to see a greater investment in television marketing in a growing domestic market. We listened to industry and went to work with the Government of Canada to secure \$3.6 million in total to be able to initiate and implement the Yukon Now marketing campaign.

Specifically, the vision included having made-in-Yukon television commercials, which proudly showcase the beauty, majesty, history, and rich culture Yukon has to offer visitors from Canada and beyond.

Last February, as Yukoners may recall, the Yukon Now marketing program was launched with the airing of the first winter commercial. The ad celebrating the beauty of the northern lights aired over 500 times on some 24 different conventional and specialty channels and was seen well over 30 million times.

Following the launch, we saw traffic to our Travel Yukon website nearly double in February as compared to the same month last year. Our territory also enjoyed a corresponding increase in the number of visitors to the territory in the corresponding months of February, March and April as well. In the coming months, each of the six new commercials will be broadcast to millions of Canadians on conventional and speciality television channels across the country.

As I mentioned earlier, I am very pleased and very happy to be able to commend the many Yukoners who contributed to the production of the commercials. They each created invaluable training and employment opportunities within all of our industries, making this perhaps the biggest legacy of all.

In addition to all of the many Yukoners who were involved in every stage of these commercials, I also want to acknowledge the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce for championing this important initiative. My thanks also goes out to our stakeholders for their vital input and feedback, including the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, the Klondike Visitors Association, the Tourism Marketing Committee, the Screen Production Yukon Association and the Yukon Film Society. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the hard work and creativity shown by everyone who contributed in every stage of production.

In addition to the investment in the commercials within the Yukon Now marketing campaign are the award-winning digital storytelling and user-generated content initiatives. Tourism Yukon and our marketing agency, Outside the Cube, recently won a national award of excellence for the most innovative public relations campaign for both. The digital storytelling project, as you may recall, uses locally produced short videos to convey Yukon stories, while the user-generated content project features photographs, videos and written content from Yukoners and visitors showcasing their Yukon experiences.

Yukon Now is also complemented by a strategically focused overseas component, which has included trade missions to Japan, China, Britain and German-speaking Europe in the past couple of years.

I will certainly speak at greater length to the Yukon Now initiative but, again, I want to thank everyone. We certainly look forward to the outcome of our winter commercials and launching the summer commercials in the new year. I hope that everyone has the opportunity to see them as they make their way to our communities on tour.

A little closer to home, the department, along with Yukon and Northwest Territories delegates, participated in what I would call a very successful tourism and business mission in Yellowknife last month. This mission resulted in even stronger relationships with our partners to help continue to grow the tourism sector in Yukon and across the north. I would like to thank the 50-plus individual businesses and representatives of organizations that attended the tourism economic business mission in Yellowknife. It was a commendable success. We had representatives from many sectors of the economy, including the heritage community. We continue to receive letters and accolades for taking the initiative between the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon government and partnering with the City of Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories government. We took advantage of the air leg that is currently provided by Air North, Yukon's

airline and being able to promote that particular link that is so very important as well as the one further on to Ottawa.

Throughout the year, we have also met one-on-one with many business owners. We have travelled to communities to meet industry stakeholders, hosted workshops and developed resources to help business owners make better business decisions with research and industry best practices.

During Tourism Week this past summer, the department launched, in collaboration with the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, a very successful and innovative initiative, which encourages Yukoners to make the most of all the territory has to offer. To mark national Tourism Week, we had partnered again with TIAY on the event called Explore Your Yukon. Yukoners were encouraged to visit each of our visitor information centres, explore the territory and take advantage of a number of great offerings by local businesses, museums and other attractions. It is very clear that the Department of Tourism and Culture provides strong support and partnership with our tourism industry, but also offers strong support for the cultural sector, which is also a critical part of the work that the department does to enhance the lives of Yukoners and contribute to their overall quality of life.

Before I leave the Tourism branch, I would also like to offer my thanks to each of the individuals who work in each of our visitor information centres throughout the Yukon. They continue to provide expertise and experienced travel counselling information to each of our visitors, including many Yukoners. Madam Chair, you will recall that in this year's budget we have also allotted increased dollars to enable an additional 18 days to our visitor season by opening up earlier and closing at the very end of September — the longest operating season yet to date for each of our Yukon visitor information centres.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work of our parks as offered through the Department of Environment. In collaboration with that department, we've also been able to sync many of the park openings and closures with our visitor information centres opening and closing as well. That is a really significant boost to our visitor industry and it is really evident that we are continually broadening our seasons and continuing to fill the gap.

Madam Chair, I would like to highlight some of the critical work done by the Cultural Services branch to support arts, culture and heritage for Yukoners and visitors. Earlier this year, we were very pleased to again partner with the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association on hosting another fantastic Adäka Cultural Festival. This festival of course continues to win national accolades and has just recently celebrated its fifth year in operation. It's really gratifying to see that from what had first commenced — and I recall back in 2007 the Gathering of Nations, which was also held in conjunction with the 2007 Canada Winter Games. It was really the first time that all 14 Yukon First Nations had come together to showcase through art, culture and performances, and it was an amazing opportunity.

The following year, I recall it went from the Gathering of Nations to the very first First Nation art festival, and from

there it slowly evolved into what we have today, which is a very unique collaboration. It is superb in terms of being able to partner with not only Yukon First Nations, but the circumpolar north as well — having performances and workshops — just a really fantastic showcase for indigenous populations and Yukon First Nation art, culture and heritage on display for the consumption of all Yukoners and visitors alike.

We were also very pleased to be able to partner with the Yukon Arts Centre on announcing our support for the Magnetic North Theatre Festival. I want to congratulate the Yukon Arts Centre and its partners on being able to secure this really fantastic — it's a nationally acclaimed theatre festival that works to create artistic and economic opportunities for Canadian theatre talent. It's based in Ottawa, but every other year, it's hosted in some other jurisdiction in the country. This will be the very first time that Yukon will have hosted this festival and actually the very first time that any jurisdiction north of 60 will have hosted as well.

It's a great opportunity for the territory. It will provide tremendous opportunities for existing and aspiring theatre talent here in the Yukon, while attracting festival-goers and talent from across the country and certainly beyond. So for 10 days next June, Whitehorse will be transformed with the Magnetic North Theatre Festival. It will unfold in venues throughout Whitehorse and draw theatre professionals and fans from across the country and beyond.

There will also be offerings taking place in other areas, such as Dawson City. I know the leveraging ability of this particular festival is huge. I know that the Yukon Arts Centre is working very hard and certainly growing their production team in ensuring the festival hosted here in the Yukon will be fantastic.

The Arts branch has worked tirelessly on a number of initiatives as well. In June we were able to celebrate eight new pieces of Yukon fine art as they were added to the Yukon permanent art collection. They were displayed along with other craft items from the "Found, Forged and Fused" exhibition at the Yukon Arts Centre that was launched in June earlier this year.

Craft Year 2015 has been celebrated in our territory and across the country led by the Canadian Crafts Federation. A proclamation at Craft Year and the exhibition honours talent in our community, inspires others to learn and practice craft, and ensures Yukon's rich craft-making traditions with resident and visiting art lovers.

Another initiative of significance is the department's enhanced funding in support of the Whitehorse wharf. This is a contribution agreement through the Yukon Arts Centre in addition to what we have already to animate the Whitehorse waterfront through the Old Fire Hall as a cultural venue, and now adds that additional element with the construction of the Whitehorse wharf, thanks to the Department of Community Services working in collaboration with Canada. We are very committed. I would like to congratulate the Yukon Arts Centre and the Old Fire Hall staff for continuing the revitalization of our historic waterfront and boosting the use

of the wharf for arts, community and cultural events, one of which was "Arts Up Front", which was a fantastic showcase and a great collaboration with the Yukon Art Society.

There is so much I want to get into, including our museums, historic sites and heritage resources, but I do recognize that I'm running out of time. I certainly look forward to receiving questions from the members opposite and talking at greater length to some of these individual initiatives that we continue to grow and take advantage of and continue to partner with our various organizations, governments and individuals across the territory.

Before I sit down, I also just want to say a big thank you to my Department of Tourism and Culture for their hard work over this past year. It's a privilege to be back as Minister of Tourism and Culture. On every single front, they have continued to provide their expertise and professional counselling in terms of that strategic direction in collaboration with our individual stakeholders. I wanted to thank them for their assistance over the last number of months. I also want to welcome our officials here, our deputy minister and our director of tourism, to the Legislative Assembly. I will sit down and I look forward to receiving any questions.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her opening remarks and also would like to welcome the officials here today to help us. Thank you for your hard work, as all of those in the department, I know, work very hard for us here in the Yukon to develop a cultural and tourism sector that we can boast about and so that people can go back to where they have come from and tell other people to come back again and again and again. Thank you for your work.

I am not sure if the minister completed her opening remarks, so what I might do is share some of mine and then welcome the minister back to the floor before I start in with questions.

I would like to say that the folks — not only in the department but, all of the folks who are leaders in the Yukon arts and cultural community — continue their hard work. Many First Nation dance groups that have come up, as the minister articulated, to the musicians, to the writers, to the storytellers, the visual artists — it goes on and on and on as more and more people are sharing their cultures, as we see at the different festivities.

I would like to also say just briefly that some festivals that have returned to their previous homes — such as the Kluane Mountain Bluegrass Festival, which is back in Haines Junction. I know that is a very welcoming place. If the member opposite is listening there, I know there are people who are already planning to get their tickets as soon as they come out because they are excited that it's back in Kluane. It is an economic driver when we have these kinds of festivals in the territory.

I would like to maybe just end my comments for now and allow the minister to finish her opening remarks before I come back with questions.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his opening remarks as well. The member opposite touched upon our festivals. As I was mentioning

earlier this year, one example is the Adäka Cultural Festival, which I referred to earlier. We were very pleased to provide that ongoing core funding support to the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association — in addition to that, through a number of other different funding mechanisms such as the arts fund, in support of that, toward its 2015 festival. It continues to grow into one of the most popular and successful arts events on our summer calendar, to say the least.

In addition to that particular celebration of First Nation arts and culture, we have seen a resurgence of other organizations and festivals. There was a new festival — at least I believe it was new — and that was sponsored by Champagne and Aishihik First Nations earlier this year. They held it at their beautiful cultural centre. That was based on dance and celebrating all of the various cultures in that particular area. Likewise, one only has to take a look in Teslin at the end of July every other year. There is a tremendous collaboration and exchange of Tlingit cultures as hosted by the Teslin Tlingit Council. That particular gathering is tremendous, and it continues to grow. There was a huge uptake of individuals who participated in this year's gathering. It is just another example of what can happen by being able to host a festival such as Adäka and be able to leverage that strength and to grow other festivals around the territory. I would be remiss if I did not mention the Moosehide Gathering through Dawson City and with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in hosting it. The list goes on.

It is tremendous to see these world-class festivals right here in our territory. Our department plays a really important role in building and maintaining the vitality of our various cultures and in preserving and promoting our heritage.

Just recently, I had the opportunity to meet with a number of various multicultural groups to discuss the New Canadians event fund. That was a fund that was initiated by my colleague, the former Minister of Tourism and Culture. We were able to collaborate about the various initiatives being hosted through that fund as a way to celebrate new groups and new festivals. It is tremendous to see the richness of our various cultures throughout the territory continue to grow. For us to be able to reach and leverage the reach of those festivals, to be able to engage Yukoners from all walks of life and from all backgrounds and to be able to celebrate the diversity that has really changed the face of our territory over the last number of years is exceptional.

This year the department also contributed some funding to the Cultural Human Resources Council to enhance the art of managing your career, a course for indigenous Canadians working as artists. The course was developed to support building the business skills needed for a successful career working as a visual artist, craftsperson, writer, dancer, actor, musician, digital media content creator or film maker. We were really pleased that there were two Yukon artists who attended the training in Ottawa.

We were also able to help fund the seats or the training, so to speak. We were also able to help fund the travel costs. This important initiative not only helps enable those individual First Nation artists to strengthen their own creative

careers, but the point of being able to sponsor those particular seats is for those artists to come back and to share what they learned and to be able to help expand that capacity throughout the Yukon within First Nation artistic communities.

Another funding initiative we're proud of — and the Premier alluded to it earlier this year and announced — was a contribution agreement to the Ted Harrison Artist Retreat Society to support the re-establishment of the artist-in-residence program. The residency program provides visual artists from across the country with an opportunity to concentrate on the research, the development and production of a project or a body of work in a remote and inspirational setting.

Of course we all are very familiar with Ted Harrison. His legacy not only includes his extraordinary and treasured body of work and the artist retreat cabin established in his name, but this is really not only celebrating Ted Harrison's work and his contributions to our territory. One of his largest legacies was being able to inspire other artists. Emma Barr is another example of a Yukon artist who was able to learn from Ted Harrison and is now masterfully creating beautiful works of art that continue to reach every corner of the territory and well beyond of that.

I would like to acknowledge the society for reaching out to the Yukon government. We've been really pleased to work with the society to find meaningful ways to pay homage to him and to acknowledge his contribution to the arts, education and community and as a means of continuing to further our investment in the arts community in the territory.

Moving on to the Museums unit, of course we have some 11 museums and seven First Nation cultural centres. They continue to be a huge attraction for residents and visitors. The members opposite will recall this year that we were able to announce an increase to their funding for their overall operations and projects — a 10-percent increase this year, followed by an additional 10-percent increase next year.

When I first was elected to office in 2002, we really only had a handful of museums that really belonged to our museum funding program and now, to see that family grow to include new First Nation cultural centres — a new program — and to include other museums like Binet House and also the Copperbelt historical railway society — and the Watson Lake Northern Lights Centre in your own home riding, Madam Chair — and the Campbell Region Interpretive Centre. Those were all brought into the family as well.

Of course, with new capital investments in our cultural centres, it's tremendous to see the capacity continue to grow in this particular area of our economy. One popular Whitehorse attraction is the Old Log Church and the Rectory. In July, a formal public ceremony — I was very pleased to be able to join the Mayor of the City of Whitehorse to be able to designate this particular site as a municipal and Yukon historic site. I believe that was the first and only time that has ever occurred, where the two governments co-designated together.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the Yukon Transportation Museum also just recently celebrated 25 years

of being in operation — and to see the tremendous growth of that property and all of the various artifacts they continue to receive and be able to showcase, and also to be able to host events. It is a very unique cultural venue unto itself.

The George Johnston Museum, for example — we were also pleased to be able to celebrate their new facade with the unveiling of Keith Wolfe Smarch's fantastic new facade that he had painted along with his family members. It's striking for anyone who happens to have seen this particular new front of the museum. It is very captivating. They want to capture more visitors to come to their facility, and so what better way than through the use of art. Congratulations to Keith Wolfe Smarch — it's tremendous to see his work continuing to grow throughout the territory and beyond as well.

There are a lot of things I can go through here. The Yukon Archives — we're also seeing some exciting developments. I'm pleased to say that, again, planning the design of the vault expansion is well underway. Work is proceeding toward completion of the detailed design phase this winter and the negotiation of a Yukon construction asset agreement with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation as well.

The Archives has a wide array of technical and creative skills within its team, and every year Yukon Archives works with the Friends of the Yukon Archives Society and other partners to produce creative and compelling exhibitions. Earlier this year, I was really pleased to also attend the successful exhibition in the Hougén Heritage Gallery at Arts Underground, entitled "Somewhere Here". The exhibition was curated by the Friends of the Yukon Archives Society, and it describes how place names are rooted in the physical landscape as well as in past events and people. It highlights the names given to important geographical features by Yukon First Nations. It is impressive. I believe it is still on display. For members opposite, if they haven't had an opportunity to see the exhibit, it is well done.

It never ceases to amaze me just how much information and history there is. It is a great educational experience to be able to learn about some place names that perhaps we take for granted each and every day, but there is quite a story behind each of those geographical place names.

Yukon Archives provides access to an impressive array of maps and other materials that document Yukon place names over the last 125 years and throughout the territory. There is indeed a lot of content to articulate and display. The exhibition attracted locals and visitors wishing to learn how those names help us understand our landscape, history and culture.

In terms of the supplementary estimates that we are currently debating, we are requesting an increase of \$648,000, which includes \$584,000 for operation and maintenance revotes and \$64,000 in capital revotes. For the Tourism branch, there is a revote of \$78,000 for the tourism cooperative marketing fund agreements that were initiated in 2014-15, but were not completed by recipients before the year-end. The tourism cooperative marketing fund is an initiative that our government brought into play a number of years ago and really grew that fund to about \$700,000 —

where we are today. It has been integral in leveraging, dollar for dollar, in terms of promoting all that we have to offer in products and encouraging Yukoners and visitors from beyond the Yukon to come and experience all the product offerings by our local tour operators or our service suppliers.

Another great component of the tourism cooperative marketing fund is initiating and supporting the travel to some of our key travel trade shows throughout the country and beyond. It is another very innovative way to be able to promote that team-Yukon effect among organizations and individual operators and so forth, all in support of promoting Yukon's tourism.

For the Cultural Services branch, there is a total of \$506,000 in operation and maintenance. Cultural Services is home to the Historic Sites unit, which is looking at a revote of \$41,000 for the heritage attraction sites board and the historic properties assistance program. The historic properties assistance program has been a fantastic program that has assisted many different properties over the years; the Caribou Hotel being one that is currently underway and hopefully will be completed soon. The list goes on, but it has been a really important program that has leveraged private sector dollars to continue to invest in our historic properties.

Also in Cultural Services is the Arts unit, which, as I mentioned, continues to play a leadership role in strengthening and promoting Yukon culture. We have a revote of \$354,000 for projects approved in the last fiscal year, but not completed by the funding recipients before year-end.

The Museums unit has a revote \$111,000 to fund Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres. On the capital side, there is a \$64,000 increase to the department's anticipated capital expenditures, covering a variety of items, including maintenance of the Tourism Business Centre, upgrading theatre lights at the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre and so forth.

I see my time is just about due again, so I would like to conclude by again recognizing the incredible and expansive level of work done by our department. It's a pleasure to represent this department and promote the important work being done in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders. I truly believe, and our government certainly believes that by increasing the investments, the Department of Tourism and Culture continues to contribute significantly, not only to our economic quality, but also to the overall well-being and quality of life for all Yukoners.

Mr. Barr: I would like to say a few more remarks and then move into some specific questions.

I would like to acknowledge and raise some awareness to the Caribou Hotel stamp and post office. If you want to travel to the haunted places of Canada, the Caribou Hotel is now one of the places designated by Canada Post. I know the minister is aware of the day, recognizing the stamp. There were speeches by her designate, the Speaker of the House, on that day, and me. The community showed up and it was a great occasion. We have stamps now that show the place and the history of Mrs. Gideon, who was spoken about on that day. I

encourage the House to let their families and friends know about it.

I believe that when I was talking to the owners just a couple of weeks ago to confirm what was stated on that day — that the hotel will be open this summer, and possibly some of the rooms; however, we have heard that before. I said to the owners, “We have heard that before. What makes this different?” I think what it makes it different is the stamp acknowledgement, which gave them a lot of incentive. They did say that there are about six weeks left to get the doors open. The plans are that we will be able to sit in the Caribou Hotel and maybe listen to some creaky noises and sleep in there.

No parrots are allowed though — if you remember the days of the parrot — we’re not going to be able to have a live parrot there, but, just to bring that to the House’s attention, it was a great day.

Just highlighting something that is coming up, there’s an upcoming conference that will be a great addition to Yukon’s cultural history and industry. The conference will take place November 18 to 20 at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre and will be hosted by the Yukon First Nation Culture and Tourism Association.

The title of this event is *Sharing Our Stories: Developing Cultural Tourism in First Nations Communities*.

According to the government’s own marketing studies, authentic experiences are high on the list of people coming to visit, especially First Nation and aboriginal people’s events. I do know that even the opportunity to get up and do the grouse dance or stand and do round dances and so on and so forth — the dance of some of the many groups these days is a highlight for people, something that is growing more and more in the territory. I do encourage the government to attend the conference. I know that the funding level for Yukon First Nations in this specific group has not grown and they are hoping to increase funding in that area. I look forward to them being at that conference as much as possible.

I would like to state that the release of the videos, the commercials — when I look back, it took Yukon’s tourism industry players quite some time to convince the government to invest in the domestic marketing endeavour, and we are glad that the government has moved forward. I recall that the initial amount was \$5 million, which ended up being \$3.6 million over two years. I know that there is no commitment beyond this two-year commitment, although I understand there has been some announcement for some monies for IT-related projects, but there is nothing that we know of that will extend or continue and expand on the domestic marketing program.

Will the minister update this House as to whether or not we will be continuing with the money that we are spending for domestic marketing beyond the money that has been invested?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I just want to thank our Speaker for representing all of us at the stamp unveiling in Carcross. I understand it was a tremendous event, and I really wish I had been there. I was, however, in Haines Junction a few months ago when Canada Post kicked off its stamp unveiling,

recognizing Kluane National Park and Reserve as a park of the overall UNESCO stamp series — I think it was. Any time we can have — whether it is the Caribou Hotel or Kluane National Park and Reserve — Yukon’s name out there on an international scale, it is a great thing for the Yukon. It just continues to leverage that brand that we work so hard to make and to be able to expand the reach. There is great recognition for Kluane National Park and Reserve, great recognition for Haines Junction — fantastic coverage for all of Yukon at that. That was a great event, I have to say.

As for Polly the parrot, I would have to say that my former colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — he actually had a stuffed parrot in his office there at one time, and I think he did reference that it was the actual Polly the parrot from the Caribou Hotel — but he also liked to tell a tale or two.

Madam Chair, when we speak about conferences and festivals — *Sharing Our Stories* — I also had a big shout-out with the recent Alaska Travel Industry Association inviting all of those delegates from across the state and beyond, along with many of our Yukon operators, to come to the *Sharing Our Stories* conference coming up. It’s great to see that it’s shaping up the way it is. A huge shout-out to the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association for working so hard over the past year on bringing this exciting initiative to fruition.

I had an opportunity to speak with and to listen to Charlene Alexander, the executive director for the association, at the recent Yukon Heritage Symposium that I had the opportunity to attend not long ago. There was actually a roundtable on cultural tourism, and it was great to have a reminder of all of the various initiatives and how our department is continuing to support many of those initiatives, starting with the Adäka Cultural Festival. I had mentioned that we provide continuous, ongoing funding — \$60,000 — in support of the association itself, and we very much recognize that the funding has not moved over the many years. We want to work with that organization to recognize the growth and the capacity in that organization and their huge reach to every single community.

In addition to the dollars provided to the organization, we’ve been pleased to provide \$40,000 — I think through the Yukon arts fund — in support of the Adäka Cultural Festival. Likewise through the community development fund and through our own in-source revenue through the department, we’ve also been able to provide almost \$100,000, I think, in support of the *Sharing Our Stories* conference coming up. In addition to that, we’ve also been able to provide about an additional \$40,000 in support of the webisodes showcasing First Nation stories by way of vignettes that will be shared. They probably will be launched at the *Sharing Our Stories* conference as another way of really being able to showcase First Nation cultures.

There are a number of different ways that we have been able to support this organization and the many exciting and invaluable opportunities geared to Yukon First Nation culture and tourism. They’re also working on a Yukon First Nation

welcome guide, which I know our department is also providing some assistance with. It hasn't been updated in a number of years, so we are really excited to be able to help the organization refresh that particular guide.

Likewise, through the Department of Economic Development, we're providing — I know that I heard again from the executive director — a number of different feasibility studies in support of the travel guide, in support of First Nation art, branding and PR campaign, and production development workshops with our communities. These are all initiatives that we — perhaps not within the Department of Tourism and Culture, but through the Department of Economic Development and their various funding sources.

If anything, it gives you a really great understanding of the breadth and depth of the initiatives being undertaken by this one organization in collaboration with many others. We are looking forward to the conference coming up and looking forward to saying a few words at that conference, and being able to work with the organization — to be able to sit down with them after the conference has concluded and to see where we move from here.

As I said in my opening remarks, the momentum that has been garnered from way back in 2007 to where we are today is encouraging and it's wonderful to see.

Likewise the commercials — I know the member opposite made reference to that. The commercials showcase each of our significant pillars identified within our tourism plan and strategy, developed in collaboration with industry. I have to say that every time I see those commercials, I get welled up. I can't help but feel significant pride in those particular pieces when I hear Sharon Shorty's voice as the voice-over on a couple of them. When I see others — I won't go through the various names, but some very prominent First Nation artists showcased within these commercials — it really is wonderful, and to have had that influence from the organization again, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, being able to help inform the direction of those commercials. It was significant, and to be able to reflect those stories — that really is what those commercials are all about. It's one large storybook and each of those commercials supports a chapter in the storybook.

It was well done I think, given the amount of dollars, which was not insignificant. At the same time, compared to other jurisdictions like Travel Alberta or British Columbia, we did a lot with that funding and we continue to do great things with that funding in addition to the commercials through the digital storytelling initiative and the user-generated content. That just received a national award of excellence through Destination Canada, a significant feat as well.

As we go forward as with all of our various initiatives, we know how important these initiatives and investments are and we know how very important it is to have Yukon saturating the rest of the country in terms of its presence, whether it's in print, digital, social media, online or through television commercials. I think the important point is that we want to continue to work with industry to recognize those

commercials and that investment and we want to ensure that those commercials continue to play on the airwaves.

To that end, I know that our Premier just recently met with our new Member of Parliament earlier today. I know that one of the priorities for our government is to see what partnerships we can obviously continue to leverage in support of this initiative and Yukon Now. We will continue to monitor the ongoing evaluations and results of the commercials.

As I mentioned, the two winter commercials are in play. They're on the various networks right now on some 30 national specialty networks across the country. I've heard from a lot of people that they've seen them during the Blue Jays game — and the list goes on. It's great. We obviously have a great presence. We want to continue with that presence in the marketplace as well in order to continue that sustained forum. We've heard that from industry, so the key for us is finding that way forward. We are about halfway through our fiscal year, so we're certainly looking forward to continuing those discussions with industry and moving forward.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response. I will take that as nothing definite, but we're willing to look further for more funding.

I would encourage the minister — what I've raised in the House and to those in the industry and in the department, as we move forward in strategies and vision, is how we now capitalize on these ads. We're inviting people here and that's great. I recognize the hard work of the people — actors, people behind the scenes, storylines, videos, photographers. It takes an incredible amount of people to do this work. I recognize that the bulk of the money was spent here in the Yukon. That is a good thing. By no means is this minimizing the amount of money that was spent; it is how do we best move forward with this money so it's not a one-off.

I have brought up wildlife viewing in the House, for example, and the opportunities that we know about — the dollars that our neighbours in Alaska benefit from — \$3.4 billion from wildlife viewing. That is close to three times our budget per year, just from wildlife viewing alone, which also includes hunting. With the ads for people to come here, will the minister commit to developing — and I know that we have the swans; I know that we have brochures; and I know that we have wildlife events throughout the year. But what are we doing to market all of this, specifically targeting groups — whether it is during the shoulder seasons, the winter or the summer seasons and so on and so forth — to see some of the wildlife — I know the members opposite and the officials were at the TIAY conference this spring in Dawson City — to continue with marketing dollars as we move forward to enhance the infrastructure and the tour operators to capture the ears and eyes of those who are driving through to our neighbour Alaska, to stop here and see the same wildlife that we have here. When I think of Bear Cave Mountain, which is booked into 2017 at a few thousand dollars a day, there are many opportunities.

Will the minister commit, with her team, to explore these missed opportunities and how we can capitalize on what we have started?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It was interesting — I was just over in Alaska for the Alaska Travel Industry Association meeting and of course it was a great opportunity being in Juneau, Alaska to meet with some of my counterparts at the government level to talk about issues of importance to tourism. I have to say, we often talk about our fiscal stand here in the Yukon, and it just really resonated how very fortunate we are to be in a jurisdiction in this country in North America where we actually have money in the bank and have net financial resources that enable us to continue to invest in infrastructure. That is so important to the development of our tourism industry and so important to heritage and arts and culture — really in all of our sectors: airports, highways, IT, our attractions, museums, cultural centres or wildlife viewing opportunities.

Alaska, of course, is in the midst of some financial difficulties — to hear that first-hand from a couple of the departments and the dramatic decisions that they have to make certainly resonates with us as northerners. I know that tourism marketing, for example, has seen a decline of about 42 percent in Alaska alone. That is why, in the Yukon, I am very pleased to see an over 30-percent increase in our tourism marketing budget. It just provides that contrast of how very important it is to ensure that we do have continued financial success and that we continue to divest it in areas where we have the best return on investment.

I go back to our continued relationship with the tourism industry. There is one thing that I have learned over the years, and that is that all of our marketing programs and initiatives — marketing strategies; our plan itself — continues to be industry-partnered, market-based and research-driven in everything that we do. It is very important to continue to work in collaboration with industry. When it comes to wildlife viewing, when we look at areas of cultural tourism, for example, wildlife viewing is but one of those areas in taking advantage of the products that we have on the ground here and how to best integrate those into our marketing programs to be able to leverage that to the best that we can.

Likewise, on the culinary side, culinary tourism is another area of importance where we have seen growth here in the Yukon. TIA Yukon has really shown leadership working with its partners — Air North, for example — and a number of our industry partners. The Yukon government has also provided assistance and support for the culinary festival. That is another area where, by combining food and local farms, by being able to leverage the talent of our chefs in the Yukon — who are incredible artists — throughout the territory we have been able to provide that added depth to our tourism industry. Likewise through the Yukon conventions, meetings, incentive travel, adventure travel, sport tourism — those are all different areas that we continue to work on with our various stakeholders.

Wildlife viewing is one of the pillars highlighted in our marketing strategy. It is one of a number of different pillars. It is very much showcased in our commercials and showcased in all of our integrated branding efforts, whether in print in our

vacation planner, online, through a social media presence or the like.

As the member opposite is very familiar, we do have a strategy for developing and promoting those wildlife viewing opportunities in collaboration with the Department of Environment. As I mentioned during Question Period the other day, the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, for example, is just one of a litany of various examples, but how the added investment in that particular initiative from the very start — thanks to our MLA for Lake Laberge, we were able to add that to our platform back in 2002. We were able to grow those continued investments in that particular product.

Now we have seen a number of other products emerging from the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, and now you have one of the reality television shows that's also utilizing the Yukon Wildlife Preserve. It's just another area of investment where we continue to see a great return on investment.

Each of our marketing pillars — those being wilderness and wildlife, iconic drives, heritage and culture, the Klondike Gold Rush, northern lights, midnight sun — was not dreamt by me as Minister of Tourism and Culture. They were really initiated by industry, by research, driven by the market and, of course, in partnership with industry. That is how we derive each and every one of our programs and how we evaluate and implement those programs to ensure that we have the best return on investments.

I know that this is a very important area, and we'll continue to work with the Department of Environment and continue to work with all of our various stakeholders to leverage the reach in wildlife viewing, but, likewise on culinary tourism and with adventure travel, meetings, sports tourism — and the list goes on.

We just recently met with Sport Yukon and talked about the proliferation of sports tourism events that we continue to host with our world-class infrastructure, whether it's working as a result of the Canada Winter Games that we hosted in 2007, some of the legacy infrastructure that we have — the Canada Games Centre and Mount Sima. We have tremendous facilities — the biathlon range there. I was just recently there with a couple of our former contestants from *Amazing Race Canada*. It's just another added element to all that we can offer to Yukoners on that particular scale of sports tourism.

We'll absolutely continue to work with our partners to leverage all that we have. I don't want to go over all the various opportunities, but even the Tombstone Interpretive Centre is another piece of infrastructure that we were able to open a few years ago, again working in collaboration with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. I remember when I signed off that management plan for the park with the former chief — and how the interpretive centre plays a really key role in promoting and providing a great resource in telling the stories about Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation culture, the history, the heritage, and the wildlife in the area.

As I mentioned, through the various campground extensions — the 10 campgrounds, to the end of the year — expanding and extending the operating season for each of our

visitor information centres. These are other ways of really sharing information about each of our wildlife viewing sites.

We have over the years increased our expenditures in terms of support of interpretative signage and pullouts to be able to ensure that peoples' experiences are rich, that they are informed and that they are interesting.

There is a lot to share in terms of all the various areas of importance when it comes to promoting and developing our tourism industry, but we've seen a tremendous increase in capacity. That is indeed a great thing and we'll continue to invest in the tourism industry to continue to leverage those opportunities.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for expanding on her response. I am quite aware — we are, on this side of the House — of how all of these different assets that we do have, whether it is culinary or cultural festivals and so on and so forth, intertwine with the draw.

What I was speaking to specifically is wildlife viewing and the numbers that go along with that — \$3.4 billion in this last study in 2011 for Alaska. That is a significant amount of revenue that this side of the House feels is untapped, and we would hope that we do not lose track of what we're already doing, but very much so expand to see how we're missing out in those kinds of dollars as our neighbours enjoy next door.

Many First Nations could, at this upcoming conference, talk about how we could all work together in capitalizing on a natural product that we have. I won't carry on with this at this point.

I would also like to ask: the Department of Economic Development and the Yukon Arts Centre commissioned — I don't know if they'll be able to answer this in Tourism and Culture, but the Yukon Arts Centre commissioned a study to determine how many Yukoners make all or part of their living from arts and culture. The last major study of Yukon's cultural industries took place in 2004, and they showed that arts and culture were the fourth largest sector in the territory's economy at the time.

I would like to also acknowledge that it's great that the government is interested in updating its knowledge in this sector. When will the results of this — or has there been a latest study, and when will they be made public?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I just want to go back to the wildlife viewing, because I know how important this is to the member opposite. I want to emphasize the importance of the work of the Department of Environment in terms of increasing — in fact, I think it is this government that has really almost quadrupled the amount of investment of in wildlife inventories over the years, in terms of our caribou populations, bear populations, migratory bird populations, and the list goes on.

It is wonderful, and my hat is off to each of the biologists who do this work, year in and year out, and the importance of having that continuous funding in place over the years so that they can plan out the five-year plan for bear populations, for example, and the monitoring and the tagging of the Porcupine caribou herd population. This work is really a draw for biologists from all over the world to look to the Yukon and see how we are able to co-manage our wildlife populations

with Yukon First Nations, as borne out of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. I think that is very important to note. We can put as many wildlife viewing sites and infrastructure, but if you don't actually have healthy populations to showcase and be able to tell the world about, and be able share them in a very relevant and meaningful and responsible way, it is all for naught. Again, I just wanted to thank the Department of Environment for their ongoing work.

The member opposite made reference to — I believe it is the cultural industries labour force study. In fact it was the request of industry members back in 2014, and I believe that the Minister of Economic Development could share more information about this — obviously very interested in the outcome of this study as well. The Department of Economic Development, at the request of industry, has been working to conduct a study to measure the size and the impact of Yukon's cultural labour force. It is really intended to update a report that was completed back in 2004, as a way of identifying, measuring and helping to address challenges facing the industries and opportunities as they continue to expand and grow into areas that we have not seen before.

The project, as the member opposite alluded to, is being worked on, in conjunction with the Yukon Arts Centre, and has benefitted from the assistance of a steering committee comprised of representatives from various cultural sectors. I have not been directly involved with this particular study but, like I said, we have been apprised through the Department of Economic Development, and obviously the results of that study will help to inform our work as well.

I am just looking at my notes here, but I believe the steering committee met in September to review the latest draft. I know that there were some concerns regarding the draft, so I understand they are back with the committee and they are providing more of a detailed list of various suggestions by section and providing that to the contracting team for their consideration. I do not have a final date as to when the report will actually be completed or released, but I would assume it will be soon. Whether that is the end of the year or in the spring, I do not want to respond on behalf of my colleague from the Department of Economic Development. It is really great to see that this report is taking place.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that there was just a culture satellite account report that was released recently. I think that was through Statistics Canada, if I am not mistaken. It was through the federal government. It was developed by Statistics Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage. They obviously worked in collaboration with a number of jurisdictions throughout the country. It speaks to the value and the importance of culture, arts and heritage as well as sport — they were included in that cultural account — to all of our economies on the national scale, and territorial and provincial as well.

What we are looking at — and what has been discussed and continues to be looked at by industry and by all of these sectors — is how we can best utilize and work together to be able to capitalize on the investments that have been made, and the products and all of the many individuals who are working

in this sector and sharing with our economies, and how we can best leverage that investment to showcase through the tourism sector — being able to distinguish ourselves and really cast a great light upon our territory, and how we can increase revenues in terms of people coming here to seek those experiences, whether it is wildlife viewing, culinary, sports tourism, meetings or the like. There are many different areas.

It is quite an interesting field. I really look forward to the outcome of this report and look forward to how we can utilize the information as to how we can grow business in the territory, how we can create more jobs, and how we can diversify our economy even further. I do know that, just through our department alone, we invest about \$4.3 million in the arts, which includes about \$3.6 million in transfer payments alone. That is just our one department, and that does not even include the individuals within our departments as well.

That said, there is a lot to celebrate in terms of Yukon's cultural industries. It is interesting — I was just going through the *Klondike Sun* recently. I had an older copy of it on my desk, and I was reading a really great letter that was written by the mayor of the City of Dawson.

It was actually a copy of his address to the School of Visual Arts students and talked about growing up in Canada. When your child says, "I'm aspiring to be an artist" — and perhaps, back in the days, that may not have been looked upon as the right industry to go into. Mayor Potoroka really articulated on paper what a great investment and what a huge return for our overall quality of life, and to the economy — and how that one investment in the School of Visual Arts, for example, by this government and the proliferation of programs that are offered through Dawson City Arts Society and the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture is an example of how you can really create a cultural economy for the benefit of not just that one community, but for our entire territory at that.

It's great to see those programs growing through ongoing partnerships between the Yukon government, the city, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon College. It's a great example of what can happen.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response. I would like to also acknowledge the work. It seems to always extend a little bit more on the one topic — but the Department of Environment does play in what we are pursuing in Tourism and Culture, and also land use planning with Energy, Mines and Resources is something that I was alluding to last week in Question Period as we move forward in Tourism and Culture. I will just talk about it in that amount there.

I would like to move on to acknowledge that Fort Selkirk is a very important heritage site. It is a popular place for people who are right in Pelly and are going over there on boat tours, or for canoers going up and down the river. I know that there was a very successful singer-songwriter workshop that was hosted at Fort Selkirk this summer. It's just one example of the places with historical significance that has all these buildings that people can go see and sit in. It's very unique and it is a place that I really enjoy going to, and I make sure I

stop in. I remember the first time I stopped there. I was in awe of what was preserved and the continued preservation of this one particular area.

I know that my colleague from Mayo-Tatchun has written to the government regarding the need for a buffer zone around Fort Selkirk. I understand the government has not yet committed to establishing a buffer zone around Fort Selkirk.

There are other historical sites that we would want to look for in the future, but I guess the question is: When will the government commit to a buffer zone around Fort Selkirk — whether it is mining opportunities or so on and so forth that would disrupt the natural place of Fort Selkirk, as it is enjoyed by so many?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would concur, and I was very proud to be able to be the minister responsible for Tourism and Culture when we actually designated Fort Selkirk as a Yukon historic site. I was really pleased to be able to join the Chief of Selkirk First Nation and the Yukon Heritage Resources Board. That was actually my first time out to Fort Selkirk, and I have to say I was overwhelmed to see the amount of work that has been done over the many years. It is perhaps one of our longest established historic sites — or co-managed or co-owned historic site in collaboration with a Yukon First Nation government. It is tremendous. The amount of capacity that has been able to have been grown over the years in terms of capital infrastructure and in terms of just practices of preserving and restoring facilities and buildings that have been in place for many years. It is an important piece of our heritage and an important story to be told.

I am well aware — in fact I think I was copied on that particular letter and I think it was sent to our Premier actually, earlier this summer, asking for discussions to take place on this buffer. As I mentioned, I understand that there have been ongoing discussions with Selkirk First Nation. That is really being driven through a couple of different parties — one through the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, but also through Aboriginal Relations through the Executive Council Office. When it comes to Fort Selkirk, the historic site, we remain very much committed to jointly working with the First Nation to protect, preserve and promote this historic site for the benefit of not just the current generation, but the future generations to come.

As I understand it, the site is permanently withdrawn from staking under the *Quartz Mining Act* and the *Placer Mining Act* in accordance with the *Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement*. I know that those discussions are ongoing regarding a buffer area — again, just to ensure that those historic values in the area remain protected and preserved. That is the last update that I have, but it certainly is top of mind for not just me, but for my ministerial counterpart from Energy, Mines and Resources and also the Premier as well.

I also just want to say that, every year on Parks Day, we're really pleased to be able to partner up with the Department of Environment in celebrating Canada's Parks Day with free tours of Fort Selkirk. It's a great opportunity for Yukoners. I know a lot of Yukoners look forward to going out there every year and sharing all that there is to see and do on

the grounds. It's just but one example of many different spectacular, very unique, special areas.

Just recently my counterpart, the Minister of Environment, and I were also able to join in a tour with respect to Herschel Island Territorial Park. That was really our first time to ever go there and join with the park staff and some of our Heritage staff, to see first-hand the tremendous amount of work that continues to be invested in protecting and restoring and documenting all there is to see on Herschel Island. It's a tremendous amount of investment. It's one thing to look at the capital infrastructure, but again I look to the individuals themselves who are in those positions as park rangers. They are tremendous ambassadors for our territory and for the north. It's really an interesting partnership that we have, again secured through the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*. We have ongoing obligations and training opportunities as well.

It was amazing for me that, when we flew in on a crew changeover, we were there overnight and it was tremendous to be able to witness the history and see all these various buildings that have existed there for many years, and how some had to be moved because of changes in our climate. As a result, it continues to be quite a draw for researchers from all over the world to come to Herschel Island to take advantage of the ongoing availability of research as a result of those park rangers — boots on the ground — and be able to monitor the changes in the vegetation, in permafrost, in the impacts to our buildings. It is not just a historical region, but is also very important to many different pillars of our territory.

In addition to Fort Selkirk, we have a number of various partnerships through Rampart House with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation government; we have the Tro'chëk partnership with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation — and the list goes on. There are a lot of long-standing partnerships that we've had with First Nation governments. It has been a great model for cooperation and collaboration with other orders of government to be able to see the continued investment and return on investment in terms of investments in our cultural centres as well and the growth in terms of best practices, so being able to share that traditional knowledge, and not just the infrastructure. Again, it's about sharing those stories and being able to articulate them in a very culturally relevant, meaningful way that respects all.

Thank you to the member opposite for his question and that's where we're at with regard to Fort Selkirk.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response.

When we talk about the opportunities — and I know that we do the best we can from time to time in developing these places and so on and so forth — I know from speaking with various people as we go day to day about how we can move forward and have places such as Fort Selkirk or Rampart House, or when we talk about Herschel Island, I think there are so many places where we could be building infrastructure. One that came to mind is Conrad campground, which is — when we think of Herschel Island and Fort Selkirk, they are places where you have to be on the river or you have to be off the beaten path for some of these types of tourist opportunities

or attractions — or have people stop. When you think of Conrad, and knowing that not only do we have some historical buildings that are still standing, but with the First Nation cultural and heritage opportunities that are being assessed and spoken about as this campground is moved forward, I would ask if the minister or the department isn't already thinking about expanding on what is in place to rebuild and reclaim some of these buildings, and also expand on the First Nation aspect of that area, especially when it is so accessible to such large numbers that either are driving out of the territory to Skagway or coming through from the port. There is a large opportunity and I'll plug the riding of Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes when we look at moving forward with that campground and the cultural significance that we do have. Are there talks to expand the physical infrastructure that is there specific to Conrad and then moving also into opportunities to explore how we present and preserve what is in place in Conrad for the generations to come and for people coming to visit our territory?

Chair: Would members like 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.

We are resuming general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his questions. I think we left off talking about Fort Selkirk and then we were talking about Conrad.

When we talk about some of these areas, of course I just referenced that the land claim agreements have borne a number of various management planning exercises. Over the years we have developed a number of management plans that have become the successful model of cooperative governance with Yukon First Nations as it pertains to management of these historic sites. This includes Fort Selkirk — as we were talking about — Forty Mile and Rampart House. Governments are involved in the planning and the decision-making regarding the sites. When it comes to Fort Selkirk, we actually have a management group to oversee the operations and the planning for the site. That has been a successful model of cooperation and collaboration. As I mentioned, the management plans are an obligation under the final agreements. It is those agreements that have also given life to new funding commitments for Yukon government and the respective First Nation involved.

When we talk about the Conrad site, I know that there has been funding secured from Aboriginal Relations from the Executive Council Office to look at planning and starting those discussions. I know that we have had some resources to undertake some of that work and we are very appreciative of

the expertise that has been afforded to our department and to the First Nation as well.

Likewise, we have also been able to look at, in terms of moving forward with heritage management planning, the Lansing heritage site. Also there is provision under the respective final agreement for *Na Cho Nyäk Dun Final Agreement* and again, that would be a site that would be co-managed by the Yukon government and the First Nation.

In terms of the Conrad site, however, it is identified in the *Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* as a site to be co-owned and co-managed, similar to Selkirk First Nation and Fort Selkirk Historic Site. We have a steering committee comprised of three members, as I understand, from the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and three members from the Yukon government. That governing body has been created to really oversee the process to create a heritage management plan for that historic site, as per the agreement.

In terms of the Department of Tourism and Culture, we are also working with Environment in collaboration for the actual campground construction so that it does not negatively interfere or impact the historic resources of Conrad historic site. The process for review and approval is actually set out within section 5, schedule B and I have actually got the provisions right here, but it states in 5.1, for example, that Carcross/Tagish First Nation in the Yukon ... “may refer any proposed management plan to the Yukon Heritage Resources Board for its review and recommendations.” In 5.2, it states: “Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Yukon shall jointly review any proposed management plan and shall make reasonable attempts to reach consensus on whether to accept, vary or set aside provisions set out in the management plan and shall consider any recommendations put forward by the Yukon Heritage Resources Board.” 5.5 also states that the “Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Yukon shall jointly review the management plan no later than 10 years after its initial approval and no later than every 10 years thereafter.”

I understand that the steering committee was established almost a year ago, so the Carcross/Tagish First Nation has been working on it and, as I understand it, completed the oral history of Conrad earlier this year, which was fantastic. There was also a steering committee site visit earlier this summer to Forty Mile. That was really to get a sense of it. It's an established site and this is how they've been able to manage and work together. I understand that, even though I was not part of that, it was a very good exercise in seeking to understand how other governments have worked on their plans in the past.

There was an archaeology evaluation, or at least an RFP, done. I'm not entirely sure if that was actually completed. I think it was earlier this summer — the field work. Then there was a public gathering in July and more field work done. For the steering committee, there was another subsequent site visit to Fort Selkirk looking to best practices, and to see that long-standing relationship between Selkirk First Nation and the Yukon government and how that has worked very well.

There was more work on the archaeology front, so I understand that they are looking to have a draft some time

next spring — it could be into the summer. I'm not one for timelines, because sometimes they don't always come to fruition. It would appear there has been a tremendous amount of work done already, but there is more work and more engagement with the community to be done as well. It's one of a number of various areas.

The Carcross heritage management plan — a tremendous amount of work has been going on in that community. It's a high-priority action item in the Carcross local area plan, and that's also required as part of the CTFN self-government agreement provisions. There has been a contractor who has been hired to undertake the development of that management plan, so there have been a number of various community engagements, working with the LAC, but also working with the public. The working group was created to oversee the management plan process, again comprising various individuals from the area, from CTFN, residents at large, the White Pass & Yukon Route business owners and the Southern Lakes advisory committee — so very much a lot of engagement.

I won't go through the list, but I do know that between the working group meetings, public meetings and public presentations on the work that has been done, reflecting that work or reflecting the comments that have been brought forward from those public meetings, and then inputting that and reflecting that within our reports that are coming in from the consultant — then again having further public engagements. In fact, there was even a questionnaire mailed out to all of Tagish and Carcross mailboxes and online as well — the work goes on.

I know that there was more time requested from the committee itself, looking for additional time to reflect the input that has been received from the most recent round of public consultation, so that work is still underway. There have been five public meetings that have occurred and public presentations and a lot of engagement on that front. These are just a couple of the examples of the management planning that has taken place — very engaged. There is a lot of engagement by First Nation governments working with the Yukon government on this front and it's exciting to see that we're making lots of headway and lots of improvements in this regard.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response and the update on some of the activity that has gone on and around the development of not only the camping spaces at Conrad, but the combined heritage opportunities both by YG and CTFN. From attending many of those public meetings there, I am aware of lots of what has gone on. I wasn't aware of some of what the minister brought forward to the House today, so I do thank her for that. I know that it was very good news for both heritage YG and CTFN that it was struck up that they are part of the process, rather than coming in after the campground is built. I know that was a bit of a struggle to get that to happen and where we are at today as a result of people working together was welcomed, so it's a good thing.

I think that when we think of Dawson City and all the opportunities that people see all along the highway — when

we think about the people who are travelling through the Yukon staying another day and so on and so forth — this particular spot is in a prime place. People will stay there for a few days and then understand what's available in the Southern Lakes just in general. There are many small businesses in Mount Lorne, Tagish and Marsh Lake that could benefit from being brought up to date just by staying in the campground. So I hope that this is part and parcel of this when that's actually going in — that there is integrated information sharing for the Southern Lakes that broadens beyond there and expands, whether people are continuing on the Alaska Highway or the Klondike Highway. I feel confident that we'll be doing that.

I'm going to try to wrap a few questions into this one last one: Having said that, there are these new things happening now in the Southern Lakes and for a few years now people have been requesting signage, not only for what is going on in Carcross, but for the many new opportunities in Tagish.

There are people along that area who are trying to direct people who are coming up the Alaska Highway via Teslin, and when they get to Jakes Corner, they don't know that a lot of this stuff is going on down there. They could come through what we call the "Southern Lakes loop". I know that there have been letters. I know that the LAC from Tagish has inquired about signage that would direct people down through the loop and back around through Mount Lorne, but there is still no signage there. I would invite the minister to work with her counterparts in having this happen. It has been a few years now that it has been requested. I know I requested it in the spring, and now we have had another tourist season with no signs. I know that the businesses have been doing their part along the road once people get on that road, but we are talking about when they approach Jakes Corner, for example, and having something that would have them turn left and come around that way.

There are new things going on. In the same breath — because I am going to wrap this question into a few questions and it may be my last one — it has also been brought forward — and I would invite the minister to work with her counterparts in Environment and Highways and Public Works and so on and so forth — that signage for the Silver Trail has been requested by the tourism operators for several years now — again in the spring. When the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and I visited last fall, all of the chambers of commerce from up the highway, which are part of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, have been requesting not only about the new signage, but about the signage that is falling down and is in disrepair. We have gone through another tourism season and it is still not fixed.

When I think of all of the great work that is happening with the ads and with the commercials bringing people here, we really want to be able to direct them to what we are asking them to come and see. It is these details — the devil is in the details, they say — that are a bit of a sore spot for people who are putting their lives into their businesses. They work so hard and are trying to capitalize on a tourism season of the rubber-tire traffic, which I am speaking of specifically, that is driving

around, and this is a part that is being overlooked. It is not a first-time request. I do not want to be redundant on this, but it is time that we do not miss the next season, given that we are developing new campgrounds now and so on and so forth.

Would the minister please commit to hog-tie the rest of them and get this done once and for all — if I could put it that way? I just strongly put that out there. It would be very much appreciated by the business community all along. Those are some of the sites that we have been asking about, but there may be others that have been asking that I am not aware of — but to look at and study that and get that job done.

I think that is all I have. I look forward to the minister's response. I know that my colleague from Klondike has some questions and I thank those officials here today for helping out.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his questions and for raising his suggestions. I do recall the member opposite raising similar questions this spring. As I understand it, according to my officials, we understand the ongoing challenge. We want as many visitors as possible to get off that highway to do the Tagish loop and enjoy all there is to offer in the Southern Lakes corridor.

I understand that they have been engaging in discussions. I think perhaps there may have been some difficulties just trying to actually have two-way discussions just because of different schedules and probably just —

Madam Chair, I'm not very good at hog-tying. I'm certainly willing to work with the member opposite in facilitating a discussion. If that member opposite can hog-tie, so to speak, or — perhaps not, because that sounds a little bit violent. Perhaps I would just ask the member opposite if he would like to facilitate a meeting. I would be more than happy to discuss this and then we can actually put forth a plan together.

I would tend to agree that this is an area, of course, so I'm more than happy to do that.

I will say though — and I will take some credit, because of the scenic drives initiative that we introduced a number of years ago. I think it was about \$350,000 at that time that we had invested in a new program. This was probably dating back to 2005 or 2004. There was about \$200,000 allotted in support of interpretive signage. It was really important that we increase the amount of investment in support of interpretive signage. The scenic corridors — we're always talking about promoting the Silver Trail, supporting the Klondike Highway or the Dempster Highway and so forth. But interpretive signage and pullouts — all of that — are very important — the brushing work that we do in collaboration with Highways and Public Works.

We did actually invest a significantly increased amount in terms of implementing all those various plans that have been developed over the years. We have been implementing many of those plans. Many of those plans have been refreshed in engaging with stakeholders again, so it is a work in progress.

In terms of the Silver Trail, it's the same thing. I do recall seeing a signage plan and implementation plan that was derived a number of years ago. I'm not sure what the status is,

but every year I do know there are investments made in support of interpretive signage all over, in every corner of the territory.

It's very similar to investments and banners as well. We're just about due for another makeover of our banners as they are coming to their end of life. These are all ways that we can continue to work with our partners and ensure that we are able to address community and business signage as well — pullouts.

I just take, for example, the Village of Teslin. It has done an extraordinary job, I would say. Over the years they've really invested and they've utilized some of the funding through the community development fund and other funds made available through Tourism and Culture and Economic Development in support of their kiosks.

As you pull into town from the southern end on the Alaska Highway, there is a beautiful kiosk that showcases many of the businesses and places of interest. There is another pullout just as you are exiting the Village of Teslin on your way to Whitehorse, and the pullout is another great example. It adds value. There has been a lot of investment in trails as well.

The George Johnston Museum has done a great job in terms of investing in signage and trails — from the facade opening and luring individuals into their properties and facilitating those visitors spending another day or two, or three or four.

It's a work in progress, but I do recognize that community signage along the south Klondike Highway and the Alaska Highway — we have been working with officials from the Tagish Local Advisory Council on options to improve, but perhaps it is just a matter of corralling everyone in the same room. If the member opposite would like to hog-tie those officials, then that would be great. I'm all ears.

In terms of other steps forward, I also just wanted to make reference to the Silver Trail kiosk. That's a significant improvement along the Silver Trail as you enter Stewart Crossing. They have done a beautiful job in terms of replacing the kiosk. It has been a great collaboration between a number of businesses and the Silver Trail Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Association, and it's great to see new signage there, new banners and a new kiosk. It looks great. It's another means of being able to direct people to ensure that they do experience all that the Silver Trail has to offer. Investments in the Binet House, for example, or the various other attractions in the area — it's about building that.

At the recent heritage symposium that I attended on the cultural tourism roundtable, there were a couple of great speakers there, one of whom was representing Keno City, talking about how they're now incorporating more film festivals into their offerings for visitors and for locals as well to generate more interest in the area. They are building that product, but they are doing that in a responsive way — trying to balance what the residents would like with what the visitors would like to see.

All in all, I just want to congratulate the Silver Trail Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Association for all of

their collaborative work with Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation and with the Yukon government making headway. Of course there is always more work to be done, but I think that there are some great foundational pillars being set in terms of concrete initiatives. We want to leverage those investments and be able to grow tourism even more in that particular area, and in all areas for that matter.

I look forward to working with the member opposite and thank you again.

Mr. Barr: I would like to just respond. I see that my attempt at using some humour to try to get the opposite side to do only what the government's responsibility is to do and fix the signs that were put up possibly 12 years ago and that maybe are dilapidated, and do the maintenance at the request of — many times in this House — in using some humour as another way of asking — because it does get very tiring, I think, for the people who bring these questions to us — to get that work done.

I would ask that — sure, I will sit down at a meeting. I would love to and I will direct you right to where the spots are. Knowing that the Yukon Party does have the capacity to do this work and has not, for this number of years — if you want to really show your compassion and your goodness in all the hard work of the Silver Trail, which does not — I would remind the minister — have the capacity, as does an incorporated community like Teslin. That is one of the obstacles. These places don't have that opportunity for the monies — they are unincorporated. It has been requested, and that is one of the roadblocks with the Tagish LAC, for example. They have been told: "Well, use your money to put these signs up." "Well, we don't have a budget." Maybe that is part and parcel of why some of the LACs haven't even come back or were short on people sitting on the LACs — to fill positions — because of some of the deaf ears that some of these responses have fallen on.

Having said that, I would be happy to sit down with YG if they are unsure of where these signs would go. I won't be spearheading that, but I see the invite for me to be part of that discussion in a more informal way. I will be very much happy to do that and maybe we could finally get this done.

Mr. Silver: I would like to begin by thanking the department officials for being here today. I know they are very busy. I really appreciate their time, and I also thank all of the tourism operators out there for all of their hard work and their contributions to the Yukon's economy.

I would like to start with Parks Canada, Friends of the Klondike Corridor. In the executive director's report for the Friends of the Klondike Corridor dated August 2015, the following statement is made — and I quote: "We had a great time last week walking through the historic buildings at the Bear Creek historic complex in Dawson City. Our vision is to support Parks Canada to re-create a vibrant community there. There is so much there to support tourism operations, the film industry, mining support companies, government offices. We will open up discussions soon with YTG and go from there. Hopefully this leads to a full development and operations plan that can be announced there on Legacy Day 2016."

Has the minister had any discussions with the Friends of the Klondike Corridor over the Bear Creek property? Could she outline some of the new activities there for 2016 and beyond?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: As I understand it, there are ongoing discussions with Parks Canada and the community about Bear Creek and what to do with Parks Canada's operation at Bear Creek. As the member opposite is very much aware, the facility was really closed a number of years ago. There is a renewed interest to see if there are any potential partnerships out there. As I understand it, Friends of the Klondike Corridor is one of those significant partners that have been striking some interest in seeing what can be collaborated on. I believe our department has engaged with Friends of the Klondike Corridor a couple of times. I have not, but I know that those discussions are ongoing. I really do not have too much more to report other than it is great to see that Parks Canada is looking at options for Bear Creek. I know that our family went to Bear Creek back in the day when it was open, fully running and operating. It was a great facility, so it is good to see that Parks Canada is reaching out, engaging and seeing what the options and opportunities are.

Mr. Silver: I think now would be a great time for more engagement and more conversations with this level of government and the Friends of the Klondike Corridor — the folks in that particular NGO or organization have lots of knowledge as far as the historic uses of that area.

Also, now that we have a federal government that has committed to millions of dollars more being put back into Parks Canada, it would be a great time to have those conversations. I'll leave that and move on to the First Nations Culture and Tourism Association.

Madam Chair, I've had many conversations with contacts of mine in the tourism and culture industry. We know that the First Nations Culture and Tourism Association is going to have a conference coming up here in Whitehorse November 18 to 20. A lot of the conversations we've been having are about funding for these particular types of agencies. What we have here is a small crew that's trying to do the work of an entire department and trying to achieve support.

A great example of what they do, Madam Chair, as I'm sure they're aware, is the Adäka Cultural Festival. It's amazing the amount of work that goes into these types of festivals. I was wondering if the minister can walk us through the funding allocation to the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association over the past decade. I'll leave it all as one big question here.

Does the minister believe it's sustainable? In many jurisdictions around Canada and the United States, First Nation culture and tourism is an extremely hot market these days. British Columbia, for example, has a very successful First Nation tourism industry. I guess I'm putting the question to the minister — if she believes that it's time for an increase in funding. The success of the association is clear. The Adäka Cultural Festival, for example, is extremely successful. I had an opportunity to volunteer this year at the festival and was amazed at the festival's professionalism.

The art work on display is world-class and the cultural centre was packed to the rafters with individuals watching the drumming and the dancing and seeing the art that was on display. Just as an anecdote, I spoke to tourists up from Arizona who were on their way back from Alaska. They remarked that this festival was an unexpected highlight of their bucket-list trip.

I know that Economic Development is funding that organization and bringing back the welcome guide — and kudos to that department for that — but can the minister walk us through what steps her department is taking to hopefully increase some funding for this motivated and extremely important tourism partner?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I was just speaking to this issue awhile ago in my earlier remarks, but I'm happy to just go through some of the work that we have done as the Department of Tourism and Culture, and also the work that has been undertaken and continues to be undertaken by Economic Development in support of the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association.

As I mentioned earlier, I'll always recall that at the Canada Winter Games back in 2007, there was a concerted effort at that time to bring all 14 First Nation governments together in a celebration of Yukon First Nation art and culture. That included performances by different dance groups. I believe there were a number of speakers.

There were performances by different artists and there was also quite a showcase of all the different crafts and art conducted or completed by individual First Nation artists. It was situated, I remember, just along the waterfront over beside the ATCO — there was a large tent — and I recall just being amazed at what a significant presence there was of First Nation art and culture.

It was from there that it was such an overwhelming success that, the very next year, it was carried on by the Yukon First Nations Tourism Association — “culture” wasn't in there at that time.

The tourism association went to work and collaborated with the Council of Yukon First Nations to put on the very first Yukon First Nations art festival. That was also a great display. That was, I believe, hosted over at the Old Fire Hall the following year in 2008, if I'm not mistaken. It too grew. The venue was fantastic and then there were tents set-up along the waterfront. It was another great example.

Fast forward to 2010 to the Winter Olympics and there was a really a huge presence. We wanted to — even though we didn't have individual athletes participating in the Olympics — at least I don't recall at that time — we wanted to ensure that we leveraged that reach that the Olympics afforded us through tourism, art and culture. At that time — the member opposite may recall — we were able to launch a number of pan-northern Look Up North commercials at that time.

In fact our partnership with the other two territories continues. We continue to run similar television commercials as a pan-northern jurisdiction and in fact they will be running again next spring as well.

At the same time we had a showcase — a couple of different showcases. One was Canada's Northern House. That was really a great opportunity for many of our First Nation artists to be able to display and perform, and to have a number of pieces of our own permanent art collection on display. It was a great way — but leading up to that time at the 2010 Winter Olympics, we had a couple of individuals — Charlene Alexander and Katie Johnson to name but a couple. They went to work on putting packages together — marketing materials for each of those individual First Nation artists. They did a beautiful job, in terms of really articulating and making it very distinctive of Yukon artists and to be able to promote that in a very professional way, but also a very meaningful and respectful way.

In addition to Canada's Northern House, there was also Canada's — I do not recall the exact name of the pavilion, but it was an aboriginal pavilion that many of our dance troupes really got a significant lift in terms of developing capacity, in terms of really adding professionalism to the promotion of what they do and how they presented that, and to be able to work with other groups across the country was really a huge, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

From there — when we look at the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers, that is a case in point. They really came to life just prior to the 2010 Winter Olympics and, from there, now they are performing all over the world. Our touring artist fund is really put to great use for that particular venue. In fact those particular dancers — I was just reminded by our officials — won a Tourism Industry Association of Canada award of excellence last year as well. They are also nominated for another award — actually they aren't, but our Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association is actually being nominated for an award this year in that category.

From the 2010 Winter Olympics, that is when Adäka really was born and took all those various elements of successful festivals and events and showcases and really breathed life into the cultural festival, to where we are today five years later.

It is significant to see the growth in the product and to see the growth in the partnerships being generated across the north, not just in the Yukon but forming those alliances with Alaska, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, British Columbia and other jurisdictions. We have a lot to be proud of in this territory and it is significant that this organization has taken on what they have taken on.

The Department of Tourism and Culture, as I have already alluded to, has and will continue to provide \$60,000 in annual operational funding for the association to implement its strategic business plans and in support of a number of marketing initiatives related to its tourism objectives. Of course, I have met with the association on a couple of occasions and committed to working with the association in really recognizing the significant growth in responsibility that the association has taken on over the years.

I was just at the cultural tourism roundtable that was hosted at the heritage symposium just about a week ago and heard the executive director talk about all of the many

cooperative marketing initiatives, the webisodes and the documentary. Our department this summer funded that initiative alone — \$40,000 — in addition to their core funding in support of a number of First Nation vignettes to be shared on their website and to be able to be utilized on our own website as well, through the Travel Yukon website, but really leveraging those experiences.

In addition to that, they contributed heavily to the development of the tourism television commercials that we just recently launched — two of the six. The other four summers very much showcase the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers to Marilyn Jensen, Sharon Shorty — there are a number of different artists woven throughout each of the commercials, woven throughout the stories embedded throughout those various commercials, particularly with added emphasis on the summer ones.

In addition to that, I know the member opposite referred to Economic Development working with the association on the welcome guide, really updating that particular publication, which is fantastic. In addition to that, we have the Sharing Our Stories conference coming up. Through the Department of Economic Development, through the CDF, there was about \$75,000-plus awarded to the association. In addition to that, the Department of Tourism and Culture also provided just shy of \$20,000 for the November conference, and there are a number of other funds. The arts fund, also administered through our department, has also provided \$40,000 in terms of supporting the Adäka Cultural Festival.

There are other funds — on Yukon time — that we have also provided — and through the tourism cooperative marketing fund. So all told, there's a fair amount of resources that have been invested for a very good initiative — a number of great initiatives — but we know the more that they take on and the more that we have been able to grow products and to be able to leverage the resources of many others, including our business community and other levels and orders of government, I'm very cognizant of that capacity and that we need to help grow that association.

So we have committed to sitting down, again following the conference — the Sharing Our Stories conference — regrouping with the association and identifying how we can actually grow the organization and grow our funding commitment in support of this association, recognizing all the additional products and programming that they continue to offer.

There have been a number in the past, of course. Through the Department of Economic Development, they have also provided funding support in developing their business plan in support of a gallery tour. They were also able to participate in our Premier's tourism trade mission to Europe. There have been a number of various product workshops — I know the cultural retail gift shop product workshop was also just hosted in this fiscal year through Economic Development.

There are a number of various initiatives that they have been contributing to and it is great to see. There is a great amount of work that they also do in collaboration with our First Nation cultural centres as well. That is a key component

of developing First Nation tourism and contributing to the breadth and depth of our tourism offerings. They have also been able to work seamlessly with our department through the Cultural Services branch to be able to work with each of those cultural centres. Those are just some of the examples where we have been able to provide support, and we will continue to work with them to implement their business plans and set their goals even further.

Mr. Silver: I appreciate the minister's response. The minister did list a plethora of grant opportunities and other funding opportunities that the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association can access. I guess what I will do is leave my suggestions on the floor of this Assembly. I imagine that, with some kind of core support or some other kind of commitment toward funding, the good people in this department could spend less time applying for funding and maybe more time working inside the industry.

I will move on and I apologize to the minister and to her team. I am all over the map here being the Third Party and coming up after the Official Opposition and the questions that were asked there.

I am going to move to the Japan trip. The Department of Tourism and Culture signed marketing agreements with the CTC worth \$67,500, marking the largest ever single investment by Yukon in an overall marketing campaign in Japan. These initiatives included the production of video vignettes, which will be broadcast on a new online travel video channel in Japan, as well as the development of new Yukon travel packages by Japanese tourism operators and other Yukon-focused promotional activities. I have just a couple of questions for clarity. I was wondering if the minister can let us know what the web address is for these vignettes. Can the minister give us an update on the total cost of this trip?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I do not have the exact website address, but we can certainly get that information to the member opposite. That is no problem at all. I just want to say that it was a significant opportunity for us, and I was really pleased to be able to accompany a dozen or so businesses of various representatives on the tourism mission to Asia earlier this year.

We're always looking at ways of being able to expand even more in our key markets, and that includes our international overseas markets, Asia being — well, when you look at China for example, it is the world's largest travel market. It is Canada's fastest growing market. We've seen increasing flights to Vancouver from Japan — Osaka, for example, introduced a new flight, I understand, for the season, which enhanced opportunities to come to Yukon within one day without having to overnight anywhere else. So it's about being able to really capitalize on those opportunities.

Likewise in China, we've seen increased flights to Vancouver — that's a key gateway city for us — and then being able to go to Yukon from there. There has been the introduction of 10-year multi-entry visas for Chinese travelers. Obviously China presents a significant growth opportunity for Yukon's tourism industry and certainly when we look at

events in China for example, it includes a number of business-to-business meetings with tour operators and tourism officials. We had briefings from the Canadian Tourism Commission. It was very informative for all of us.

We had a media event in which we had 30 to 50 different media representatives in play at the site, which was a great opportunity for businesses such as Air North, Yukon's airline, to be able to highlight and showcase air access opportunities.

Likewise we had other businesses with us at both events, and it was great because between the diversity of the sector itself — we had some from the hotel area, from transportation with Driving Force — we had Westmark hotels and the Downtown Hotel — we had a number of various representatives. All told, at the end of those presentations that we made, day in and day out, it was a great way to be able to advertise all that we have to offer here and be able to perhaps breakdown some of those myths as well.

We've seen an increase in Japanese visitors in recent years. They all represent hiking, canoeing, dog-sledding, nature activities, fall colours viewing. They all represent strong products for our Japanese visitors. While we were in Japan, in both cities that we visited, we were able to participate in more than 100 meetings with some 92 tour operators from Japan.

We met with representatives from the Japanese travel media, officials from CTC and the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo — again, a very informative opportunity for us.

During the tourism mission, as the member opposite alluded to, we were able to sign a couple of agreements with CTC, marking that largest-ever single investment by Yukon in an overall marketing campaign in Japan. There were two of them. As the member opposite stated, it included the production of video vignettes, which will be broadcast — or have been broadcast — on a new online travel video channel in Japan. I know that CTC led this initiative. Yukon Tourism also obviously assisted CTC in, I think, partnering up various contacts within the Yukon's tourism industry to showcase various assets or various product offerings in Yukon, but it was a CTC-driven initiative. Being able to have that outlet was a great thing indeed, as well as the development of new Yukon travel packages by Japanese tour operators and other Yukon-focused promotional activities.

It was a huge opportunity for all of us to sit face-to-face with these individuals in a room and be able to hear directly from them and be able to answer questions about the Yukon and be able to set the stage. We have in place a general sales agent in Japan — in Tokyo, as I understand — and we have had that individual there for — I am not sure for how many years — five years now. So that is a really key position, just like we have a position in Frankfurt, Germany — a general sales agent as well. We do not have, obviously, a sales agent in China, so we heavily rely on the Canadian Tourism Commission to really provide us that intelligence and to provide that research that is so integral in helping inform where we go, as a jurisdiction. We really appreciate the assistance on the ground, all free of charge, that they provided us while we were in China.

I have to say that, since the actual Tourism mission, we have had a number of different tour groups coming here — from Shanghai for example. I was able to meet with a group of them earlier in August, and in fact we had representatives here from a Shanghai radio station and we had a number of representatives here from the various auto travel clubs. As I understand, they went all the way up the Dempster Highway and back. They were very excited, but it is just the tip of the iceberg.

You know, from where we go from here, we have said — and I have asked industry and our department to work together to set out a plan as to how far or where it is that we wish to go into the Asian market and how we wish to present ourselves, based on the information that was gleaned during our tourism trade mission.

There are significant opportunities, and I learned from a company, in speaking with them recently, about their plans to leverage some of that reach in the new year. We have been able to form a China working group with industry. It is really their task to come together with some recommendations and observations to help inform our ongoing work on the Asian file, given the significant opportunity that lies ahead.

The one other last point I want to make is that we have also been able to work together with Travel Alberta and Tourism British Columbia. When we were in China, we met in Beijing at the CTC's head office. It was very intriguing in that we find that Chinese travellers are, more often than not, coming over to Vancouver and, from Vancouver, they may experience the Whistlers or go to Niagara Falls from there or they may go to the Banffs of Canada, but if it's their second or third trip, they are looking for something different and something unique, and so Yukon is strategically placed, being just one air-leg away from Edmonton, Calgary or Vancouver. It is really taking advantage of and working with the Japanese and Chinese receptive operators in Vancouver as well. I know that the previous Minister of Tourism and Culture hosted a reception, forging ahead and strengthening those alliances as well, but again working with our partners in British Columbia and Alberta to incorporate a travel itinerary that will introduce Yukon on their trip to British Columbia and Alberta as well.

It may be their first or second trip, and then full-scale Yukon. There are many different strategic opportunities for us to enter these markets. Again, I just want to say thank you to the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon for their work and to express industry support for the mission to Japan and China that was coordinated by our department. The Tourism Marketing Committee has highlighted investment in Asia, especially in Japan and China, in its recommendations to our department. It recognizes the return on investment that can be generated by promoting the Yukon to these regions.

I know I've received a number of letters of support following the Asia mission from TIA Yukon and from the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, just helping to reinforce the importance that we place on these markets and providing those open dialogues and new opportunities for industry. I just want to again say thank you to all the various businesses for working with us to showcase all that we have to offer in our

territory to media and the trade in China, together with other officials from our territory.

The mission to both countries really reinforced the importance of these markets and certainly signalled a commitment to these markets by being able to be there in such full force with industry.

It shows a very close partnership with industry and obviously our ongoing support of travellers. I hope that answers the member opposite's question.

Mr. Silver: Actually, to be frank, it didn't. My question was: What was the cost of the trip?

Very specifically, we had a commitment to get the web address from the minister and I thank her for that, but can she also commit to giving us the cost of this trip to Japan?

In her response, she did talk about core markets. I have a series of questions on these markets, and I'll just start with: What are the Yukon's core markets for 2015? Has that changed since 2014? A supplementary question is: How are core markets that Tourism and Culture pursues determined?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Just with respect to the overall core markets, I was just reminded that we have primary, secondary and tertiary, which I refer to as emerging markets, for Yukon. Our primary, obviously, is Canada, United States and German-speaking Europe. We have seen tremendous growth over the years — in Canada particularly, and German-speaking Europe as well. We have seen growth in those areas as well.

Canada though — and I attribute a lot of growth to our air access, working with Air North, Yukon's airline, in opening up those markets even more into Yellowknife, Ottawa, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver or Kelowna — recent leg.

This really opens up a lot of opportunities with Air North and all of our partners. In terms of the increased air access, as I mentioned, through the United States, that is primarily done in collaboration with the State of Alaska through cooperative tourism marketing initiatives. I have said that Alaska is going through some financial difficulties. They are undergoing some significant decisions, but the Tourism North and the cooperative marketing initiatives that we have in place with Alaska remain intact and, in fact, just earned an award of excellence. It was recognized by the International Economic Development Council — I believe it is — in recognizing the significance of Tourism North partnership. Tourism North ties together Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska to market all that we have to offer in a collaborative manner, working with key partners like Holland America. It is a very significant partner indeed. They have a tremendous amount of property here in the territory and they employ a lot of individuals. Their marketing reach alone is very substantive, and so we regard them as a very close partner as well.

Likewise, German-speaking Europe through the Condor flights has really helped advance the tourism market here in the Yukon. Initiatives like Yukon Day in Hanover, Germany, are additional exposure for Yukon. We have to be very strategic with our dollars and ensure we have a good return on investment. When it comes to secondary markets — I spoke to Japan. We've seen growth over recent years in the Japanese

market, the aurora viewing market, as a result of better economic conditions, but also as a result of better air access into Canada. Obviously we've also seen growth in Australia and the UK as well.

The emerging markets — as I mentioned, China, especially with the approved destination status that we received about five years ago. We have seen tremendous growth right across the board in all of Canada, and so the recent tourism mission to China, being able to leverage the reach — working in collaboration and partnership with Destination Canada has been significant. Other emerging markets are the Netherlands, Mexico and South Korea.

Madam Chair, I often talk about partnerships, and our tourism marketing programs have to be research-based, they're market-driven and we are partnering with industry every step of the way. Every year we do come together. We do have a tourism marketing committee. I know the member opposite is fairly familiar with that. It is a committee under the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon. It was formerly the Senior Marketing Committee. They make recommendations to TIA Yukon and then they make recommendations to the Government of Yukon.

They meet on an ongoing basis every quarter, if not more regularly, depending on circumstances, but we have a lot of great expertise at the table and very industry-led, and that is really key to be able to provide that strategic direction to ensure that each and every one of our marketing programs is in response to the needs and the priorities of industry and that it does have the best return on investment.

We do have a market assessment on each of our portfolios and each of our markets. We assess those markets. We will certainly take a look at every dollar that is invested in every market and readjust accordingly. There was just a market portfolio assessment that was adopted during the recent retreat of the Tourism Marketing Committee. That assessment — and I do not sit in on these meetings and that's probably a very good thing — but they do provide me with, obviously, strategic direction and recommendations from industry to TIA. In turn, from TIA, it goes to the Government of Yukon for consideration.

Again, I just thank all of the industry players for their input, providing direction — I remember when the Senior Marketing Committee was first formed back in the day — I think it was Nancy Huston who was the chair of TIA Yukon at that time, and therein was born the Senior Marketing Committee. It was very timely because if there is one thing that I have known over the years, it's that there are many outside factors that can contribute to the decline or the growth of tourism in each of our global markets, and every time there is a change, whether it was the financial crisis, whether it was the SARS outbreak, whether there was a forest fire, whether there was 9/11 and so forth — every time industry would come together and we would readjust and perhaps put more dollars into the domestic market versus the United States market.

That is really what it is all about — being able to show flexibility, be nimble, be responsive — but industry-led at all

times — strategic — to ensure that the return on investment is there at all times.

That is a quick overview of some of the markets that we carry forward and, Madam Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 20, entitled *Second 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. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Written notice was given of the following motion November 2, 2015:

Motion No. 1046

Re: Remainder of work to be done during the balance of the Yukon Party's mandate (Silver)