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HANSARD

Wednesday, October 24, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2018 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

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NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Deputy Premier Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Pauline Frost	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
Hon. Jeanie Dendys	Mountainview	Minister of Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Women's Directorate

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Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
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Yukon Party

Stacey Hassard	Leader of the Official Opposition Pelly-Nisutlin	Scott Kent	Official Opposition House Leader Copperbelt South
Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
Kate White	Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King

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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, October 24, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would like to ask my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly to help me to welcome some folks who are in the gallery today for the Big Brothers Big Sisters tribute.

I am going to apologize in advance if I brutalize any of your names. We have Angela Krueger, who is the executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters. We have Elisabeth Lexow, Rebecca Johnson, Jamie McCarthy, Craig Van Lankveld and Nick Desson.

I would like everyone to welcome them to the Legislative Assembly.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: This afternoon, we have several members of the territorial and municipal road crews with us. I would like you to help me welcome from Highways and Public Works: Dan Shevchenko; Kathleen Ayers; Kevin Moore; Gary MacDonald; Paul McConnell; Jaime Pitfield, our deputy minister; and Mickey Parkin.

I also have from the City of Whitehorse: Nick Talsma, Trent Egglestone, Gordon Smith, Al Hill, Kyle Martsinkiw, Damien Smith and Mack Smith.

Please join me in welcoming them to the House.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of 40th anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon

Hon. Mr. Silver: As noted, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon. This year, they are celebrating their 40th anniversary in the territory and I'm honoured to congratulate them on this major milestone.

Since 1978, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon has been a force of good in the lives of young people in the Yukon, spanning four decades of valuable contributions of this organization to our territory, which cannot be overstated. The formative experiences we have as kids define who we

become, and I am proud that we have such a dedicated community of people investing in our territory's youth, helping to bring them forward into adulthood and build on their foundations. These volunteers truly embody the idea that a community is only as strong as its weakest, it's only as healthy as its sickest and it's only as rich as its poorest citizens.

Study after study has shown that mentoring children through relationships with non-parental role models can bring so many social benefits. Monitored youth tend to have better attitudes toward school and they are more likely to graduate from high school and go on to trade schools, colleges and universities and reach their dreams when they choose their career path. Young people with mentors are so much more likely to build strong and healthy relationships in all aspects of their lives.

Kids need positive role models. They need to know that someone cares, that someone is vested in their future and that they have someone at their side who is cheering them on. I don't need to quote studies to convince me of this. As a former teacher, I have witnessed this in my classroom. If somebody cares about them, about what they do and what happens to them, kids are so much more likely to succeed. If you give an inch of respect to a child you are going to get a mile back, that's for sure — and a mile back of gratitude and self-worth.

The young members of our community truly are the most valuable resource that we have. They are our future. They deserve our time and attention. Big Brothers Big Sisters mentors guide youth and invest in their development wholeheartedly. As adults, our role in preparing young people for the future is a very complex responsibility. The skills and the attitudes that they need cannot be packaged up in a box and delivered. What can be done, however, is the gradual but persistent facilitation of change that is ongoing and that only mentorship can provide. The mentors of Big Brothers Big Sisters provide stability, consistency and a safe judge-free environment. They challenge and advise their mentees, enriching and broadening their experience and connecting them with new opportunities.

In addition to congratulating them, I must also say thank you to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon for their tireless work fostering the positive growth of Yukon's young people. Once again, the importance of your work absolutely cannot be underestimated and it can't be stressed enough. It deserves our full recognition and our full gratitude. Thank you.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Big Brothers Big Sisters as they celebrate their 40th anniversary.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada's vision is this: "Every Child in Canada Who Needs a Mentor, Has a Mentor". This organization services more than 1,100 communities across Canada, and we are very proud of our Yukon chapter. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon provides an invaluable

service to young children, matching them with volunteers in healthy mentoring relationships.

There are many children and youth in our territory who do not have active role models in their lives. They do not have someone to rely on or to listen to them as they navigate struggles and barriers in childhood.

This mentoring program is a proven model and does so much for providing positive feedback for the youth who participate. It can be a life-changing relationship on both sides as they share experiences and build a relationship through shared interest. They explore those interests through outings, discussion, games and activities. Both Big Brothers and Big Sisters pairings require at least two regular, scheduled outings a month of a few hours each and a one-year commitment.

Besides one-on-one mentoring, there are group programs focusing on physical activity, healthy eating and communication skills. Go Girls! is a program for ages 12 to 14 to focus on physical activity, balanced eating and self-esteem. It helps give young women building blocks to have a positive self-image. Game On! — eat smart, play smart — is geared to boys and young men to inform them of healthy lifestyle choices and, again, to encourage a positive self-image. Mentors gain skills and experiences that they would never have acquired without the help of a little brother or a little sister.

This organization relies on volunteers to keep these important programs going and, of course, the fundraising that is always needed to move things forward. I know that because my beautiful daughter-in-law, Nicole Jacques, is a volunteer and has chosen this organization as her charity of choice.

Next month, on November 18, Curl for Kids Sake is happening at the Whitehorse Curling Club. Teams of four seek pledges; there's a silent auction, prizes and, of course, food. Get involved with this initiative and other events that they do throughout the year. Spread the word and, if you know someone who is looking for an opportunity to volunteer in a fun and fulfilling way, this could be it; or, if you have a child in your life who could benefit from having a big brother or a big sister, take a look at whether this program would be a good fit and register that child.

Thank you to the organization and to the volunteers for 40 years of service to children and youth in our communities in Yukon.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to celebrate 40 years of friendship, mentorship and fun. Big Brothers Big Sisters is about changing the course of young lives and helping young people reach their full potential, one relationship at a time. I know from personal experience that the benefit of mentorship doesn't flow in just one direction and that the life of every adult who has participated with Big Brothers Big Sisters has been enriched by the experience. It's also pretty fun, so if you have ever thought about it, I suggest you apply because even if you're not sure if you have skills to offer — I go to the ski hill and it's a pretty good time.

In the 40 years that Big Brothers Big Sisters has been in the territory, we know they have reached and affected the lives of many. We offer our thanks to the many community volunteers who mentor, fundraise and continue to support Yukon youth when they need it most. Congratulations to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon on your 40th anniversary, and we look forward to many more.

Applause

In recognition of Yukon road maintenance crews

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: It is my pleasure this afternoon to rise on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to the members of the territory's road maintenance crews.

No matter where they work, the territory's road crews rock — and they also gravel and sand. It is vital work in this territory where harsh winter conditions hit in mid-October, as they did last week. Our roads bring us home. They bring us help. They bring us together. That is only possible because our territorial and municipal road crews keep our highways and roads in the best shape possible.

It is difficult work, especially in the face of a changing climate. As my colleague, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, noted in a conversation just this morning, we don't see the consistent extreme cold temperatures we used to. Stable, cold conditions used to build a good snow base. Today, that's not a given. Temperature and precipitation are in flux, sometimes week to week or day to day, location to location. These days the environment is trickier. Roads are wet, icy, slushy or snowy and this forces changes in approach, material and equipment. In the face of climate change in the north, our road crews do a tremendous job dealing with unpredictable weather and changing seasonal patterns. It's not easy, yet our road crews keep our far-flung northern highway network clear and safe right around the clock all winter long.

While we have territory and municipal workers here this afternoon, I am going to talk for a moment about the work of the Yukon team I'm responsible for. Highways and Public Works employs about 200 people to maintain our roads to get us home from October through to March. That work takes about 140,000 hours a season. Many of these workers are third generation Highways and Public Works employees who grew up with their parents and grandparents working in the night and wee hours of the morning to keep Yukon highways safe to drive on in the dark winter months.

Just this weekend, I met one such worker who spoke eloquently about the professionalism and dedication of his peers, how challenging the job is and how much he liked it. He was proud of his job maintaining Yukon roads.

We have 21 grader stations that house 75 snowplows. We have 40 graders to ensure Yukoners get to their destinations and get safely home. My team at Highways and Public Works maintains roughly 4,800 kilometres of roads for a population concentrated in one urban centre and then stretched out between 13 rural communities. These vast, sparsely populated distances are part of the challenge. Maintaining these roads is the team's number one priority all winter long and we all know how long winter can be. They take it very seriously.

We recognize and thank these everyday heroes. They get the job done, often in the dark, early morning hours, long before the rest of us rise. I applaud their commitment to maintaining our northern road network during our coldest months of the year.

I also ask Yukon citizens to help our road crews do their job by yielding to their equipment and exercising caution on ice and snow-covered roads. Remember, the posted speed limits are for ideal conditions. If you face a snowstorm or fluctuating temperatures, slow down. Our road crews are often the first on the scene of an accident. This is not how you want to meet them and certainly not how they want to meet you. Take your time, slow down. It's not worth the risk of an accident.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP and the Yukon Party to thank all those hearty souls who work for highway and municipal road crews throughout Yukon.

We celebrate all those professionals who help maintain the more than 4,821 kilometres of Yukon roads for the driving public. When the temperatures soar and blackflies are the mortal enemy or when the thermometer plummets and no one wants to leave the comfort of home, you can always count on highway and municipal road crews to be out doing what they do best.

We thank those solid individuals who get up long before dawn and even work through the night to be sure that our roads are passable and safe in winter conditions for our morning commute to work. We thank the ferry operators who facilitate our safe crossing of both the Yukon River and Pelly River. We thank those good folks who work at any of Yukon's 21 grader stations or any of our weigh scales. We thank city and municipal crews for their ongoing work at keeping our communities rolling, from the obvious like plowing to the more obscure like draining puddles the size of lakes or making sure that sidewalks and paved walking trails are safe year-round.

Ultimately, there are many people responsible for keeping the Yukon ticking — most, we won't ever see — but who all certainly deserve our thanks.

So today, thank you very much.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to reduce community reliance on diesel energy.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to provide a clear timeline showing when they will allow private retailers to sell cannabis and when the government will shut down their publicly funded cannabis store.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Education to attend the public meeting scheduled for November at Golden Horn Elementary School to address capacity issues and long-term capital planning.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon Liberal government to:

(1) immediately put a warning label on the 20 lots in Grizzly Valley subdivision that are currently for sale by lottery advising potential purchasers that the Minister of Education has not agreed to provide school bus services into the subdivision, despite the fact that the Minister of Community Services confirmed via legislative return: "The roads meet the necessary Transportation Association of Canada geometric design guideline requirements for safe access to the subdivision for school buses, emergency response vehicles and other users"; and

(2) explain why their supposed whole-of-government approach has failed to resolve the issue of school bus service to families in Grizzly Valley subdivision, which was raised with ministers early in their term in office by the MLA for the area.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to consult with trucking industry stakeholders to develop training program requirements for commercial and long-haul Yukon truck drivers.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: McKinsey & Company association with Government of Yukon

Mr. Hassard: As many Yukoners have heard, the regime in Saudi Arabia has been silencing their critics. There has been international coverage of a murder of a journalist and vocal critic of the Saudi regime. This weekend, *The New York Times* published a story with revelations suggesting the regime had been targeting and silencing critics with the help of the international consulting firm McKinsey & Company. According to *The New York Times*, this company put together a report identifying the sources of criticism of the regime.

After this report was produced, those sources were then targeted by the Saudi government.

Mr. Speaker, we ask this question because a senior partner of McKinsey & Company was in the Yukon the last couple of days and the Deputy Premier did a public event with him yesterday. Can the Premier confirm that it was, in fact, the Deputy Premier who asked this individual to speak and do these events?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Yes, I would love to speak to this issue. First of all, I had the opportunity to participate in a discussion yesterday with Dominic Barton as well as Tosh Southwick, vice-president of Yukon College, and the Deputy Minister of Economic Development. I thought a great place to have the event was at Yukon College because the individual is also the chancellor of Waterloo University, just spoke at McGill University, and I think at UBC and Oxford, all in the last two months.

I'm going to get clarity today from both the Leader of the Official Opposition and maybe even from the Third Party. I saw there was some stuff on social media from the Leader of the Third Party. What do we say to Yukon businesses that Mr. Barton spoke with yesterday, whether they be the leaders of one local business that was asked to go to Oxford University and speak or maybe another local innovative company that he spoke with yesterday, where he said he would like to see their prototype, or even the other individuals who were agriculture?

If somebody needs to put something on the table today, I want to know: Have I done something wrong? Has my department done something wrong in having this individual come to the Yukon? I want to know: Should we tell all these companies that provided support yesterday that they should hear from the Yukon Party, and potentially the NDP, that this individual should not be somebody who speaks? I want to hear from both of these individuals please.

Mr. Hassard: It seems to be a rather sensitive topic for the Minister of Economic Development. All I did was ask if it was, in fact, he who invited this Mr. Barton to the Yukon.

As we have already highlighted, this weekend *The New York Times* published the story with revelations suggesting that the Saudi regime had been targeting and silencing its critics. *The New York Times* suggested they are doing this with the help of a report produced by McKinsey & Company.

We know the Deputy Premier participated in an event with a senior partner of this firm yesterday, and we have even heard that he got his staff to go for breakfast with Mr. Barton. Even before the Saudi Arabia story, the firm was linked to another corruption scandal in South Africa earlier this summer. Does the Premier feel it's appropriate for the Liberal government to associate with an organization linked to the repressive regime in Saudi Arabia or corruption scandals in South Africa?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would say to the Assembly today that if there is any sensitivity coming from me, it's really not so much with the questions, but when you walk in and you're being linked, as an individual in the Yukon and as a minister,

to these actions in Saudi Arabia — quite petty; very unprofessional; quite sad.

I think what we're really seeing from both sides of the floor today is the fact that — why aren't we talking about the economy? Why aren't we talking about the fact that this conference was heralded?

I know that there were some members from the opposition who were at the event last night where people from the business community said this was the best keynote speaker they have ever had.

We certainly don't condone what's happening abroad. The fact that this is becoming a geopolitical conversation because an individual came to speak at an academic institution or to Economic Development staff or even as the keynote speaker — I think it is a really big stretch. I think Yukoners know it's a big stretch. I think the business community thought there was some great value. I think the students who heard from this individual yesterday about academia and where things are happening in the world — and to draw from the history of 24 months ago, former managing director — no longer — and now the chair of Teck Resources, Canada's biggest mining company — is a real stretch. Especially to connect a company that has 30,000 employees.

Mr. Hassard: I don't think it makes any difference how big the company is.

Just to reiterate, we think this is a very serious and important story that *The New York Times* wrote this weekend, and it's important for Yukoners to understand how and why the Liberal government is associated with this firm. That is why we're asking this question.

Can the Premier tell us if any money was spent by the Government of Yukon to bring and host this individual here in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I'm glad the Leader of the Official Opposition brought that up. No money was spent.

I'm going to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Barton, who came up. There was no money spent. He came and wanted to see the Yukon. He had not been here since he had done roadwork — funny enough that we're doing a tribute today — in 1984 outside of Watson Lake. He wanted to see what was happening here. He was quite pleased with all the interesting things happening between our development corporations, the economy itself and innovation.

Once again, a big stretch — maybe the biggest stretch I've seen since I've had an opportunity to be in this Assembly with my friends across the way.

Anyway, I hope there are more questions, and we'll continue to answer these questions. I am sure there are more and better questions about the economy that we could be talking about.

Question re: Cannabis retail store

Mr. Istchenko: Today, CKRW reported that the cost of a pre-rolled joint from the new government-run cannabis retail store was \$16. The shipping for it was \$12.00. That's \$28.00 for one joint. According to Statistics Canada, the average price for a gram of weed is much lower — at around \$9.52.

We have told this Liberal government many times that, by insisting on a model that grows government, it would not be able to compete with the black market. Remember, that's what this whole thing is about — eliminating the black market — but instead, with such high prices they are encouraging people to stay with the black market.

Can the minister explain how a \$28 joint competes with the black market?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I know that the opposition party is opposed to cannabis. That is fine.

The first week of operations saw over \$160,000 in sales. Our priorities have been to displace the illicit market but also to focus on the health and safety of Yukoners, especially to ensure the care of our youth.

What I want to say is that the price range for a gram of cannabis at the new store ranged from \$8 up to just shy of \$20. What was interesting to us was to see that Yukoners chose to buy the more expensive premium, organic products. That was their choice.

Maybe the members opposite, through their investigation, bought the premium product. Well, no worries — there is a product that is closer to the street price across the country, but they are providing a range of products because we do want to displace the illicit market. I'm very thankful for the success of the first week of the cannabis store.

Mr. Istchenko: Shipping from the government-run retail store to the CKRW office downtown took five days and it was \$12. Imagine how long it will take to have it shipped to Beaver Creek, Dawson City or Mayo. The Liberals have shut out the communities from having retail stores, so they are required to ship if they want to purchase legal marijuana. By shutting out the private sector in the communities, the Liberals have actually insulated the black market in rural Yukon.

Who is going to switch away from the black market if you have to wait so long and pay so much in shipping? The goal of this was to eliminate the black market, but unfortunately, the Liberals were so focused on ideology that they ended up growing government and missing the goal.

Will the minister tell us how this big government approach to the sale of weed will eliminate the black market in the communities?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think I just did talk about how it's displacing the black market.

I thank the member for raising the question because I want to encourage all Yukoners to move away from the illicit trade and move to this legal store. We're very happy to be working with businesses to get them up and running, from Beaver Creek to Watson Lake — wherever they would like to go — as long as those communities want those stores in those communities.

By the way, another great thing — and the way in which we're helping our communities to make sure that they are safer — is that when they buy through this legal system, they know that they are not going to get a drug laced with something else, which is wreaking havoc on our people across the territory. This is a way to ensure that safety.

Canada Post is what we have for delivery. I heard of one delivery that took two days. I heard of one that took five days. I thank CKRW for doing that test — great. I will work with our partners to try to make sure that the delivery system is as fast as possible. We're working now to bring in regulations, as I have said in this Legislature, to introduce private retail and we're looking forward to it.

Mr. Istchenko: It's clear that the prices are too high to compete with the black market, and that's because the Liberals insisted on a model that grows government. To ensure they don't lose money, they need to have the prices high enough to pay for the government wages, all of the renovation costs and all the other overhead that comes with a government-run business. If they had listened to us and went with a private sector model, then we would be doing this at less cost to taxpayers and we actually wouldn't be competing with the black market.

Let's talk about the packaging. In the CKRW report, they highlighted how this one tiny \$28 joint was shipped in a much larger box. In fact, there was probably more air in the box than there was pot. Why is the government spending so much money on shipping materials, and will they rethink this wasteful strategy?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The packaging is as per regulations from the federal government.

In my first meeting with the president of the corporation, I talked about the concerns of packaging. I think those are good concerns. Let's get at them. I will have to work with the regulations that are set there by the federal government, and so would the private sector, by the way.

In the first day, we had \$60,000 which was removed from the black market. Thank you very much to those Yukoners who went to the store on that first day. We're very happy.

I have seen across the country concerns as we went to privatized retail and as retail opened up across the country — concerns about supply. One of the things that we chose to do was to push our own prices down to not worry about profit — which, by the way, is costing Yukoners nothing because it is being sold, so we'll get that profit back.

It's really about trying to displace the illicit trade. If the member wants to know, I can get him a price list — I would be happy to do so — starting at \$8 a gram.

Question re: Technology in school classrooms

Ms. White: Technology is more present than ever in Yukon classrooms. There is no doubt that this is needed. Technology provides opportunities for innovation and, after all, kids live in a world where technology impacts their daily lives. This is a major transition for our education system, and like any transition, it comes with challenges.

We have heard from teachers who have experienced problems with bandwidth that made it impossible for them or their students to participate in a class as planned. This has forced teachers to completely change their lesson plan on the fly, often leaving them to teach a class without the resources they need. Teachers need the right tools to provide the best education possible for our children.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister monitor how frequently these issues occur in Yukon classrooms? What is being done to ensure that teachers have the tools they need to do their jobs?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It's absolutely critical that teachers have the tools they need to deliver the best possible service to our students. The member opposite is quite correct that the redesigned — now Yukon — curriculum already introduced in elementary schools and now up to grades 9 and 10 will be focused much on the way students are now learning. It is important for our curriculum and our school facilities to be as modern as possible because students clearly learn in a way that perhaps those of us in this Legislative Assembly did not in early days.

The technology piece with respect to the new curriculum is an important part of that particular innovation. The particular problem mentioned has not come to my attention, but it is absolutely something that is dealt with on a daily basis in our schools by teachers and by their administration and hopefully, if there are issues being brought to the department's attention, through their superintendent or other ways. As I have said earlier when talking about education, it is an issue that must be monitored constantly for improvements for Yukon students.

Ms. White: Integrating technology in our classrooms can have a positive impact on education as long as teachers, parents and students are properly supported through these changes. We have heard concerns from parents that their kids have no math or science textbooks to take home because there weren't enough for the whole class, so everything is done online instead. Others have reported that very few textbooks exist in the whole class, making it nearly impossible to teach a class where there are a few issues with accessing online course material, and that's without even talking about homework.

Mr. Speaker, how are teachers supposed to properly support students in their learning with such limited resources?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the question. I will speak with the member opposite about particular cases, if they have been brought to her attention and not to mine. We are not interested — I would say about any member of this Legislative Assembly — in children not having the proper tools to be used in classrooms and to assist with their homework.

I can indicate, of course, that some of these changes and developments in the redesigned curriculum result in a student-centred approach with more emphasis on experiential learning. Definitely, we would be moving away from the reading, writing and arithmetic of the old days that necessarily had textbooks. There are lots of new online learning initiatives. There are also opportunities for teachers to have online and electronic resources for teaching those classes as well. As I have said, I will speak to the member opposite about any specific case she is aware of that has not been brought to my attention.

Ms. White: Speaking of tools, Mr. Speaker, technology is not equally accessible to everyone. I don't need to remind

the minister that Yukon's Internet access can be patchy at times, and some communities don't have the same speed or infrastructure as Whitehorse does. With one-third of the food bank's clients being children, it goes without saying that some Yukon families cannot afford a computer or a home Internet connection. Other parents may not have the computer skills needed to help their kids with homework that is done online. These kids have the same right to a quality education as every other kid. What measures are in place to ensure that all kids have access to the same quality of education regardless of their access to technology?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I think it is a good opportunity to talk a bit about technology and its interface with students, not just in the public school system, but the opportunities that we are seeing available now through YuKconstruct and the (co)space in our innovation hub. I think that everybody here strives to ensure that there is equal opportunity for our students right across the Yukon.

It was touched upon that there is patchy Internet services. First of all, Yukoners have waited a long time for the commitment to get redundancy. I think that is a key project that is underway right now — making sure that we have redundancy so that we don't have that patchy service that we have seen for such a long time. Secondly, I would also say that I think when it comes to coding programs and game design and seeing our elementary students now going into activities at the innovation hub — it is that really great cross-pollination.

I know that the Member for Takhini-Kopper King is a huge supporter of the trades and making sure that our children have an opportunity for that real, tangible, hands-on experience. I think that this is also something where we are working in conjunction — the minister and I.

I also would say, just as we touched on the food bank and we talk about innovation, that I do want to thank Economic Development — our project where we now have our 11-month greenhouse. A portion of that food has been dedicated to the food bank. I also want to thank the people at Yukon Gardens for their innovation and help to the food bank.

Question re: School capacity

Mr. Kent: Last week, we asked some questions of the Minister of Education about overcrowding at Golden Horn Elementary School. The minister has had letters on her desk since last December asking her to take action to address overcrowding and so far, nothing has been done. We know the minister doesn't think this is a terrible problem to have, but the school council has asked the minister for two portables to be in place by next school year to avoid having to turn in-catchment families away from the school.

Last week, I asked the minister if she would commit to this request, but she was either unable or unwilling to answer that question, so I will ask again: Will the minister commit to two portable classrooms in time for the start of the 2019-20 school year at Golden Horn Elementary School as requested by that school council?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am happy to answer the question, but I think the preamble of the question might have given Yukoners the wrong impression — that letters just sit on my desk for 10 or 12 months and don't get answered. That is not, in fact, the case. I have been responding to Golden Horn Elementary School Council and all school councils in the incredibly important job that they do in our schools. I have also been working with the school council in attendance at meetings, not only by me, but by others, including recently the deputy minister. I was at Golden Horn School two days ago and worked with the administration — spoke with them and spoke with the teachers. We are continuing to work on this issue.

The answer sought is: Two portables — will they go to Golden Horn? We are taking a much broader view of this particular issue, working with my colleagues here in Cabinet and dealing with the school administration and the school community to come up with the best possible solution for them.

Mr. Kent: So the short answer is: No commitment to two portables for next year.

The minister's lack of action or any sense of urgency on this file is a concern to all the families who currently have their children wait-listed. The minister has had letters sitting on her desk since December 2017 asking her to take action, because the wait-list is growing — no action from the minister. These letters detail that children are being taught in storage closets and boiler rooms due to lack of space — again, no action from the minister.

The school council has asked that tenders for these portables be issued prior to December 31 so that the contractors have time to respond and families can make other arrangements if something goes wrong, which is a real possibility, given this government's track record so far.

We asked this question to the minister as well last week and again we received no answer, so I will ask again: Will the minister commit to tendering this project prior to December 31 as requested by the school council?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I think that it is interesting that I am criticized for giving the same answers, when I am just getting the same questions. I think that is fair; I should give the same answers to the same questions.

I was asked this last week. What I said was that I didn't think it was appropriate to make that commitment here because recently the school council has written to me for the purpose of collaborating on resolving these problems together. I think that I should go there and I should speak to them. I have done so earlier this week with respect to the administration of the school and with respect to the department. At no time whatsoever is it a topic that is not getting, not just my attention, but my deep concern.

Unfortunately the question is just inaccurate with respect to the way it is being presented here. I take issue with that. I am absolutely dealing with the issues at Golden Horn Elementary School, and I think that the school community and I should work together with the department to come up with solutions.

Mr. Kent: It is too bad that the minister didn't start working with the school council last December when they initially wrote to her.

The tender to have a portable classroom installed at Golden Horn for this current year closed in mid-May and had no bidders. For some reason, the minister doesn't seem to have asked for an analysis to see why there were no bids. In fact, until we brought it to the minister's attention in October, she was unaware that these structures could actually be built locally. We answered her question to us about local providers in a legislative return that showed two successful construction tenders for portables issued by the previous government. We have actually confirmed that one of those bidders identified could begin work immediately on portable classrooms for Golden Horn.

What steps did the minister take in May after the tender closed to address the situation? Has she reached out to any local companies about their capacity to build portable classrooms?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am puzzled by this line of questioning. I think the document that was tabled by the opposition earlier was about school portables that were built in 2011 and perhaps 2013 for, I think — if memory serves me — \$800,000 for one portable. The going price for portables is about between \$400,000 and \$450,000. I'm not aware of any local businesses because, in fact, they didn't bid on the tender that was issued in April of this year.

This is an issue that is extremely important as enrolment grows in elementary schools across Whitehorse. It is a topic that was not given any attention by the former government. It is a topic that is given attention by me, by the Department of Education, by the Department of Highways and Public Works, and we are attempting to solve this problem, perhaps even on a daily basis.

We're certainly working closely with the school community, which is what we should do to have their solutions brought forward and figure out how we can manage this problem going forward, not just for one school year.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation funding

Ms. McLeod: Can the Minister of Health and Social Services confirm if the Yukon Hospital Corporation currently has a financial request before the Department of Health and Social Services?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to maybe bring a little clarity to the question around the relationship with the Hospital Corporation. The Hospital Corporation was here last week, and the questions that were asked of the Hospital Corporation were around efficiencies. I think they made it quite clear at the time that they are working collaboratively with the department to address the concerns they have with respect to budget. We have increased their budget by 2.5 per cent for this year and we will continue to work with the Hospital Corporation to provide the supports they require, of course, always with efficiencies of services in mind and looking at priority areas, recognizing that the capital side of the proposal that they submitted will take some time, and

those are things that we have agreed to work on with them collaboratively.

Ms. McLeod: I did not get an answer. Is the minister telling us that, in her opinion, the Yukon Hospital Corporation has all the resources they need and they are not requesting any more from the government?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the question about my having an opinion — that is not relevant. What happens when we go through a process is we develop a strong, successful partnership with the Yukon Hospital Corporation, as they've noted. The strategic direction is really built on some principles that have been defined with respect to collaborative care, not acute care. Historically, they focused on acute care, and we're now looking at how we provide services to the individual who enters the hospital and leaves the hospital.

The member opposite may find humour in that; I don't. I take it very seriously, as does the Yukon Hospital Corporation. We ensure that the individuals who enter the hospital are provided the best possible care that they can get, and that means that we look at a home first model, we work with our partners and we ensure that the individuals — as they enter the hospital — leave the hospital and go back to their own homes.

As noted, the members opposite find humour. I don't. I think this is a serious matter for Yukoners. We will continue to work with our partners and ensure that every patient who enters the hospital is given the exceptional care that they require, and that's what the Hospital Corporation committed to, and that's what this government will commit to as well.

Ms. McLeod: No answer to that question.

As we've previously talked about in this House, the wait-list for cataract surgeries has grown to over three years in length. Hundreds of Yukoners are finding themselves unable to get this very important surgery that affects their quality of life. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has provided no plan to address this wait-list.

In spite of the looming cuts to budgets in the amount of two percent — including in Health and Social Services, as they haven't been excluded from that request — how much money does the Yukon Hospital Corporation require to reduce the wait-list of cataract surgeries?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't know if it is just a matter of the Yukon Party having been out of government for so long that they forget how the budgetary schedule works, but decisions will be made at Management Board — well, this government makes decisions at Management Board — when it comes to budgeting for Yukoners' future and the spending of taxpayers' money — not on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 340

Clerk: Motion No. 340, standing in the name of Mr. Adel.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Copperbelt North:

THAT this House supports the development of a climate change, energy and green economy strategy that sets out a coordinated approach to climate, energy and economic planning.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: I have a question regarding whether the motion is in order for debate due to a decision rendered by this House on March 21, 2018. I'm going to very briefly quote from the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, pages 582 and 583. The first quote is: "A decision once made cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgement of the House."

Another quote is: "This is to prevent the time of the House being used in the discussion of motions of the same nature with the possibility of contradictory decisions being arrived at in the course of the same session."

The third is: "The House may reopen discussion on an earlier decision (i.e., a resolution or an order of the House) only if its intention is to revoke it; this requires notice of a motion to rescind the resolution or discharge the order, as the case may be."

On March 21 of this year, the Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion, reading:

THAT this House supports the development of a strategy that addresses climate change, energy and green economy as an effective mechanism to support economic diversification and environmental stewardship; and

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support environmental stewardship by developing initiatives that increase the use of renewable energy sources in the Yukon.

In our view, that motion and Motion No. 340, presented by the Member for Copperbelt North, are essentially the same motion, and the House has already rendered a decision on it. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to review and compare these motions and rule whether Motion No. 340 is in order to be debated or whether that matter has already been dealt with by this Assembly.

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on the point of order.

I anticipate that some time will be required for me to confer with the Clerk, whatever the submissions are.

Hon. Mr. Silver: For one, I believe it is your role, Mr. Speaker, to determine which motions are in order and not in order. I also do believe that the members opposite have known about this motion for a while now, since calling it into play.

Again, this has to do with a green economy strategy that we're currently working on here in the Yukon, which wouldn't be any different from working on a new education strategy.

I'm not sure what exactly it is that the members opposite do not want to speak about, but we are willing to continue the debate today and we are looking forward to your ruling — again, knowing full well that the Yukon Party knew this was procedurally in order yesterday and supposedly this morning as well.

Speaker: The Minister of Community Services, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just want to talk about one word within the motion, which — at least, as I developed a plan to try to speak to it today — is something new, and that is the “coordinated” approach. It's not that these things are disparate but that we're working on them in a coordinated fashion.

Speaker: So we have, perhaps, three options at this time: we can stand down; we can adjourn for five minutes so I can confer with Mr. Clerk; or, if we had unanimous consent, we could move on to the other motions and I could reach a decision with respect to this motion later in the day. I'm obviously not prepared to provide an opinion to the House right away because I do not have the motion that the Member for Lake Laberge has mentioned before me, so I'm not in a position to — as one would say — compare and contrast.

Is it the House's wish to stand down or adjourn for five minutes?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: The House stands adjourned for five minutes or perhaps a little longer.

Recess

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: The Chair has had an opportunity to confer with Mr. Clerk and is in the position to provide a ruling or an opinion with respect to the matter that has arisen with respect to the point of order this afternoon.

The Member for Lake Laberge raises a valid concern, though the Chair takes no position as to whether it applies in this case. The member is fully within his right to raise a concern about the orderliness of a bill or motion on the Order Paper. However, at this point, members have known about the motion identified for debate today for approximately 24 hours. If a member has a concern about the orderliness of a motion, the onus is on the member to bring their concern to the attention of the Chair or the Clerk as soon as is possible. This would assist the Chair in making a determination on the matter.

At this point, the Chair has put the motion to the House and it is now up to the House to decide what it wishes to do with it: adopt it, negative it or adjourn debate on the motion at some point.

That being said, as stated, the concern raised by the Member for Lake Laberge that the House is revisiting a decision already taken is, at least potentially, a valid one. The Chair will take the matter under advisement and may, if necessary, confer with House Leaders or other members in order to reach a more definitive statement on the matter.

We will now proceed with debate on Motion No. 340.

Mr. Adel: We are on the verge of beginning public engagement on climate change, energy and green economy, so today is an opportunity to talk about a plan to address these issues.

“Climate change, energy and the green economy” is a lengthy title, but it represents the large scope of what is facing us as we go forward. Climate change is affecting our lives locally and globally.

On Monday night of this week, the national CBC news ran a 10-minute report on how climate change is affecting Kluane country, the Slims River and water supply. It is a program that I would urge all Yukoners to watch. Chief Bob Dickson of the Kluane First Nation made it quite clear how the reduced water levels in Kluane Lake are affecting traditional food security for his people, how blowing sand is affecting highway travel and the safety of his people and how losing a metre of ice from glaciers a year will change the environment.

We are seeing the dramatic effects of climate change affecting our economy. Locally, buildings are shifting due to melting permafrost and highways need more repairs to deal with the shifting ground beneath them. I am seeing changes personally in the water levels at Tagish Lake and how they are affecting fishing and recreational opportunities. The introduction of deer along the highways that have moved in from down south are another obvious indicator of our changing climate.

Globally, Mr. Speaker, we just have to look south and to the eastern and western seaboard of the United States and how they have been pummeled with extreme weather that has resulted in billions of dollars of damage. This will affect our insurance rates. As a storm blows through the Gulf of Mexico and refineries and drilling platforms are damaged or shut down, it affects the price of our fuel.

Mr. Speaker, the picture I am trying to paint is that climate change impacts our lives in so many ways, so we need to develop an integrated strategy on our climate, on our energy use and on our economies. The previous government didn't see it that way. They focused on the energy and economy side of the equation only. The environment was an afterthought. The Auditor General of Canada weighed in on the previous government's climate change strategy, and it wasn't all that pretty. The Auditor General's report in 2017 said the following — and I quote: “Overall, we found that the Government of Yukon created a strategy, an action plan, and

two progress reports to respond to climate change. In developing these items, the government took good first steps toward providing leadership and direction for responding to climate change. However, the commitments in the government's action plan and progress reports were weak and not prioritized. In addition, deficiencies in the Climate Change Secretariat's reporting made it difficult to assess progress on the government's climate change actions."

"Weak and not prioritized" — this is how the Auditor General of Canada described the previous government's climate change plan.

It went on to say — and I quote: "These findings matter because the government's development of a strategy and action plan are key to establishing priorities, roles and responsibilities, and actions for its response to climate change. Furthermore, by reporting clearly and consistently on the progress it makes in meeting its climate change commitments, the government helps keep the public informed and strengthens its accountability."

Mr. Speaker, on the heels of that report being reported, our Minister of Environment released the following statement — and I quote: "The office of the Auditor General of Canada released its Report on Climate Change in Yukon today. The report audited the actions, commitments and initiatives undertaken by the Government of Yukon between July 2006 and July 2017.

"The report presented four overarching recommendations, outlining that there are improvements to be made in Yukon's approach to climate change. The government supports the recommendations, and work is underway to address them.

"Climate change is a priority for this government. Our efforts include the development of a new Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and green economy. As part of that, we are in the early stages of establishing partnerships with First Nations and municipalities so the strategy reflects the needs, concerns and ideas of all Yukoners.

"It is envisioned that, in collaboration with our partners, the commitments and targets in the new Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and green economy will be supported by clear milestones, completion dates and associated costs. We expect to seek public feedback into this strategy in 2018 so that it can be released in 2019 — however final dates will be decided with our partners."

We will undertake a climate risk assessment. "This information will support departments as they develop... risk reduction plans, including implementation and monitoring plans.

"Climate change affects all of us. It impacts our traditional ways of life, our wildlife and our environment. We are working to set the foundation for effective, targeted climate action as it is vital for Yukoners today and for future generations" to come.

As the minister said, and as I referenced earlier, we are close to being ready to engage with the public on a strategy. Developing this strategy is listed in the spring 2018 Yukon performance plan. It also presents an opportunity to respond to the Auditor General of Canada's recent report on climate

action in the Yukon, to draw in relevant elements of the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change* and to respond to platform commitments to replace the existing 2009 climate change and energy strategies and to set transparent emission targets.

The departments of Environment, Economic Development and Energy, Mines and Resources are collaborating on strategy development, which is being coordinated by the Climate Change Secretariat at the Department of Environment. An integrated and collaborative approach is being used to develop the climate change, energy and green economy strategy. The approach acknowledges that there are significant impacts from climate change in the Yukon. Climate, energy and economic planning needs to be coordinated, and many groups have a role to play in responding to climate change in the Yukon.

Yukon and transboundary First Nations, Inuvialuit and Yukon municipalities have been invited to partner with the Yukon government in the development of that strategy. This includes providing input and feedback on all aspects of a strategy and developing and including the initial planning, community engagement, draft strategy content and final strategy content. Although the Yukon government will approve the final strategy, indigenous and municipal partners will be encouraged and invited to endorse a final strategy to include their own goals and commitments.

In-person meetings were held with participating governments and organizations on February 9 and April 30, 2018, to discuss integrated strategy, public engagement and how we will work together. The Yukon government has continued to engage through telephone conversations and e-mail as well. Indigenous and municipal partners have contributed to developing a public engagement strategy, discussion document and survey and will be involved in organizing public engagement events in their communities and gathering input from their citizens.

There will be seven areas of interest for a new strategy based on issues and priorities identified by Yukon and transboundary First Nations, Inuvialuit and Yukon municipalities. The areas of interest will help to focus conversations and ideas during public engagement. An online survey will be available during the public engagement period to complement the community visits. The survey questions are being developed with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics with input from indigenous and municipal partners.

The Yukon government held meetings with business and industry stakeholders in advance of a public engagement period to ensure that they are aware of an integrated strategy and to discuss how best to incorporate their input. These stakeholders include: the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce, Low Carbon Yukon Stakeholder Committee, Yukon Research Centre, Yukon Chamber of Mines, Yukon Energy Corporation and ATCO Electric Yukon.

The Yukon government will continue to work collaboratively with Yukon and transboundary First Nations, Inuvialuit and Yukon municipalities to develop a draft

strategy following this public engagement that reflects Yukon-wide priorities. After a period of public review on the draft strategy, our recommended strategy will be presented to the Yukon government for final review and approval.

Discussions on carbon pricing and the rebates for Yukoners will continue to take place in parallel to the development of the integrated strategy. While carbon pricing is an important element of climate change policy, the integrated strategy is about all of the other important actions to make communities more resilient, to reduce our emissions and to plan for Yukon's energy needs and economic future.

A strategy has implications for other areas of government as well, including Community Services and Highways and Public Works, because climate change affects community resilience, infrastructure, food security and many other aspects of life in the Yukon. The intent of a strategy is to enhance Yukon's capacity to thrive in and respond to a rapidly changing environment. It will combine planning for the effects of climate change with the planning for energy security, green economic development and greenhouse gas emission reductions.

High-level goals will communicate the desired results from developing and implementing the climate change energy and green economy strategy. Yukon is prepared to respond and adapt to the changes that are already affecting us and the projected changes that will continue to affect us. Yukon communities will need to have access to energy that is affordable and reliable while having low emissions of greenhouse gases and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Yukon residents and businesses are able to participate in the opportunities associated with meeting these objectives and can thrive in a low-carbon future. Yukon contributes to global efforts to address climate change by achieving a meaningful reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Issues will identify and acknowledge challenges faced by Yukoners that a strategy will help to address. Relevant issues may include a high cost of living in Yukon communities and the impacts of climate change on Yukon communities.

A strategy will be organized to areas of interest with desired outcomes clearly articulated for each of the interests and specific actions identified to help achieve those desired outcomes. Actions that the Yukon government, indigenous, municipal governments and organizations will undertake will be listed in annexes to the strategy.

Possible areas of interest, desired outcomes and specific actions are as follows: electricity — desired outcomes include reduced community reliance on diesel, and examples of actions are support the development of community renewable energy initiatives and deliver programming that reduces energy use in communities; heating — desired outcomes include lessening energy consumption, increasing the availability of renewable energy solutions, and some of the actions are to deliver programming to facilitate retrofit of commercial and residential buildings and support the development of local biomass industry — these are just a few.

A plan for evaluating the success will be developed alongside a strategy. The goals and outcomes developed for

the strategy will be tied to measures of success with a plan for collecting the required data to evaluate whether we are making progress. Measures will be linked to goals and desired outcomes of a strategy and could include: greenhouse gas emissions, employment resulting from initiatives under the strategy, residential energy intensity per square metre, and proportion of heat energy generation from renewable sources.

Yukon intends to be part of a global shift to address climate change by building resilient communities and low-carbon economies. The Yukon government is working with Yukon and transboundary First Nations and Yukon municipalities to develop a territory-wide strategy to address climate change, energy and a clean economy. A 10-year strategy will replace the 2009 climate change action plan and the 2009 energy strategy for the Yukon.

While climate change action plans and energy strategies for Yukon help the territory make headway in dealing with energy and climate change issues, a lot has changed since these documents were first released. We are ready for an update, Mr. Speaker — an innovative approach to climate change, energy and green economy and a new strategy that will enhance Yukon's capacity to thrive well into the future.

The Government of Yukon will work collaboratively with Yukon and transboundary First Nations and Yukon municipalities to prepare a recommended strategy to be reviewed and approved by the Yukon government. A final strategy will be released late in 2019 that will include priorities and actions that will align with Yukon's climate change, energy and economic needs.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, it is all connected — climate change, energy and economy are all interconnected — our economy relies on energy; the kinds of energy we use affect climate change; and the impacts of climate change affect our energy supply and our economy. Economic decisions influence how much and what kind of energy we use, how resilient we are to the impacts of climate change and, by addressing all three — energy, climate change and clean economy — Yukon can effectively respond to the rapid changes happening in our territory.

The Yukon is experiencing significant changes in its climate. Over the past 50 years, temperatures have warmed by two degrees Celsius and rain and snowfall have increased by six percent. Some of the resulting impacts are: permafrost is thawing, damaging our buildings and roads; new plant and animal species are moving north, impacting our ecosystems and wildlife; glaciers are melting, changing river flow patterns; and higher risks of flooding and more frequent and severe forest fires.

To face these ongoing changes, Yukon can adapt to the impacts we are already experiencing and plan responses to the changes that are coming. Taking action on climate change and energy will help build a diverse green economy that creates economic growth with as little environmental impact as possible. Yukon businesses will see new opportunities in areas like renewable energy and energy efficiency. The knowledge economy will grow as we develop innovative solutions to local and global challenges.

All Yukon businesses will benefit from initiatives to use energy and other resources more effectively. This is an ambitious project and we are happy to see it moving forward. I hope all members of the House will be supporting this motion before us.

Mr. Kent: I am going to be very brief in my remarks here today. It is always interesting when we come around to government private members' day because it gives the private members on the Liberal side an opportunity to join in the blame game that the Premier and his ministers participate in on a daily basis here in the Legislature, blaming the previous government for almost everything. I take issue with some of the remarks made by the Member for Copperbelt North, but I am not going to focus on that here today. It is just disappointing that we are two years into this government's mandate, and I swear that when they wake up in the morning, if they stub their toe they find a way to blame the Yukon Party for that. Again, it is disappointing, Mr. Speaker.

As my colleague from Lake Laberge noted earlier today, the motion up for debate today is, in our view, essentially the same as Motion No. 253, tabled by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and passed by this House on March 21, 2018. As you know, the House has already debated and rendered a decision on essentially what we feel is the same motion. As the members of this House are aware, we passed Motion No. 253 unanimously on March 21, 2018. The final motion, after amendments, reads:

THAT this House supports the development of a strategy that addresses climate change, energy and green economy as an effective mechanism to support economic diversification and environmental stewardship; and

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support environmental stewardship by developing initiatives that increase the use of renewable energy sources in the Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the motion that we are debating today — it reads almost exactly the same and fulfills the exact same purpose as Motion No. 253. We already know where each party stands on this topic. We supported the previous motion; therefore, we will be supporting this motion. What we do not support is using time debating motions that the House has already made a decision on. The government could have written a new motion for the Member for Copperbelt North on a topic that we haven't already discussed.

We hear a lot from the Premier and the ministers complaining about having to answer questions in Committee of the Whole or Question Period or the amount of time spent in general debate on the supplementary budget because they see them as a waste of time. Then they go around and bring forward a motion that we have already spent time debating and, in fact, already voted on. Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was sincere in his word, back it up with action. Don't bring forward a motion that was already debated and passed in this House. The government can agree to just unanimously pass this motion right now so that we can move on to new

business, but I don't anticipate that will be happening as I am sure there is a lineup of speakers across the way who want to say essentially the same thing they said in the spring.

That said, Mr. Speaker, again, we will be supporting this motion, but we do feel there are better ways to use this time here this afternoon.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am rising today as the Minister of Environment to speak on the motion brought forward by my colleague, the Member for Copperbelt North, which urges this House to support the development of a climate change, energy and green economy strategy that sets out a coordinated approach to climate, energy and economic planning.

The Yukon landscape is changing. Elders of our traditional territory have lived through winter temperatures that are changing and that our children and their children may never see.

Invasive species like the pine beetle are making their way north and destroying Yukon's coniferous forest. Wildlife is claiming habitat in places they haven't seen before. We are seeing declines, and the integration of local traditional knowledge and practices into what we do with science as we design models going forward is essential. Water systems are taking new paths as glaciers retreat. As permafrost melts on our highways, we're seeing cracking. The foundations of our buildings are shifting. There are things we certainly need to adapt to. Like the landscape we live in, Yukoners are also changing; however, determining our response to the impact of climate change requires us to understand the changes around us.

That is why we are monitoring and studying these changes by incorporating scientific, local and traditional knowledge. With this essential information, this government — and all Yukoners — can make thoughtful, evidence-based decisions about how to power our homes and businesses and how to support green economic growth.

It also requires governments of all levels to be leaders in shaping policy and adapting our responses to the emerging climate changes that we face. This is why our government is an active member in climate change action for our region, our nation and our global world.

We participate in the Arctic Council, an international forum that promotes cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states and Arctic indigenous communities on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection.

We support Canada's commitment to the United Nations international climate change agreement. Nationally, Yukon's perspective was a part of shaping the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*. Here at home, we have already started supporting Yukoners in reducing energy consumption and saving money. We worked with the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Village of Teslin to install a state-of-the-art biomass wood-chip boiler that produces significantly less emissions than traditional fossil fuels. We have cooperated and worked with the Kluane Community Development Corporation, and we are about to

break ground on a 300-kilowatt wind project located between Destruction Bay and Burwash on the traditional territory of the Kluane First Nation. In Old Crow, we have partnered with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government and Yukon Development Corporation to install a 942-kilowatt solar array that will save the community up to \$189,000 litres of diesel fuel a year.

We're also leading a new integrated strategy that sets a coordinated approach to climate change, energy and economic planning. The new strategy represents an opportunity to address the Auditor General of Canada's recommendations from the 2017 report on climate change action in Yukon — something that the previous government neglected to do. It will help Yukon address Yukon-relevant aspects of the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*. We have already started the initial work through meetings and workshops with our First Nations and municipal partners, and will continue to do so as the strategy progresses.

It is also essential that we have brought public engagement for the development of this strategy. We will be inviting businesses, community leaders and individual citizens to submit comments online and to attend face-to-face community meetings. Working together will help ensure that the strategy works for Yukoners and reflects important issues across the territory. Integrating climate change energy solutions and green economy action into one strategy will help us stay coordinated and focused.

It will guide renewed actions on: developing adaptations for our highways, buildings and community infrastructure that is affected by thawing permafrost; increasing our understanding about food security in regard to climate change; reducing carbon usage; and expanding renewable energy and ensuring economic growth that accounts for future generations and ecosystems.

These efforts will help us to build resilient and sustainable communities while supporting environmentally responsible economic growth in the territory. This, in turn, will allow our future generations to be able to live and enjoy the Yukon as we have.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to begin just by addressing some of the concerns. First of all, I'm happy to get up. A couple of weeks ago — maybe three weeks ago now — the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — I'll refer to them as the IPCC — released a report talking about the imperative of addressing the issue of climate change in order to try to keep the world to or below one and one-half degrees of warming. By the way, Mr. Speaker, the Yukon has already warmed more than that.

There is kind of an imperative. I never see it as a waste of time to talk about the issue of climate change and how we should best address that here in the territory. I appreciate Question Period. I certainly appreciate the work that the Yukon Party did on this issue over the years. I just really think it needs to go a lot further. So rather than criticizing them for me stubbing my toe, I thank them for the work they have done.

I would also say, Mr. Speaker, that there was a time when I was invited — I have been working on the issue of climate change for most of my adult life. I remember being invited to speak to a United Nations youth summit on climate change to talk about the issue. This is now 15 years or so ago, maybe 14 years ago. At that conference, I gave a presentation on the issues of climate change, especially with respect to the north and what we were facing here — that it was tangible and real. One of the youth stood up at the end of it — they were in a discussion session afterward — and said, “Oh my God, we have been talking about this for an hour; we have to get going on this issue and get some stuff done.”

This is a challenging issue for us here in the Yukon; it's a challenging issue for Canada; it's a challenging issue for the world. I don't think that this is a waste of time in any way.

I will talk about the things that are new — or that I appreciate as new — in this motion and that have been happening over the past year. While I see similarities in that all of us in this Legislature acknowledge that climate change is happening, that it is dominantly caused by the actions of people and that we need to do something about it, I think there are stark differences about how we would choose to address it.

I think it is incredibly important to begin with what I thought was important about this motion: to ensure that the work we do is coordinated. In the past, in 2009, the first climate change plan came forward as well as the energy strategy. Over the years, we have seen a couple of iterations on the climate change action plan. I think there was an update in 2012 and 2015. At that point, I was invited to offer some critique of those things. My most significant critique of it was that there's no real way to tell, through that strategy, that you're actually able to reduce emissions. In fact, my observation was that the claim that there had been some emissions reduction seemed to be solely due to the fact that the economy had been in decline.

You don't want a strategy for how you're going to reduce your emissions that is based on a declining economy. My goodness, no one here in this territory wants a declining economy, so we need to have a way to coordinate between the economy and the environment, in particular around climate change.

As I said earlier, this month the IPCC — the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — came out with their report. The purpose of this group is to provide evidence for decision-makers and policy-makers. It's to pull together the best science that there is around the world to say here's the situation that you face and this is what you need to do. They don't say how to do it, because they don't want to be prescriptive to our legislatures around the world. What they want to say is these are the sorts of things, the tools, you have at your disposal if you want to achieve a reduction in emissions in order to prevent going beyond one and one-half degrees.

It does detail the risks that exist. This is not an insignificant problem. In fact, it is a very significant problem to shift your energy economy from fossil fuels to a low-carbon, and eventually a no-carbon, economy — that's no

easy feat, Mr. Speaker. In order to do it, we really do need to be very coordinated, but we also need to understand what the motivation is — why do it? — and the risks that they outline are significant for the whole planet. It will lead the world to an unsafe place at one and one-half degrees. The risks are dramatic to our communities and our ecosystems. I won't detail them here except to say that there is an imperative to act.

Those risks are not an abstract notion for the north. Here in the Yukon, we have just heard from the Minister of Environment outlining some of those risks. We know about the risk of flooding, about the thawing of permafrost and what it does to our infrastructure. We know from traditional knowledge the issues around food security and, especially, changes to our wildlife and its health. By far, my impression is that the biggest risk is wildfire. Each of our communities suffers from that risk. We really need to act to diminish that risk while, at the same time, make sure we're dealing with the root cause of the problem, which is reducing our emissions.

Sometimes I have heard people say, "The Yukon is a small jurisdiction. We don't have that many emissions here." But on a per capita basis, our emissions are comparable to most Canadians, which, by the way, are much higher than most countries on a per capita basis around the world. We are not the highest, but we are right up there. As a result, I believe that we — all of us — have a responsibility, and, in particular, I think one of the most significant responsibilities lies with us as a government. If we don't take action, those risks will become realities. The situation is the biggest experiment in the tragedy of the commons that I have known of — of humankind — to date. I wish it weren't so; I just believe it to be so.

Given that it is our responsibility to act, what is the opportunity that we face? How can we build on the work that began with the members opposite? I think that it is critical that we coordinate around how our economy works, how our energy systems work and how we integrate within our environment. If we don't do that, what happens is that we just start working at cross purposes. So we get a great initiative over here but it is not coordinated in a — I was going to say "in a one-government approach", but what I want to say is that we need to work together. We need to be smart with our investments in our economy so that they are working for our environment, not against it. If we don't do it, we can't sustain it.

One of the things that I noted for years, with the previous iterations of the climate change strategy, is that we didn't get at where emissions really were happening. Roughly two-thirds of our emissions are with transportation and roughly one-third with heat, and the solutions didn't line up. All the solutions were around the energy side, not around transportation or the heat side, and that is another reason that we need to coordinate this. We need to get the economy working with the issue of heading toward a low-carbon future.

We know that some of our best solutions, or the solutions that we know of as Yukoners, lie around heat, because we know how to build buildings that don't rely as much on heat.

Insulation is key. We have better building codes and we have incentives to lead us toward SuperGreen buildings, and that is great. We know we have to get at some of our older building stock. I am going to talk about this very building, our Legislature, in a moment, just to use it as a case in point. We have good ideas there. I know we have good solutions around agriculture, as agriculture is one of those ones that hits all the buttons. It deals with adaptation. It deals with food security. It deals with reducing our reliance on transportation. It is a great opportunity. It builds the economy.

One of the ones that I focus on within my work as the Minister of Community Services is how we invest in our infrastructure. There are some standard ways that it can happen — for example, retrofits. Again, I will talk about it in a moment, but it is much more than that. It is looking at the life cycle of the infrastructure and trying to understand how it will exist over its life cycle so we can value things better than just: What is the cost to build it? We need to understand the cost to maintain it over time. We need to understand how it will exist and how that infrastructure will end up in our landfills eventually if we don't think about it properly. If we don't build it according to a changing climate, we might build somewhere where the permafrost is thawing and then we see the challenges that we're facing. I don't think people anticipated it, but we can't ignore it anymore.

Finally, one of the things I want to say about the importance of coordination and the opportunity that we have is to make sure that we're measuring these things. I'm a strong believer in evidence and I want to see the numbers. I guess I'm a stereotypical engineer. I want to understand whether this is worth it or not.

Let me talk for a second about retrofits and why I believe retrofits are such a strong choice but why they are not the best choice out there, and I will get to it. Retrofits are good. You extend the life cycle of your buildings. They don't end up in your landfills as quickly. You get a savings because you reduce your energy needs, but the way you want to try to measure them is by actually doing that number crunching. I was surprised when I read the last update of the climate change action plan not to see that analysis done. I have been requesting it now as we work on projects — to see.

For example, I looked at this very building. I understand that the investment was \$700,000 or \$720,000. That was great because it gave us a savings of \$50,000 a year. The fuel bills went down \$50,000 a year. You only need to be running for 14 years and you get a payback. I think this building has a much longer life. If you give it a 25-year life, you can start to look at what the cost is at reducing those greenhouse gases. You just run the math and it's about \$200 a tonne to reduce the greenhouse gases. That's the type of analysis that I think we should be doing on all of our projects. We're going to be doing some mitigation efforts. What is it going to cost us to reduce those greenhouse gases? Let's compare that, one to the other. There can be all sorts of reasons why you get to the project anyway. Again, thank you to the members opposite for retrofitting this building. I think it was a great choice. I think we have to do much more of it.

Let me compare it now to a price on carbon. It's not our policy but one that I certainly believe in. We heard from the federal government. They said that a price on carbon by 2022 would be reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the territory, year over year — 32,000 tonnes — and that the cost to our GDP would be around \$7 million. However, what they didn't put in there — because it wasn't part of the analysis that they ran — was that the rebate would be all coming back to the Yukon — to Yukon individuals, businesses, First Nation governments and municipal governments. When that money comes back to those places, it comes back into the economy.

If you ran it straight, the way they run the number, then the price is \$200 a tonne, just like it was for this retrofit. In other words, a carbon tax is as efficient as is the retrofitting of this building. But when you start to consider that you bring that money back into the territory and you feed it back into your GDP — in fact, if you bring 100 percent in, you can reduce that GDP loss down to zero — that makes the range on the cost for a price on carbon anywhere from zero up to the \$200 a tonne. That makes it better than this retrofit and better than most retrofits.

What I think we should be doing, rather than the politicizing of this stuff, is — what is the evidence around what the best solutions are? The evidence says to me, as an engineer and a climate scientist, that carbon pricing is a smart choice.

There is another cost that I think is important to try to look at, and that is the cost of not addressing the situation. If you don't address the situation, where do you go? For example, if you leave yourself in harm's way, then those costs — like the Ross River School continuing to be on thawing permafrost — just keep going up.

The biggest cost, as I have said, in terms of risk, is wildfire. We had another year where we had more wildfires than we have had in the past, but it was not a year like British Columbia had — knock on wood, Mr. Speaker.

Those are the types of costs that we really must avoid, but there are other economic costs that I want to try to understand. For example, if we are really trying to shift our energy economy over the next dozen years, what about those sectors of the economy that don't have some incentive to move over to a low-carbon economy? They are going to get stranded with a dependency on fossil fuels. That is not healthy.

I was really glad when I saw, for example, that our municipalities would be paying a price on carbon and rebated a price on carbon because what that will do is it will give the price incentive for them to try to reduce their emissions. That will leave them better situated for the future to deal with the transition to a low-carbon economy. There are lots of ideas out there. A price on carbon is a market-wide solution. It is a non-regulatory solution. It is so strange to me to hear from the provinces across this country that are on the right side of the political spectrum say: "We are going to do it through regulations." Well, Mr. Speaker, regulations are like adding red tape to each of these sectors. It is not an efficient way to get at it.

Here is the difference — and what I would love to have in debate in this Legislature today, although the Official Opposition is declining to share their voice about this important issue — all right — that is fine — but from my perspective, there is a difference in how we approach these things.

Let me wrap up, Mr. Speaker. Just a week or several days before the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change came out with its report on the need to step up further on this issue, the Nobel Prize was awarded on economics, and it was awarded to Dr. William Nordhaus. That award went to him because of his work on transitioning an economy to a low-carbon economy, and he stated that the most efficient and effective remedy for the problems caused by greenhouse gas emissions is through carbon taxes. This makes carbon pricing not only evidence-based but now Nobel-Prize-winning. That is why I think it is a strong idea and why I am up. I appreciate the Premier when he talks about making sure that we are on the right side of history.

I will finish by talking about one other polluter-pay system. Carbon pricing is effectively a polluter-pay system. It just puts a price into the economy on this negative, this bad. It allows us to send a price signal throughout the economy, and that is through designated materials regulations.

We put a price up front on e-waste. That came in on October 1. It happens that I was doing a tour of the Southern Lakes dumps. I started that tour before that new policy had come into place and I finished it up after that policy had come into place, and I saw the difference it made. From the first landfill that I went to and the second one and the third one where I had gone before that policy came into place, I was picking up e-waste everywhere. It was spilling out everywhere. I was trying to help out at those landfills to try to consolidate it to keep it clean. Then I saw those landfills after that policy came into place, and it is transformational.

I think it is a strong tool to go for a polluter-pay system and a great example of how we can coordinate our economy and our environment at the same time.

Ms. White: I rise today to talk about Motion No. 340. It has already been mentioned that it's very similar to one that was debated on March 21 of this year. One of the things I highlighted in March of this year, which the Minister of Community Services just reiterated, was the importance of measurements. I don't disagree with the previous climate change action plan because it was really hard to measure, and that's what the Auditor General said. What I did highlight in the spring is that I was concerned, as we create a new strategy — let's say that the strategy is created in 2019. Then it takes time to implement that strategy and then it takes time to measure whether or not that strategy was successful.

My concern was: What happens between now and, let's say, 2020 or 2021? How do we measure the advancements of Yukon government, or the Yukon Territory as a whole, in our desire to combat climate change?

It's really interesting, when we look at this motion, that we talk about energy. We don't talk about green energy; we

just talk about energy. The Minister of Community Services also mentioned that — it's true — we use a lot of hydro in the territory, but things are changing. Today, for example, we are producing 37.68 megawatts of hydroelectricity, but we are using 8.21 megawatts of thermal generation. It is October 24 and it's not cold yet. We haven't reached the double digits in the minuses, and we are using thermal sources to create energy. That's a concern, because we used to be able to say — well, we didn't used to say it, just for clarification. The previous government used to always talk about how good we are at energy. I was always, like — well, hydro generation. We're pretty good at hydro generation. We used to say 99-percent renewable, but that's disingenuous. The Minister of Community Services again highlighted some of those concerns when we talk about transportation and home heating.

We have seen some phenomenal advances. When you look at the Teslin Tlingit Council and you look at the district biomass they're going to use with wood waste — phenomenal.

If you look at the Kluane First Nation in Burwash Landing — we're talking about the wind project, we can talk about how their government buildings have solar installations and we can talk about how they've experimented with district heating through biomass and through less high-tech systems than are being proposed in Teslin.

When we look at this motion, it talks about the development of a climate change, energy and green economy strategy, and I appreciate that. We highlighted the issues — and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has echoed that concern — when natural gas was in the independent power production policy and how that was removed, because if we're talking about greening our economy and greening our energy sector, we need to talk about doing that in a renewable fashion.

The one big concern I have with this motion, especially if we're going to take it out to public consultation — and we're going to talk about that — is why, when we talk about energy, we're not talking about green energy. Why aren't we talking about how we're going to move forward in greening that energy production? Just that alone in this motion, it makes me wonder, because, like I said, right now in Yukon, we're using thermal for energy — October 24. It's not cold yet.

We have lots of new construction that is turning over to baseboard heating. To be perfectly frank, baseboard heating — in terms of electricity consumption — isn't the most effective home heating. It is more effective because of the insulation values that we have, but it's not the most effective use of electricity.

In my desire that we have that gambit about our responsibility toward climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, I have an amendment to Motion No. 340.

Amendment proposed

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I move:

THAT Motion No. 340 be amended by adding the word “green” before “energy”.

Speaker: I have a question for the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, which I am sure she anticipates. The word “energy” appears twice in Motion No. 340. Is it her intention that “green” be added in front of both of the mentions of “energy”?

Ms. White: Just by looking across at my colleague, the suggestion is that we put it in front of the second “energy” and not the first. I do apologize for missing the fact that the word “energy” appears twice in the original motion.

Speaker: Based on what I understand the Member for Takhini-Kopper King's intentions were with respect to the proposed amendment, the orderly construction of the proposed amendment would be:

THAT Motion No. 340 be amended by inserting the word “green” between the words “climate” and “energy”.

Is there debate on the proposed amendment?

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the collaboration with the government members. My effort in inserting the word “green” is just with the intention that, when we talk about energy, we need to be looking at alternative sources. We need to stop looking at the energy sources of the past. We need to be done with fossil fuels — with coal and the like — and we need to be looking toward a renewable future. There are lots of examples around the territory, whether we are talking about biomass, gasification, hydro, solar or any of those options. My intent of adding the word “green” is just that we try to make sure that our focus is on the future and not on the past.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just speak briefly. I appreciate the amendment and the principle that it is trying to raise. It has a little bit to do with the forward-looking nature, and I completely support this notion of the forward-looking nature being toward green energy. The thing that I want to say, though, is that, as we do this work, I fully anticipate that the whole notion of trying to coordinate it is that we take a good look at what is here now as well. Even though there is existing energy use around the territory — we have talked about it here in this House — we need to grapple with it in order to understand the challenge that we are trying to get to.

I support the amendment as it stands, but that won't stop the need to ensure that we assess where we are today with respect to energy and the demands that we have.

Ms. Hanson: I just want to thank my colleague for making this amendment. To the minister's comments across the way, the reason why it is so very important that we keep the focus on developing a green energy future for this Yukon is because of the past — the recent past and the current activities.

We all know that there are many people — and we have not seen this government, despite its claims to a coordinated approach around the serious impacts of climate change, drop

their emphasis on fossil fuels. We have not seen them say that it is not what they're going to focus on in terms of development for the future. We do know that there are, under the aegis of various development corporations including the Yukon Development Corporation, presentations that have been made by territory-wide bodies over the last couple of years that I have attended where there are long-term plans for the development of fossil fuel sources in this territory. There are proponents in this territory who will argue strenuously to this government that there should be development of local fossil fuel resources in the immediate and the long term. We saw at the presentation at the Opportunities North conference yesterday several proponents from one major transnational that is looking at establishing LNG transport systems in the Yukon to complement other ones that already exist here.

Either the emphasis of this government in a coordinated way is going to be on green energy or it's going to be on talking about moving toward a green future, at the same time continuing the practice of other governments across this country, which is to continue to subsidize fossil fuels, which, in fact, would be quite contrary to the recommendations set out very clearly in the government's own Financial Advisory Panel that we have spoken to numerous times. When the minister talks about carbon pricing, they make it very clear that the current forms of subsidizing that go on for the fossil fuel industry in the territory make no economic sense, so it's not an economic argument. They're saying, Mr. Speaker, that if you want to make an argument for it then you're going to have to look at making a subsidy — a direct cash transfer — to those industries. That will run counter to what I'm hearing from the minister opposite and his colleagues with respect to developing a green future to address climate change and to address greenhouse gas emissions, as he mentioned, from the transport sector in particular.

We understand that the government has already done its work on this and, as we heard from the minister and from the mover of the motion, this motion has been brought forward to tell us about it — that's great — but we want to ensure that there is an emphasis on green energy going forward.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors outside of the time provided for introductions.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would just like to welcome Mr. Roger Epp who is here with us here today from the University of Alberta, attending the Opportunities North conference. He works with the northern partnership and plays an integral role in the Opportunities North conference.

Ms. Hanson: I also acknowledge Dr. Epp. Before the minister opposite got to it, I got carried away with the response to the motion. I just want to say that Dr. Epp was really well-respected and admired when he was at Augustana University Campus in Camrose.

My daughter Sarah Mowat attended that campus and spoke very highly of Dr. Epp. It is good to see him here, and I understand that he was at Opportunities North as well.

Applause

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I am eager to speak to it. I just want to thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. When we get back to our original motion, there are certainly some tips that have come to mind in the role that were highlighted by the member concerning the 2008 energy strategy. We had some good questions, I believe, last spring, if not before that, that certainly caught me as we talked about certain fuel sources — things that we need to look at as we revisit our energy future.

Once again, I want to say and commit to the fact that when we look at our new sources of energy — mid-term and long-term — and I will touch on timelines there — I appreciate the comments from the Third Party in the sense that we need to be focused on a green energy future. We are committed to that and we will highlight some programs.

I think it was a little unfair for the Leader of the Third Party to touch on the fact that maybe it is mostly talking points. We will identify — it was my talking points — that we haven't fulfilled our work and that it has mostly been talk and not walk, but we will go through a series of things. Actually, some of the key achievements, I think, were highlighted by the member's associate when we talked about biomass in Teslin and some of those other projects that are being highlighted. We have been staying behind those groups, making sure that there is appropriate funding, helping attend conferences and making sure they have the right expertise in play.

I will just say that we do understand that, when you come into this job, there are some other members of the House who want to have the cleanest energy sources possible, but there is a reality and you can't just turn a switch to go from where we are today. You can put a plan in place. You can put the proper regulation in place. You can have tools such as independent power production. You can continue to look at a variety of different ways to, over time, get there, but this year — I'm talking this year or next year — we are going to move on adding new infrastructure in place. We will have our IPP in place in the fall or at the end of this calendar year, and we are going to be able to make sure that in areas such as Kluane or Old Crow we continue to divert large amounts of diesel and move toward a greener economy.

This winter, we will ensure that we have backup and it is thermal — not being used — but if we get to a point in an N-1 scenario, meaning something happens to our largest piece of infrastructure, such as the Aishihik dam, we have an obligation to have a backup in place and be able to turn that on so that we can keep Yukoners safe and warm.

Also, I think that there was a great point made — where we are in our calendar year or in our seasons and understanding how we make sure that we go to a greener

portfolio as we move through and still have a strong economy. That's always a challenge to wrangle with.

When we talk to our community, the comment was made that this works, but we're going out to have very broad conversations with our many individuals in the sense of First Nation governments and municipal governments. We've talked to some individuals to date and there has been feedback. When we go out, we'll talk about climate change and energy. That doesn't disparage the fact that we still have a commitment. I know that the Third Party will keep us on task and if we stray from that, they will let Yukoners know. I think Yukoners will be the judge of how we work together. Our teams at Yukon Energy, Yukon Development Corporation and Energy, Mines and Resources — I have to say — have been working extremely well together.

There was a comment made that there has been a lack of coordination. I think there has been great coordination. Speak to Kluane First Nation, speak to Teslin or others and ask if there has been good coordination between Energy, Mines and Resources, Dr. Michael Ross, through to Yukon College and others. What we continue to hear is that they're working well together.

If there's something that I have not been made aware of and the Leader of the Third Party would like to highlight something that I should look into — that there has been a lack of those energy minds paddling in the same direction — please let me know and I will look into it and ensure that we are coordinated. What I have heard and continue to do is commend all of those individuals as they are committed to this. Although our conversations publicly may say "energy" broadly — so we're getting feedback — that doesn't mean that there is any lack of commitment here.

I appreciate the amendment from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Amendment to Motion No. 340 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 340 as amended:

THAT this House supports the development of a climate change, green energy and green economy strategy that sets out a coordinated approach to climate, energy and economic planning.

I would first like to start by highlighting the definition of green economy: It is an economic system that achieves growth and development while ensuring the sustainable management of natural assets. A green economy focuses on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, increases the energy and resource intensity of economic activities and maximizes resiliency to climate change.

One of the pillars from our Liberal government's campaign was a sustainable environment. Under this pillar, we

highlighted a number of commitments which fed into a green economy. We committed to updating the Yukon's climate change and action plan and energy strategy.

We committed to working with Yukon's mining industry to establish strong environmental stewardship. We also committed to diversifying our economy. To diversify Yukon's economy we will need more energy than we currently have.

Our government is committed to promoting and developing energy policies, initiatives and programs that source future needs from renewable technologies. Some of this work is underway.

Through consultation with businesses, the Yukon public and stakeholders, including First Nations, municipalities and organizations, we will take into consideration the issues at hand and the actions that are important in the development of this new strategy. We will build a plan that reflects the needs of Yukoners and build a path toward a sustainable, environmentally responsible and prosperous future for our territory.

Through the Yukon Development Corporation, our government launched the innovative renewable energy initiative. This fund is \$1.5 million annually and supports small-scale renewable energy projects. To date, we have supported — we just touched on some of the projects in Carcross, Kluane, Old Crow, Teslin, Whitehorse and Dawson City. The majority of these projects are in partnership with First Nations and communities.

As a result of this fund, we are reducing community reliance on diesel. The partnership with Vuntut Gwitchin in Old Crow will build a 940-kilowatt solar array and will reduce the consumption of diesel fuel by over 15 percent. This equates to about 189,000 litres of fuel being flown into Old Crow. Not only that, the timeline that the community has shared with us is that they would like to see this project up and running next summer. Also — and my colleague from Old Crow could correct me — this will be the first time since those installations, unless there has been a problem, where the actual diesel will be powered down and the community will be running on solar.

In addition, we're replacing current street light bulbs with high-efficiency LED bulbs, which may seem like a small undertaking, but this will actually save an additional 4,600 litres of diesel fuel having to be flown in and the cost of transportation. The resulting reduction in carbon footprint for Old Crow and the Yukon is significant when you further consider the fly-in fuel to the community.

Through the Yukon Development Corporation, our staff is planning community visits across the territory to engage with people on our innovative renewable energy initiative. There are many communities that have reached out to us and want to continue to do it, not just some of our larger communities, but also communities to our west like Klukshu or Aishihik where, at times of the year, this could be advantageous, and continuing up into areas outside of Beaver Creek and southeast Yukon — all really making sure that we can look at where we can have some real impact. During these

visits, it is our hope that more communities will work with our officials to identify opportunities that fit their needs.

The shift in location for the Yukon Development Corporation into northern innovation is also part of the work in building a green economy. There are many economic and employment growth opportunities for Yukon within the green economy. It is our hope that, by making this shift, the corporation will gain more public exposure and conversations will be had and natural relationships will be built between the Cold Climate Innovation centre and local innovators and businesses.

In support of Yukon's development of a cold climate change energy and green economy strategy, the Department of Economic Development is investigating the potential for local economic activities that supply green products and services that help Yukon lower carbon consumption and become more resource efficient.

We are looking to identify the economic contribution and potential of green sectors in Yukon's economy. Already, there is the Solvest team that continues to expand its workforce. One of the team moved back to the Yukon. It is very interesting when you think about it. One of the team individuals has a family history of being very successful in the mining sector and in the prospecting sector, but now this next generation family member is working with us on a number of projects, working with Yukoners on a number of projects and building a workforce. We are seeing that expansion and diversification of the economy really focused around this green economy.

Some of these other areas would include: green building materials and approaches; sustainable agriculture and forestry; waste management and recycling; sustainable tourism; sustainable resource extraction; green transportation; and the knowledge sector, including education and research. Through the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, we partner with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the Ross River Dena Council to drill deep monitoring wells in the Takhini Hot Springs and Ross River areas to measure ground temperatures and to determine the potential for geothermal resources. That is work that is ongoing. We will have to get that data back and see what those opportunities are.

If you look at the 2008 strategy, you will see that one of the commitments — I believe it was work that was done under the Member for Lake Laberge — talked about regulation and framework around geothermal. I think there is only one other jurisdiction so far in the country — I might be incorrect, but there are very few, if any, that have put that framework in place. Because you are dealing with water, of course, there are lots of sensitivities around it. We will wait and see what the data says, but it is kind of an outward-looking work that we will see. At this point, of course, IPP is where our team is really focused.

There has been a strong interest in biomass over the past two years. The Yukon government has helped the Teslin Tlingit Council to install 10 biomass boilers as a district heating system for 13 commercial buildings owned by the First Nation. There are now three full-time and 15 part-time

employees working to run this district heating system. Projects such as this have a large economic impact on small communities. It allows communities to be self-sustainable. The Yukon government has secured \$945,000 as well from the Indigenous Forestry Initiative through NRCan to support continued First Nation-led biomass projects. This year, we are supporting five biomass projects as well. To highlight a few: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is looking at the feasibility of developing a district heating system in the Tr'ondëk subdivision; Kwanlin Dün First Nation is looking into the viability of installing a biomass heating system in the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre; and Liard First Nation is working on a strategic plan for the development of a biomass economy in Watson Lake. We have had dialogue, and I think that this is dialogue that will have to continue with the municipal government and the new mayor in Watson Lake.

I need to get some input from the Member for Watson Lake. Last year — certainly this summer — must have been a scary time, and so what are some of the mitigation strategies that have to be looked at or want to be looked at? I know that Liard First Nation has reached out to us a bit about how aggressively we should look at dealing with preparing for another significant fire season that could occur. Biomass fits into that — if you start to do significant mitigation. What would you do with that fuel source — with that fibre?

The funding agreement that we have signed with NRCan enables the Yukon government to continue to offer capacity development services to First Nations in the form of four pillars or studies per year and operationalizes six small biomass systems.

Another step we are taking is to create a climate well suited to support a green economy in updating the independent power production policy, as I spoke about last week and earlier today in a ministerial statement. We have removed liquefied natural gas as a qualifying energy source to ensure that our only renewable sources will be eligible for generating electricity.

We are moving toward implementation and we anticipate this will be completed by the end of the calendar year. Taking ownership of energy generation and creating local jobs are priorities for some Yukon communities, and we are absolutely going to facilitate this.

This is just some of the work that we're undertaking. Further work will be guided by the input received during the engagement process for the development of the new 10-year strategy.

We believe that climate change, energy and the economy are all interconnected. Our economy relies on energy. The kinds of energy we use affect climate change and the impacts of climate change affect our energy supply and our economy, and economic decisions influence how much and what kinds of energy we use and how resilient we are to the impacts of climate change.

By addressing all three together, Yukon can effectively respond to rapid changes taking place in our territory. Taking action on climate change and energy will help to build a diverse and green economy, which we're already seeing play

out, and that creates economic growth with as little environmental impact as possible.

Yukon businesses will see new opportunities in areas like renewable energy and energy efficiency. The knowledge economy will grow as we innovate solutions to local and global challenges. All Yukon businesses will benefit from initiatives that use energy and other resources. I believe that this is something that all Members of the Legislative Assembly can stand behind.

Once again, I want to thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for bringing forward the amendment. I believe it is time. To be fair, I think the 2008 document that was signed off by the Member for Lake Laberge does touch upon a number of items, some that haven't been completed but, to be fair, the timeline on some of those areas was to 2020.

Sincerely, I hope this adds a little bit of comfort to the Leader of the Third Party when we talk about some of the initiatives. In this role, I am trying to ensure that I always remember that there are a lot of different perspectives.

The Leader of the Third Party said before — and it was the first piece of advice I got — to remember that, when you are sitting in a room, there are lots of individuals in a room — more who probably disagreed with part of your perspective than those who agreed with it.

There has been some great input from bright minds in the Yukon concerning storage. Earlier this afternoon, I was happy to sign off on some of our key analysts from Yukon Development Corporation going to a premier energy storage conference in San Francisco. We have some brilliant individuals in the Yukon who have a lot of different areas of experience. We are respecting that. They want to come to the table and be part of the conversation and the solutions, so that is underway. It is sort of a loose group of very bright individuals who have come together and they continue to work. We are funding some platforms for them to talk about storage because storage is such an important part of having a consistent renewable energy source.

I am excited for our team at Yukon Development Corporation to get out and have broad discussions. I think we have a lot of things that have played out and I think that we have to share those stories. I hope that, over the next year, the Assembly — and especially the Leader of the Third Party — doesn't get frustrated with me. I think that some of the questions have really led to the fact — requesting information. Are you actually going out and doing stuff? What we have to do better is — and we know that, and the Member for Whitehorse Centre has highlighted that — we feel we haven't been able to tell our story as well as we should. We are going to do that over the next year. We are going to talk about all the things that our teams have been working on and how the IPP plays a role in that. We are going to be discussing how we talk about our retrofit. We are going to be able to come to the Assembly and give updates about our interaction in our new ecosystem when we capitalize through the Arctic energy fund. I look forward to those, and I look forward to unanimous support on this amended motion.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

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

Mr. Adel: I'm encouraged today by the comments coming from across the floor, from all members of this House. I think it is good to see that type of cooperation — the amendments that have done nothing but strengthen this motion. I am also pleased that my colleague, the Minister of Community Services, our in-house expert on climate change and so on, added an awful lot to this as well, and to the other speakers, thank you.

I think it is important that we, as a government, act now while we are developing this coordinated approach. To the Member for Takhini-Kopper King and to her question about how long it is going to take, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources also indicated that this is going to be moving along quite quickly and that is important.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to close on a point. As a member of the Public Accounts Committee working with the Auditor General of Canada, we have to understand and make it clear on a point made by the Member for Copperbelt South. When the Auditor General does a performance audit, it not only highlights the weaknesses but the strengths. I would like to quote from the Auditor General. The Auditor General's report in 2017 said the following: "Overall, we found that the Government of Yukon created a strategy, an action plan, and two progress reports to respond to climate change. In developing these items, the government took good first steps toward providing leadership and direction for responding to climate change."

We hope to build on that good work. We hope to make it better. We're going to have measurables in there. We're going to show Yukoners that the government, moving forward, takes ideas where they come from regardless, and we improve on them, and that's what we're going to try to do.

One other thing that I would like to assure the Member for Copperbelt South of is that, when I do stub my toe, his name or his party affiliation is the last thing that comes to my mind.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the main motion as amended?

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Member: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 17 yea, nil nay.

Motion No. 340, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 319 — adjourned debate

Clerk: Motion No. 319, standing in the name of Mr. Gallina; adjourned debate, Mr. Cathers.

Speaker: Member for Lake Laberge, you have 14 minutes and 57 seconds.

Mr. Cathers: In rising to speak to this motion again here this afternoon and resuming debate from when it was previously brought forward, I would note that our caucus is generally supportive of the concept of government exploring the opportunity for the private sector taking the lead in developing areas for residential building lots. It is an area where there are some challenges too, but there is also potential for the Yukon government to be able to facilitate the same type of moves over time as has happened in a number of the provinces where it is the private sector, rather than government, which bears most of the cost and the risk of doing development. The benefit to the private sector is that it not only grows the private sector, but it allows them to, while taking the risks, also take the benefits from development.

I want to acknowledge the good work that is done by the Yukon government staff in the area of land development. I know this is an area with many complexities and challenges in dealing with moving projects forward, including — as it relates to the City of Whitehorse — dealing with the municipal government around their standards and requirements. For the many hours of work and many details that go into making a successful project, I would just like to thank them for their efforts over the many decades when the Yukon government has been the lead in the development of most land projects.

One thing that I think a lot of people are not aware of is that there has been significant private sector development, or individual development, of land within the Yukon. I'm in the situation as an MLA of having the uncommon structure where most of my riding — most of the houses and the properties, both agricultural and residential, which were developed within the boundaries of the Lake Laberge area — was developed by individuals rather than by government. There has been government development within the Hidden Valley and MacPherson area, as well as the development of Pilot

Mountain, which was a government project. There are agricultural lots off the Hot Springs Road that were government developed, but the majority of properties and the majority of homes were actually developed either through spot land application or subdivision over a period of years. In total, the population of the Lake Laberge area is some 1,500 adults.

So it is a large community predominantly developed through individual initiative and opportunity, but there certainly is a potential role to expand that and allow Yukon developers to move forward multiple lot developments and, again, take on more opportunities and more risk in that area than has happened in the past. A key factor and key question from the Yukon Party Official Opposition's perspective is that we want to see this as an opportunity for Yukon companies, Yukon businesses — both small and large — and not setting it up in a way where it is simply outsourcing an opportunity to non-Yukon-based companies.

We have also seen the situation with a number of Yukoners still remembering and having a bad taste in their mouth from what happened with Yukon Zinc, where a corporation, although registered in Canada, was ultimately owned by the Government of China and, while they did so in a legal manner, they did leave unpaid bills with many Yukoners who were not paid for their services when that company went into bankruptcy protection. One of the last things that I would want to see is for a foreign government, particularly one with a substandard human rights record, to have the opportunity through this initiative to be the developer. Whether they left Yukoners on the hook for unpaid bills or did not, it is not the type of opportunity that I think would be beneficial in the Yukon. We want to see this targeted to encouraging and providing the opportunity for Yukon companies, both large and small, to invest in this area and to take on a greater role in the development of multiple lot projects and not see this as something that is overtaken by Outside companies or foreign-owned entities. With that in mind, I will move what I hope would be a friendly amendment to Motion No. 319.

Amendment proposed

Mr. Cathers: I move:

THAT Motion No. 319 be amended by adding the words "to Yukon developers" after the words "selling land".

Deputy Speaker (Mr. Hutton): The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Lake Laberge:

THAT Motion No. 319 be amended by adding the words "to Yukon developers" after the words "selling land".

The amended motion would then read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to investigate the option of selling land to Yukon developers to allow for the private development of residential building lots.

Mr. Cathers: In speaking to the amendment, I would just note and give as an example to members the point that I'm making about the importance of structuring this in a way

so that it doesn't simply become an opportunity for large Outside companies, or companies that are perhaps even owned and controlled by a foreign government, to develop Yukon land.

The situation that occurred — and I am going to briefly quote from a *Financial Post* article, which is available online, that was originally published on February 23, 2018. For members, the title of the article was: "The Chinese government now controls the biggest retirement home chain in B.C." In short, what the article refers to is that, due to some restructuring changes that a company by the name of Anbang Insurance — which is the largest owner of retirement homes in British Columbia, according to the *Financial Post* — is ultimately owned by the Chinese government and was taken over by it.

At the time, there were concerns expressed by a number of Members of Parliament regarding this structure, with one Member of Parliament, Mark Strahl, asking the question about whether seniors were going to be in a situation where, to quote him: "Are seniors about to find out that their landlord is actually the People's Republic of China?"

I note that this is not an identical area. I am simply flagging this as an area where we generally support the intent of this motion. The reason for moving this amendment is that we want to see the government structured in the right way so that this opportunity for the private sector is focused on providing opportunity for Yukon companies and Yukon citizens, not simply making opportunities available to others and certainly not entering a situation where Yukoners, in fact, provide the opportunity to Outside companies and are left holding the bag for bills that have not been paid to them and without compensation for their services, and, at the end of the day, although a company may have complied with the law, they use it in a way to avoid providing benefit to Yukon citizens in the process.

With that, I hope the government will accept this — what we intend to be a friendly amendment — and I note that my colleagues and I do support the general intent of this, just as long as it is done in the right manner: to provide opportunity to Yukoners.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will begin by saying thank you to the member opposite. If it is intended to be a friendly amendment, I really encourage that — any time in the past two weeks while this motion has been there before us — please, by all means, bring the friendly amendment over so we can have a conversation.

There are some concerns that we have with it. First of all, I think we had always imagined that we would use our existing procurement practices that I think have been well vetted. They work, for example, under the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*. When the member spoke about China — if you are not the Yukon, you are China — well, no, there are lots of Canadian companies that might be interested in applying, and we have laws that we need to abide by. I support Yukon companies to come forward. They are certainly not prohibited under the original wording of the act.

The amendment is not required to provide that opportunity for them.

The thing that I want to talk about is that this is an investigation, and we are looking to use this opportunity to assess whether this is a solid approach. I said before, when I rose to speak to this motion two weeks ago, that the notion we have is that we must keep going with the current system to ensure that an adequate supply of lots is provided for the territory because without it, we know that, as a jurisdiction of our size, it would put undue pressure on housing prices. Therefore, this is an investigation, not a wholesale switchover. I have to check my recollection, but when we spoke to the other amendment that was brought forward to this motion, I was not in support.

There was a reference that the Member for Lake Laberge made talking about a chain of homes. This is not about homes. This is about lots and lot development. We're looking for the private sector to enter and to be involved. We will use all of the tools that we have at our disposal under our existing procurement systems in order to, when we work with the private sector, explore this notion and to investigate it.

If there is an ability to use one of the exemptions under the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*, then I would be very excited to see that considered. However, my understanding from the Minister of Highways and Public Works is that there is already a process that has been developed under that agreement about how those exemptions should be assessed and determined. If this did turn out to be one of those opportunities, then I would look forward to that.

In conclusion, I don't support the amendment because we're concerned that it would contravene our existing trade agreements.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to touch upon a few items here and examples that were put forward to support the amendment by the Member for Lake Laberge. First of all, the concept of land development and private land development in the Yukon — correct. There have been examples of this previously done within the City of Whitehorse primarily, as the member touched upon, in the surrounding areas — country residential development.

This is something that, with my Economic Development hat and working with Energy, Mines and Resources and with Community Services — let's just say first that there are two drivers that we would have to look at. One is getting out of the business of doing business. We know that primarily the work is always completed on this land development by the Yukon private sector. We also know that we're in a position where we need to be putting out an appropriate number of lots and we need to do it in an efficient manner. I think that's the value — to ensure that Yukon companies have these opportunities.

In my interaction with the Yukon construction industry and businesses, there is interest to do this and that's where we want to see the work done.

We want to see companies. The hang-up becomes — and is primarily the reason why we have seen the Yukon government financially backstop and carry a large portion of

the financial burden from the beginning phase of a development until it actually goes to market. Within that period of time, you have a lot of money in the ground and also going into infrastructure before you can reap any of the revenue back. Then, of course, there's the actual margin in any profit.

The companies I have spoken to — whether they're engineering firms or they move dirt or they have gone into design work — when you talk to them, they know they're going to have to have a collaboration, which I think is great. The other thing we're going to have to do, if through investigation this looks like an opportunity, is find pieces of land that are not of large magnitude so that local companies can do this work. They can build their expertise in going right from raw land to street lights and are in a position — for many of them, it will be new. If the work is in Whitehorse, in Dawson City or in Watson Lake, they have to work with the municipality. The municipality inevitably controls what happens with the principles of design and zoning through the official community plan.

You want to be able to support people to do that. Some of the work that was done before was just a few lots. What we'll be doing is listening to the local business sector to understand what they feel the available capacity is and what financial threshold they think they could carry. That's really what we're looking at here.

The amendment — I'll go back to a few things. I believe the Yukon Zinc example — and I don't mean to be disrespectful. I don't know if it's applicable to this. We're not talking about a mining sector. If we were talking about having relationships concerning claims, the Member for Lake Laberge — and this idea of the Chinese investment in Yukon Zinc, I know there was a massive investment by the Chinese into Chance Oil and Gas, and I think the member was Energy, Mines and Resources minister probably worked very closely with previous oil and gas developers. I never heard that there were any issues from that investment into Nexen in play here, and I think there was a comfort at that point with negotiating and providing the oil and gas claim. It's new to hear that there's a concern.

I also agree with the Minister of Community Services. We're not talking about the acquisition of —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: For the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to be imagining conduct that, by the way, didn't occur on the part of another member — in this case, myself — with a company and suggesting negotiations were ongoing, et cetera, and then putting it on the record as fact would seem to be contrary to the Standing Orders to come up with a history that the member knows is a fictional and imaginary account. I would ask you to have him return to the main topic.

Deputy Speaker: Ms. McPhee, on the point of order.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't see this as a point of order. What the member was speaking of is his surmising of a situation. He is clearly allowed to comment on his view of the situation and, as a result, I don't see the point of order at all that is being raised by the Member for Lake Laberge.

Deputy Speaker's ruling

Deputy Speaker: I will rule that there is no point of order on this. It is a dispute among members.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I really was not trying to make any inappropriate comment. I was just identifying the fact that there was a company in the Yukon after Yukon Zinc that was financed largely through Chinese money through their affiliation with Nexen. There were rights that were provided through the Yukon government's Department of Energy, Mines and Resources that were very similar to mining rights. Of course, that investment has now been sold off, and it no longer exists. That is so similar, and I was just mentioning the fact that there was no concern then.

As for purchasing an asset, it is a conversation that comes up quite a bit in Canada. We have seen large acquisition potential, whether it is potash or telecommunications, where the Canadian government has felt that based on national security issues it is something that we should take into consideration. It is also something that happens from time to time in the United States. I don't know if it was in the *Financial Post* that I read it or in *The Globe and Mail*, but I do remember the conversation — or just the sensitivity — toward such a large asset being purchased.

Let me say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the idea is to ensure that there is opportunity for the complete project in the Yukon to be completed by Yukon companies. As the Minister of Community Services said, when you have an amendment like this on the fly, there is the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*, and there are situations where Yukon companies may step into place and say that we might have an engineering company or we might have a company with a long history in the Yukon, but it has an office in Kelowna or Calgary. We may have a First Nation government that has partnered with someone, so what does a "Yukon developer" really mean? Instead of getting into the stickiness — because we don't have true clarity other than who can partner or if somebody is allowed to access some of the financing with a partner in place — I will say that I do respect the principle of the amendment, which is to ensure that Yukon companies get the opportunity.

I would say that, as the member said, there are these scenarios where there is a bad history. I think the real stinging history is things like — I am not here to judge it, I would say, but the sensitivity that probably the members opposite had to deal with around firms like PCL coming in and doing massive builds.

I think PCL has been a great community contributor and partner. We see them do a lot of good corporate social

responsibility, but I think, at least from the sidelines, we have been able to watch what happens when you take a huge development and local contractors or developers — we'll call them contractors — are not a part of that, whether a school or the long-term care facility. I think we have learned — at least on this side of the floor we learned — that it does not play well within the construction industry to see that happen. We would be striving within the legal parameters through trade agreements to ensure that this is really about building our capacity locally and economic impacts to Yukoners.

I will leave it at that on the amendment, but I appreciate the principles and some of the innate values behind it, but as it is written, it just lacks a bit of clarity and we didn't have a chance to discuss what was really driving it.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate the motion brought forward by the Member for Porter Creek Centre as well as the amendment that we're talking about now brought forward by my colleague, the Member for Lake Laberge. Obviously the signals from across the floor are that they won't be supporting this amendment, which was to add the words "to Yukon developers" after the words "selling land". I think that it's obviously disappointing for us that the government won't do that.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources highlighted a number of ways that this could be conducted so that Yukon companies would be able to compete on a level playing field. The Minister of Community Services mentioned the CFTA exemptions and that there is now a process in place from the Minister of Highways and Public Works so we look forward to exploring that with him later on in this Fall Sitting.

That said, by putting in "selling land to Yukon developers", I think it sends a signal that we want to structure these land parcels in such a way that allows these Yukon developers to be competitive on it. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources mentioned PCL and thought that would be a bone of contention with us, but obviously they — I was not able to attend the opening of the Whistle Bend Place, but saw social media pictures of the Premier cutting the ribbon and eating cake at that event so they're obviously very proud of the facility that PCL built here.

I just have to remind the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that the Carmacks rec centre went to a firm from I think southern Ontario and that was done under their watch — no chance at all for the government to blame the Yukon Party for that one. The francophone school — two of the three bidders who are under consideration are Outside firms so we will see where that ends up but again, the criticism that gets levelled from members opposite is certainly wearing thin and it's not playing out for them with the contracts and the projects that are being put forward by them.

What we felt with this was that it was an opportunity for us as a House to put forward a motion here today that said that we want to support local companies and that we want to support Yukon developers. Unfortunately, it sounds like the government will be voting against that amendment. Again, it's too bad. It is eerily similar to what we heard recently with the

architectural SOA and the direct award of a \$1-million contract to an NWT firm by the Minister of Highways and Public Works where, very similarly, the government seems to be making business decisions on behalf of Yukon companies. We're disappointed with that.

We saw an opportunity here to bring forward what we felt was a friendly amendment to send a signal that we want Yukon companies to develop this land, but unfortunately, it doesn't sound like the government will support that.

Ms. McLeod: I just want to touch on something that the Minister of Economic Development mentioned. He said that he likes to get out of the business of doing business. We can see that isn't necessarily the case. We saw them expand into government-run cannabis, so we do question their commitment to this. They have also grown government by about 500 FTEs. This government's commitment to expanding the private sector is questionable and it is disappointing that they wouldn't support today's amendment.

We're talking about supporting local developers. That should be the easiest thing in the world for them to agree to — supporting local developers. Unfortunately, it looks like this government is going to vote against supporting local developers, voting against growing the local economy and that is disappointing. It makes us wonder if maybe the Liberals have made some promises to developers out east already. To quote the Minister of Community Services: "Curiouser and curiouser".

I'll move on. I think it would be great to support local developers in Yukon and especially in the communities, but again, perhaps we should not be surprised that this government is not too interested in supporting local developers.

Let's not forget that, as my colleague has mentioned, they sole-sourced a \$1-million contract to a Northwest Territories company earlier this year. When they got caught, the Minister of Highways and Public Works threw his public servants under the bus.

I hope the Liberals see the light. I hope that they do see why it is important to support local developers and not just southern developers or eastern Canadian developers. There are a lot of great local innovative ideas right here. I'm sure that there are also First Nation development corporations who would have some ideas on how they would like to get involved as well.

With that, I hope that the Liberals decide to actually start supporting local developers.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I think we have to get on the record that this government does, of course, support local. We have a growing track record of our support for local industry throughout the two-year mandate of this government. That should not be disparaged in any way.

We have started a number of procurement improvements. I have spoken about them throughout this session, about how we are actually supporting and putting in measures to make sure that local contractors benefit from procurement in the

territory. We have a five-year capital plan that has never existed before and actually allows local contractors to plan for future jobs that they see coming down the pike. We have taken action on all 11 Procurement Advisory Panel recommendations to improve procurement. We have standard clauses in our value-driven procurements that give points for First Nation participation and northern experience and knowledge.

Since June 21, 2017, we have tendered 157 value-driven procurements with these mandatory clauses. This is a change from the previous government. We saw that the members opposite brought up a standing-offer agreement that hit the news quite awhile ago. We actually took action on that standing-offer agreement and it bears striking similarity to the F.H. Collins school project where nothing was done, no change in tack from a former government. This government did listen. We did change tack and we did actually move forward and got some praise from local industry for the fact that we did listen on this procurement. These are all changes in approach that Yukoners are seeing and are growing accustomed to.

There are all sorts of things that we could talk about, about supporting local. We actually tendered a medevac contract. In the past, that didn't happen, but this time, we had an open, competitive bid and a local contractor — Alkan Air — won that contract. We were very happy to see that because we believe in our local industry. We believe in their ability to compete for and win local contracts. The Member for Copperbelt South mentioned the recent French school contract. It has closed. We do have three bids on that contract and one of them is local and we will see what happens with that. I was very happy to see a local bid on that contract and I am sure that, once that resolves, we will get a good result somewhere.

We support our local industry. We support improvements that keep the money that this government spends within the local economy. Despite the assertions of the members opposite, Yukoners are beginning to appreciate and understand that.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are five yea, 12 nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the amendment negated.

Amendment to Motion No. 319 negated

Speaker: Is there further debate on the main motion?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 319 — that this House urges the Government of Yukon to investigate the option of selling land and to allow for private development of residential building lots.

Earlier this month, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics released building permit statistics, and we're seeing close to a 25-percent increase in residential building permits issued this year over last year, and from January through to August.

Mr. Speaker, concerning our previous debate, I want to thank the Third Party. I want to thank the Leader of the Third Party, as well as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I know that for them, as well as for us — our commitment in investigating this type of work is to ensure that Yukon companies, which they and we support, have the opportunities to do this sort of work. I appreciate their thorough review to understand that, when something is put on the floor, you have a responsibility to understand the implications to trade agreements that you are supporting or are signatory to, as well as to ensure that you have a chance to hear from Yukon business.

The Member for Copperbelt South said that we're making decisions. No, we are absolutely not making decisions for business. We're giving businesses the opportunity to talk about what model will work for them. The Member for Watson Lake made some interesting accusations. I can say to this House that any conversations that I have had concerning these opportunities are with Yukon companies — Yukon companies that are appreciating having that conversation for the first time and having the creativity.

It is always discouraging when you see — in this particular case — the Member for Watson Lake coming to the table and dismissing and alluding to particular things that are not accurate. My question is: Why, during the time of responsibility by the opposition — if they support this — was there never the creativity to bring it forward and make sure that Yukon companies had a chance to do that work?

I am going to continue.

The increase equates to a value of about \$8.4 million. As my colleague, the Member for Porter Creek Centre, mentioned, we campaigned on working with communities to

create available and developed land banks to keep lot prices affordable. The Premier also tasked the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation and me to work together to increase affordable housing options across the territory. Through the ministerial working group on housing, we are working to come up with solutions to the current demands that we are faced with when it comes to available housing.

We are exploring opportunities to increase the availability of public land in all communities to ensure a sustainable supply for residential land. One such option that we are exploring is to look at private industry to develop residential building lots. Our government is committed to finding private sector solutions to the problems we face in our territory and in our government. In other words, we are looking to get out of the business of doing business, which I have touched upon. This makes sense. It works to ensure that our economy grows, continues to diversify and is less reliant on government spending.

Land development has traditionally been executed, of course, by the Yukon government. In other jurisdictions across Canada, this is not the case. Our economy is growing and it is critical that we pursue all options available to us in getting land out for development and to support this growth. This means working with all partners through a collaborative process — First Nations, municipalities, residents and private industry.

Our conversations, whether they are with Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce — the meeting I hosted this spring where all Yukon development corporations were invited to meet with the Minister of Economic Development for us to talk about what their priorities are and where their interests lie. The conversations that we are having with the subgroup — as the agenda gets formed — of the Yukon Forum — of chiefs focusing on economic development. These are constant conversations. Besides development corporations, Yukon companies that are continuing to grow, whether they are the ones that are building hotels that we are seeing right now — with Narrow Gauge's work or with many other companies that are doing fantastic work. They have executed this work for the Yukon government — with many of the construction companies focusing on the dirt moving, but also the engineering firms that have all been a part of this. I think that there are companies that contribute a lot, and they may have a footprint somewhere else. Yukoners and Yukon companies that we are talking to — discussions this morning with the Yukon Contractors Association. Again, we hear how we have done such a poor job. That is not what the business community is saying and that is not what the contractors association is saying.

There was one incident that the opposition touched upon and we had a discussion with the community about that. I think about previous situations and a case where the minister and I spoke with — and we listened and heard from — the business community and the chambers. They quickly gathered to speak with us. We listened, and there was a decision made from that.

I will tell you that the one thing in that meeting — the first initial meeting on this standing offer. The key element that is being left out of this conversation in the Assembly today is that, other than this, you are doing a very good job on behalf of Yukon businesses; we are seeing improvement; we are seeing things that we have not seen before; we are seeing the contractors and the business sector coming in and meeting with deputy ministers to talk about our capital planning and finance. We hear all the time about the lack of interaction — and, as their capital plan gets tarnished, forgetting that part of the capital plan was built by Yukoners and Yukon companies. Once again — the politics of the Assembly.

This means that, in this potential work — is working with all partners through a collaborative process. From my time in city council, I understand what it takes to move these projects ahead. I understand the importance of supporting, and the need to support, the municipalities in their official community planning process. This lays the groundwork for development within municipalities. We need to work with our First Nations in land planning. This includes both regional and local area planning. I shared this today at our early-morning conference talk — talked about our Yukon companies — another reason — sitting at Opportunities North today and seeing this collaboration between Northwest Territories companies working with Yukon companies, companies from Edmonton — and a long-standing history of this conference.

Do I want to give an address this morning? Then we get to a place down the road where a company from the Northwest Territories wants to partner with a Yukon company and, because of that — and this motion as it was originally potentially amended — we're doing something wrong. I think we want to see that level of collaboration.

We need to work with First Nations in land planning, of course, but this is both regional and local area planning. Local area planning ensures orderly development and eliminates future land use conflicts. We are currently working to complete the plans for Marsh Lake, Tagish and Fox Lake. In May, we established a committee to assist with developing possible new zoning regulations specific to the Shallow Bay area, something that had been requested, I believe, of the Yukon Party back in 2014 by several residents of the area.

We anticipate that the collaborative planning process for Fish Lake and the Alaska Highway west will begin later this year, and we will continue to prioritize planning throughout the territory, as required. We have also reached out to affected First Nations concerning Fish Lake. They are concerned about a lot of different land uses that are happening there — reaching out to let them know that we'll be moving forward on some of that local area planning.

I have had the opportunity to meet with a number of developers, land owners and contractors from the Yukon who have heard the industry and are ready to move raw land through the development process, as is done in other jurisdictions.

Our government is investigating options and looking at potential land parcels that could be rolled out. We have seen success in Dawson City — at least one of the last private

developments — and I think we have seen it here in Whitehorse and hopefully there are other communities that are open to that.

We will do this in a fashion to build local capacity and set developers up for success to promote growth in this sector. Along with this, officials with the Yukon government are working with First Nations in the planning process in their communities. Together we are working to identify and develop land for future development.

Through this process, we are working to identify the chapter 22 opportunities that exist with the development of First Nation lands in a way that their citizens see appropriate. There are several First Nation development corporations working with governments to identify land parcels for development. Chu Níkwān Development Corporation and Champagne and Aishihik Community Corporation both have land development projects being supported through the Department of Economic Development. Our government will continue to work with others on such developments.

I also would like to clarify that, when I spoke about PCL, I was not criticizing the opposition. What I stated was that PCL, in their work, have had good corporate social responsibility. They have donated to and supported a lot of great causes in our community. In my little bit of interaction with them, they have been highly respectful and very professional. I think that the work that was completed at the Whistle Bend facility is top-notch — to me through a walk-through. That's not what I'm saying. What I stated was that the government — and I think they would be able to, being honest with themselves, would say there was criticism about that procurement. That's what I was stating, meaning that if you undertake — if you let land inside of Yukon, whether it be in one of our rural communities or in Whitehorse, and that land goes out in a manner where we're not seeing opportunities for Yukoners or partnerships with Yukon companies, whatever government does that will hear from Yukoners. The people we all represent will be the judge on that. I don't think the Member for Copperbelt South understood the comment and was confused in his response.

It is one where we can work with First Nations to foster reconciliation and advance a modern Yukon. At the same time, it will help to address the housing pressures we're experiencing as a result of the strength of our economy. We will remain open to all options as we investigate ways that we can promote private development of our residential lots, including the sale of land. I believe that all members of this House can support this objective and I thank my colleague, the Member for Porter Creek Centre, for bringing this forward.

I see the role as the Minister for Economic Development, which is the other part of this, to always be representing our Yukon companies and Yukon contractors, in a sense providing opportunities for them first and not for the jurisdictions. There is a rule of law and a structure that I have to be respectful of and so I have to take that into consideration.

Through our procurement process — our partnership with the City of Whitehorse — one of the first things that we had a chance to work on — I think we are all happy here in the Assembly to see a very large spend by the City of Whitehorse on their new build and seeing a local company build that. It is a very, very expensive build and that is great to see Ketz Construction working on that. It was great to hear Ketz say that the partnership between the City of Whitehorse and the Department of Economic Development, Yukon government, here with my colleagues, extending our program to the municipality, which was a tool in the tool box that we could use. Maybe the members opposite could speak to it. I don't know if that was ever done. They did build one structure in a different way — and to know that a Yukon company was building that magnitude and to hear the CEO of that company come to us and say it was because of the partnership.

A lot of points have been made, but a little bit of a challenge in accuracy. The Yukon Contractors Association and Yukon construction companies, just two nights ago attending a function — the biggest concern right now is a tremendous amount of work for Yukon companies. Other jurisdictions — seeing some of their economies heating up — how do we continue to have enough of a labour force? How do government, our deputy ministers and our senior people continue to listen to industry to understand how we support Yukon companies to be innovative and develop private land? That is really what today was about and it's too bad that we're going down a bunch of other roads.

Thank you to the Third Party for their support. Sorry — I know that they get frustrated sometimes when I walk down history lane, but it's hard when you get this list of items that, when you are on this record, you have to — I believe — correct.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope we can continue on with our afternoon.

Ms. Hanson: Notwithstanding the interesting debate this afternoon and previously, unfortunately the NDP will not be able to support this motion. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker: we are not opposed to the idea that the government would or should investigate the option for selling land to allow for private development. The Member for Porter Creek Centre, who brought this motion forward, will be aware that I have questioned the current practice largely because the current housing affordability crisis facing Yukon was triggered by the previous government's decision in 2006 to not move forward with residential land development in Whitehorse and throughout the territory. The consequences of that have been severe. Over the last number of years, the last 10 or 12 years, I have engaged in conversations with Yukoners throughout the territory, but I have never assumed that was the ultimate or the only solution, nor had I assumed that I had the right to say that was going to be the outcome.

Given the fact that the government has indicated that it's a done deal, I'm not sure why we're even debating this right now. We have suggested in the past that, if we're going to do

this, it has to be a public conversation about options to the status quo.

I just want to point out that we did agree on the points that were raised this afternoon with respect to the notion that simply calling something a Yukon corporation in the minister's office — it will be very clear that, under the Yukon corporations act, anybody can register. You don't have to be a Yukon corporation.

Our objective would be to ensure that we're encouraging partnerships with local businesses, and if there are others from elsewhere — if we're talking about scale — that can partner, that's great, but those are options. The amendment that was put forward today was really finessing the point.

Two weeks ago, my colleague tabled an amendment suggesting that a select committee study this issue. We believed it was a reasonable proposal that would have allowed all parties in the Legislative Assembly — along with expert witnesses — to share their perspective and determine what makes the most sense for Yukon and to ensure a steady supply of lots throughout the Yukon to address the anticipated growth and need throughout the Yukon, not just in Whitehorse.

I keep stressing that, because when I look around the territory and I see and I hear the notion that we're still talking about the focus in Mayo of rural residential and agricultural land when you have a massive mine being developed there with, we hope, a mine life that is going to go more than 10 years — why aren't we talking about residential development there? It is like we are grasping at trying to understand where the government is coming from in this.

After my colleague, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, tabled that amendment, in the time we were waiting for the vote on the proposed amendment, the member opposite indicated that the department had already done the research and that Cabinet was about to receive this work.

The Premier has also repeatedly announced that this government was going to proceed with land sales for private development. So why are we here in this debate? Why are we debating this motion if the government has already made up its mind on the direction to be taken?

We can't support a motion that says "we will investigate" or that urges the government to investigate when we know that the government has already investigated the matter and determined the course of action it plans to take. By way of comparison, Mr. Speaker, as you know, a year ago we in this Legislative Assembly unanimously supported a motion by my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King to explore the possibility of developing a home warranty program to better protect homeowners.

We learned last week that, in the year that has passed, all the minister has done is send a few letters to contractors, real-estate agents and lawyers to ask for their opinion, yet we haven't even voted on this motion and this government has made it clear that this is a done deal. This is a clear double standard. When it is a government idea, the work gets done even before a motion is debated; when it is an opposition idea, all the minister can do in a year is send a few letters. Quite

frankly — and I've said this before — I think that approach shows a disrespect for the Legislative Assembly.

Given that this is clearly a done deal, we think that the government should at least make a public, clear case for the decision they have taken. For example, the government has provided no guarantee that this will not drive up the price of lots that are privately developed. We know and we have talked about the fact that private land has been developed in Whitehorse by private developers. We know that in some cases it was a success — a great success — and we know that in other cases it didn't go so well. We have seen some of those cases in the courts and in the papers over the last few years.

So before this goes ahead, the government should tell Yukoners what safeguards will be in place to make sure those less-than-ideal scenarios don't happen to public land that is sold and developed by the private sector and what recourse there will be if a private developer doesn't fulfill their obligations. The government hasn't provided this information, yet they are moving forward with this, even if they pretend — and we really feel that, Mr. Speaker — that this motion is simply to be investigating the matter.

Mr. Speaker, even if we're not opposed in principle — and we are not opposed in principle — to the private development of land, we cannot support the process this government is using. We believe it's disingenuous to pretend they are investigating it when they have already said they're forging ahead. If they want to forge ahead, they should be open about it and make the case for it — that's the least that Yukoners deserve.

Mr. Istchenko: I wasn't going to actually speak on this motion today. We discussed it this morning, and I thought that the members opposite — the government — had just forgotten about the Yukon content. I thought the amendment that my fellow colleague from Lake Laberge put forward to just make sure that it's about Yukon developers was great. I figure now I had better get up and say something, because it is about Yukon developers.

I just wanted to touch on something the Minister of Highways and Public Works said earlier today too. He claims his government supports local developers — he claimed that — but he just voted against local developers a couple of minutes ago. We know he likes to speak a lot of words — actually, the whole government likes to speak a lot of words — and I think Yukoners wish they would do more than just talk. It's a lot of thunder but not any lightning with this government, so it's too bad.

He also mentioned the five-year capital concept. As we already discussed, it was out of date the day it was created. It doesn't have a major project like the Ross River School in it. The minister doesn't even know why the Holy Family School is on it. So if he doesn't know, I don't know how that helps local contractors, but I guess we shouldn't be surprised.

This government has literally just voted against local developers. That's very disappointing, but as they move forward with this main motion — and I hope we get to vote on it today — I hope that they start to think local. I hope they

start to think about Yukon companies and not just companies and firms from down south or out east. As we mentioned, the Minister of Highways and Public Works sole-sourced \$1 million to an NWT firm; then he got caught and he blamed his officials. He didn't show responsibility and he didn't accept that. Hey, he's just a minister, but he is in charge. That's too bad, Mr. Speaker.

In closing, I would just like to state that, like we said earlier, we support this motion. We would rather it specify that we prioritize local developers, and we know the Liberals didn't think mentioning support for local developers was important, but I guess that's too bad. It's too bad for them; they'll have to explain it on the doorstep in 2021.

Mr. Kent: I think that in spite of the fact that the Liberals voted against our amendment to have this geared toward Yukon developers, as my colleague from Kluane mentioned, we still will be supporting this motion as it is because we think that this is an important opportunity to get additional lots out there.

As we have seen, with recent mining activity we have seen some growth, and housing demand in the Yukon over the past while has been very robust. There is a demand for lots — not only lots in the Whistle Bend area — but also a demand for other opportunities where there could be lot development, whether country residential, rural residential or commercial lots or other types of opportunities. It's not just in the Whitehorse area — I should be clear about that. Rural colleagues who represent rural ridings in our caucus speak often about the need for land development in their communities and what's happening in their communities as far as getting residential, commercial and industrial properties on the market.

I think what we have seen as well is growth in the Whitehorse periphery. We see the pressures and we have talked about them quite a bit in recent weeks, in Question Period, in particular. I see the pressures in my riding and the pressures that those are having on the school as well. That school just a few years ago — I talk to people when I'm there in the mornings or after school picking up my son. Those kids who are now in grades 3 and 4 — a few years ago, there was one kindergarten class and then it went to one kindergarten class and a kindergarten and grade 1 split, and then last year was the first year where there were two full kindergarten classes. Now this year, we see two full kindergarten classes and it started out with eight families on the wait-list. It was down to five the last I heard. As we move into next year, there is even more pressure and the number of primary kids certainly is much higher, so the kindergarten to grade 3 population at Golden Horn is much higher than the grade 4 to 7 as those students leave. As we continue to see rising numbers coming in due to housing pressures in my riding, it is going to be a real challenge for that school — so finding other country residential areas.

I think a lot of that obviously is driven by the Whitehorse Copper and Mount Sima development and then the fact that many of those rural residential lots are now being subdivided.

We see young families moving out there, some just in the Golden Horn area or down the Carcross Road. It is a real pressure, so if we can find opportunities for that type of lifestyle in other areas around Whitehorse or in the Whitehorse periphery, that again may take some pressure off the school that is there.

Again, that said, we do support the motion that the Member for Porter Creek Centre put on the floor. I think it was first introduced a couple of weeks ago. We would like to see perhaps some different aspects considered as well. As I mentioned, it is not only residential pressures that we are seeing, but there are commercial lot and industrial lot pressures that we are witnessing, not only here in Whitehorse, but our colleagues on both sides of the House, I am sure, will have stories in their own communities of some of the land pressures. We see the community of Mayo, for instance, where there has been tremendous mining activity recently. There is a need for the government to look at, not only lot development improvements there, but the airport, for instance, with Air North, Yukon's airline, now doing scheduled service in there. The last time I was at that terminal was when we flew in for the sod turning at the Eagle Gold mine. My colleague from Whitehorse Centre, the Leader of the NDP, I believe was on that flight too. That terminal building at the Mayo airport is woefully in need of serious repair or replacement.

Again, that is part of managing an increase in mining activity in that area, and we have to look at additional residential development. We certainly want to make sure that the people who are working in those mines and who want to live in Mayo have an opportunity to live in that community. It is a tremendous community. They have excellent recreational infrastructure and other infrastructure that exists there, but we need to make sure that they have the land to support development. If this motion leads to the opportunity to get land into, not just the hands of the private sector, but to get land developed so that people can build a home in the Mayo area, I would argue — I don't think I have to argue that it certainly is the most robust mining jurisdiction — apologies to the Premier.

I would say that with all of the activity north of Keno, the exploration activity that we see at ATAC — I think Newmont is active in that area; we have Victoria Gold which is going to be doing their first pour next year and all of those people who are going to be moving in to work at that mine; Alexco is making exciting discoveries it seems all of the time, especially with respect to the Birmingham deposit. We are hopeful that those individuals who are working in those mines — we want the ones who do have to be hired from outside of the territory — and I think it is realistic to say that there will be some staff who have to come from outside the Yukon — we want them to have the opportunity to make the Yukon their home and a huge aspect of that is the housing aspect. Those who choose to live in Mayo, we want them to have that opportunity. Those who choose to live in Whitehorse or one of our other communities, we want them to have that opportunity. If this motion for land development allows us to do that, then that is a good thing.

But again, I don't want us to forget about — and this motion focuses solely on residential — but I don't want us to forget about industrial and commercial land as well which will be needed to support that.

With that, I will take my seat, and perhaps there are others who want to talk.

Ms. McLeod: Of course, the idea of land development is very important to me and particularly to southeast Yukon. In the interest of, I think, improving the motion a little bit, to speak a little more to what my colleague was referring to and to address some issues for southeast Yukon, I would like to move an amendment.

Amendment proposed

Ms. McLeod: I move:

THAT Motion No. 319 be amended by adding the words “and commercial lots” after the words “building lots”.

Speaker: I have had the opportunity to review the proposed amendment to Motion No. 319 with Mr. Clerk and I can advise that the amendment is procedurally in order.

It is moved by the Member for Watson Lake:

THAT Motion No. 319 be amended by adding the words “and commercial lots” after the words “building lots”. The proposed new motion would then read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to investigate the option of selling land to allow for the private development of residential building lots and commercial lots.

Ms. McLeod: I heard some very interesting discussion today regarding land development and how various people think that it should proceed. I think, at the end of the day, we all want to see land development take place in the Yukon.

It does bring to mind some particular issues that happened for Watson Lake. Aside from the residential lot development that we're extremely short of, we also have one commercial lot that is available.

There is some potential for commercial development at the airport that is proving particularly difficult to move along. With that, I hope the members support broadening this discussion to include commercial lots because, for all of Yukon, I think we need to consider both.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to thank the member opposite for this amendment. It certainly hits a few key points. I have had the opportunity to listen in a number of communities where there is an interest in increased commercial lots because of more economic activity that is happening. I do appreciate the interest that the Member for Watson Lake touched on — in the community that she represents where there could be an interest in both residential and commercial lots, besides just the building lots — and also, as was stated earlier by the Official Opposition, that we should also take into consideration working with development corporations and Yukon companies. It just brings to mind that, in areas such as Watson Lake, I would think that the member

opposite — always a champion for Yukon companies. But when you have development corporations that work in conjunction — maybe from Lower Post and working with the Liard First Nation — corporations that just happen to buy their supplies in Watson Lake and they use Home Hardware in Watson Lake and really support that community, but are just across the BC border and may work in partnership on some of this stuff. Of course, that original amendment would drive those companies out of the opportunity. Those borders have to be respected, but I think those communities all come together. Those are the types of things that you need to think through, and I don't think they were thought through earlier on. I appreciate the Member for Watson Lake bringing these ideas to mind.

Because of economic activity, we have seen areas such as Haines Junction, where I know there has been some discussion. There are some commercial lots available — Chu Níkwän doing very good work. Some of those early stage rollouts and there is interest in looking at some of their lands just off of Mountain View Drive. I believe they are getting into the storage lease business right now, and they have also done a lot in the Kulan industrial area. We are seeing that come online and so we are seeing some of those situations occur already.

Taking into consideration — usually it is a diverse mix that you would put together. You put residential together, but depending on lot size, you may want to add in storage so that people living in the neighbourhood have a place, as long as it doesn't contravene the OCP and the zoning.

There are particular areas that I think we're sort of all watching from afar to see what happens — around the tank farm. There has been a lot of extraction off of aggregate, but we do see that there continues to be progress there and, once again, at least one individual has reached out. I have urged, through the work that they have been doing, some of the players there to — when they're ready to come and tell Yukoners that they may have an opportunity to bring lots to market. I think that there are two or three different options. Whistle Bend and a couple of others would be advantageous for everybody, and people are looking for different designs. Some people find that the tighter densification and smaller lots with none of the commercial lots nearby — we're looking at what is going to happen with commercial in Whistle Bend and what's the uniformity. Is there a potential for uniformity? Is it all going to be staged? Are we going to have to see huge population growth before people make that financial commitment to develop those lots? Is it a chicken and an egg? How does that work?

When we look at commercial lots — as we see in the mining sector, and I know the Member for Copperbelt South touched on a few different areas — whether it be Mayo — we have some news coming very quickly in that area and there is some stuff that I think is going to provide people with some options for residential — and also on the agriculture side. In areas such as Carcross, when we have discussions there, there tend to be more and different activities than there were

previously, and those activities in some cases do need to have commercial lots.

I think the commercial lots are probably one of the first, as we see from the private development standpoint and through Yukon Development Corporation, and one of the most advantageous routes to get people comfortable with private land development, but also private land development specific to settlement land and the LTO work — that being the Land Titles Office — that has been done. Really, what you are doing is providing access, through the lease, to an activity. In some cases, it could be storage, and in other cases, it would be more infrastructure built on the particular lot. When you need those more spacious areas — when we look at the footprint or at least through Whitehorse, and I think the same thing in Dawson and likely in Watson Lake — I will say that, just to share with you, even this week — and I could be off and it might be next week — our team at Energy, Mines and Resources is having discussions — I don't think they have concluded yet — in Watson Lake with Liard First Nation concerning some commercial area where they would like to see a renewable energy project worked on. We are hoping that some of that stuff can happen, and then we would have to take a look to make sure that the plan in place for the Town of Watson Lake is consistent. We are trying to be supportive of those green energy sources and looking at that in the commercial sense. There has been a little bit of news on another commercial lot — not private development — where there have been some energy projects, and that is out in the Sima area.

Most construction companies that I have heard of that have come to us and talked about looking at commercial lot development seemed to be in a situation where that capital cost for them is pretty significant. I think the Member for Watson Lake is certainly on to something. This is probably going to take a little bit more debate, because I think the lease would be more advantageous. It wouldn't strain cash flow to the same extent for some individuals who need that land and maybe a longer-term lease would give them the access to it but, at the same time, wouldn't strain them as they're trying to put dollars and investment into equipment, human resources and other planning strategies that they would need to undertake.

In my conversations that will continue to happen, I think I'll bring this forward — this is good information — and try to test the waters with the Contractors Association — maybe they can talk to some of their members who would be interested in commercial lots — bringing it to the chambers if I have a chance, just seeing what the ideals are. Then also to the First Nation development corporations that are in an ownership position — where they own Castle Rock or other companies such as that — I know that there have been strains from time to time on lots and, in some cases, I know that Yukon Energy Corporation has even needed to go out and find other space.

I think the other thing that is important to do is to take into consideration that, if you're looking at private development of commercial space, maybe it's something that

we should leave to our First Nation governments, because right now, we're under such strain — it was touched upon by both opposition parties — when it comes to figuring out all the different options.

Is it right to take those large segments of land and put them into private development? We're probably not seeing the same return on investment as you would if you were looking at residential land. I think that is something that we can talk to Yukoners about. I know the member of the Third Party touched on it. I think it is important to state that it was stated that you are going to go and do that. We want to investigate — that is part of our duty. We try to do that through our departments, Economic Development and others. If you do find a potential piece of land, you take that advisement, as the Member for Watson Lake touched upon, and you try to ensure that you meet the zoning guidelines. It is sort of a basket of different types of land — you have both residential and you have commercial. Maybe leave it open in the conversation, assuring, going back, that we have Yukon companies and Yukoners developing this land and that this land has the right business model to make it work for them and see what the interest is and see if we're eliminating people or if there are different models that we are not aware of. That is part of putting something out there, that you will have a chance to see it and take it into consideration, but we will also have to go back and talk to the officials I work with and just make sure that I am clear when it comes to our trade agreements. I know that there is some activity happening in different jurisdictions that are adjacent to us. We will be reviewing those activities and also looking at past practices.

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

Debate on Motion No. 319, and amendment, accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.