



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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Number 143

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35<sup>th</sup> Legislature

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## HANSARD

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## 2023 Fall Sitting

**SPEAKER — Hon. Jeremy Harper, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun**  
**DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Annie Blake, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin**  
**DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Lane Tredger, MLA, Whitehorse Centre**

### CABINET MINISTERS

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

### OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

#### Yukon Party

<b>Currie Dixon</b>	Leader of the Official Opposition Copperbelt North	<b>Scott Kent</b>	Official Opposition House Leader Copperbelt South
<b>Brad Cathers</b>	Lake Laberge	<b>Patti McLeod</b>	Watson Lake
<b>Yvonne Clarke</b>	Porter Creek Centre	<b>Geraldine Van Bibber</b>	Porter Creek North
<b>Wade Istchenko</b>	Kluane	<b>Stacey Hassard</b>	Pelly-Nisutlin

### THIRD PARTY

#### New Democratic Party

<b>Kate White</b>	Leader of the Third Party Takhini-Kopper King
<b>Lane Tredger</b>	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
<b>Annie Blake</b>	Vuntut Gwitchin

### LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Joseph Mewett
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly**  
**Whitehorse, Yukon**  
**Wednesday, October 18, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.**

**Speaker absent**

**Clerk:** It is my duty, pursuant to the provisions of section 24 of the *Legislative Assembly Act*, to inform the Legislative Assembly of the absence of the Speaker.

*Deputy Speaker takes the Chair*

**Deputy Speaker (Ms. Blake):** I will now call the House to order.

We will proceed at this time with prayers.

*Prayers*

**DAILY ROUTINE**

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

Introduction of visitors.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I would like to welcome, from the band Major Funk, which is here today for our tribute to the Western Canadian Music Awards: Selina Heyligers-Hare and Adrian Burrill.

*Applause*

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** There are a number of guests here today. First of all, from the Yukon Energy Corporation, we have Rod Savoie, vice-chair of the Yukon Energy Corporation Board of Directors, and Joseph Fred, a director from Yukon Energy Corporation. We also have the president and CEO of the Yukon Development Corporation, Dennis Berry, and Sara French, the vice-president of the Yukon Development Corporation.

From the Department of Tourism and Culture, we have Eduardo Lafforgue, Akriti, Sarah Marsh, Robin Anderson, and Avery Bramadat.

For the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TIAY, we have the president, Neil Hartling, and executive director, Dylan Soo.

For the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, we have Sandy Legge, and bienvenue à JP Laroude.

*Applause*

**Deputy Speaker:** Tributes.

**TRIBUTES**

**In recognition of Major Funk**

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I rise today to pay tribute to the Yukon band Major Funk. Major Funk has carved a unique and memorable niche in the Yukon's music scene, inspiring a dedicated local fan base with unforgettable live music — live shows of music that they describe as “familiar but fresh, epic but accessible, and dangerously infectious.”

These local treasures have been enjoying a noteworthy year. They inspired crowds to dance around Canada on their first post-pandemic tour. They released their second album, *The In Between*, where they use music to explore what they call the “meaningful moments that are often sandwiched between significant life events.”

They were nominated for R&B Artist of the Year at the Western Canadian Music Awards. This recognition is a testament to the countless hours of hard work, creativity, and collaboration that Major Funk has poured into their craft. Their nomination rewarded their talent, but I would also like to acknowledge their dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to the art of music.

I recognize and appreciate their belief in the power of music to connect, inspire, and uplift. I would also like to thank them for using their stage to support other Yukon artists through their albums, art, and music videos.

To Major Funk, we say thank you for sharing your exceptional talent with us and for representing the Yukon's vibrant music scene on a larger scale.

*Applause*

**Ms. Clarke:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to congratulate Major Funk on their nomination for R&B Artist of the Year in this year's Western Canadian Music Awards. The band consists of six members, each bringing a wealth of talent and experience to the stage. The members are: Selina Heyligers-Hare, vocals and keys; Étienne Girard, bass; Adrian Burrill, vocals and trumpet; Brent Gallant, guitar; Toby Moisey, saxophone and flute; and Anders Grasholm, drums.

Major Funk is no stranger to the music scene, having played festivals and shows across the country since 2015. This is the band's second nomination for R&B Artist of the Year, after being nominated for the award in 2021. It is always wonderful to see Yukon artists recognized for their talents on the national stage and there is no shortage of talent in the group. My son, Sean Clarke, and Selina went to high school together. I have watched her perform at school events. I am just amazed at how Selina blossomed into the beautiful artist that she is. A few years ago, a group of my girlfriends would come to her show and dance the night away.

I would like to close with a quote by Major Funk co-founder Étienne Girard: “Music is one way that we find love in the spaces in between, and we make music that makes people want to move.”

Congratulations again on your new album, *The In Between*, and on your nomination. We are all looking forward to seeing your hard work pay off and to celebrating your successes.

*Salamat po.*

*Applause*

**MLA Tredger:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to join in congratulating Yukon's very own Major Funk. There is a lot of great things to say about Major Funk. They are on their second Western Canadian Music Award nomination.

We could talk about their second album that came out in the spring, full of thoughtful lyrics and irresistible beats. Then there is their commitment to collaborating with other Yukoners, from the local producers of their albums to the local filmmakers on their music videos to the album art made by local tattoo artist Kirsty Wells. There are a lot of great things to say about Major Funk. But mostly, I want to say that they throw the best dance party in town.

I say “in town”, but this award nomination shows that wherever they go, people will be grooving to their tunes. Congratulations to Étienne, Adrian, Selina, Brent, Toby, and Anders. You make us proud and, even more importantly, you make us dance.

*Applause*

### **In recognition of Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to two remarkable milestones — the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, WTAY, and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, TIAY. For a combined 80 years, these two organizations have been the voice of the territory's tourism sector, sharing their passions, triumphs, and tribulations.

Founded in 1993, WTAY has acted as an advocate for the Yukon's natural wilderness and the tourism operators who showcase it. The early work of the WTAY led to board members blazing trail at Canada's national tourism organizations. Other highlights include: the Yukon Wild program; WTAY's integral role in the establishment of the Yukon *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act* in 1999; championing wilderness travel ethics; and, overall, the Yukon becoming renowned as a leading wilderness tourism destination.

I should also acknowledge WTAY's extraordinary work in support of COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts. WTAY, thank you for promoting authentic and responsible backcountry access, keeping our wilderness wild.

Now I would like to speak a bit about TIAY. In 1973, the Yukon Visitors Association was formed. By the 1980s, they had morphed into the TIAY we know today. With over 100 membership organizations from a dozen Yukon communities, TIAY represents the tourism spectrum: accommodations, arts, events, food, beverages, tours, attractions, transportation, and the kitchen sink. TIAY fosters tourism leadership, capacity, and innovation.

Working collaboratively with tourism association partners — WTAY, the Klondike Visitors Association, the Convention Bureau, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, the Yukon Historical and Museums Association, and outfitters — TIAY has ensured that resources and expertise are shared to provide the best support possible to the Yukon's tourism industry.

Highlights include: founding the Klondike Road Relay, which celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary last month; the 2001 Yukon Tourism Marketing Partnership; the annual Yukon

Tourism Gathering; the Yukon tourism training fund; the Yukon Culinary Festival; Meet Your Maker; and more recently, the Yukon recruitment and retention task force to support Yukon tourism businesses and the wider business community in hiring and retaining key staff.

I also want to shout out TIAY and WTAY's work as partners — and architects, really — in our *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* and, again, for their tireless advocacy through the pandemic. Both have been champions for sustainable tourism. By the way, Yukoners, please take part in TIAY's celebrations at the Old Fire Hall this Friday.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask the members of this House to join me in congratulating TIAY and WTAY members, past and present, on their incredible milestones. Thanks to the efforts of both of these organizations, tourism remains a strong, vibrant, and sustainable industry across the Yukon, poised to rebound, grow, and prosper. Thank you to TIAY and WTAY for your unwavering dedication to our extraordinary territory.

*Applause*

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to two organizations that are celebrating noteworthy anniversaries: the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, or TIA Yukon, and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, or WTAY.

If one is involved with the tourism industry, I, for one, believe in joining forces with other businesses. The best avenue to connect with like minds is through a structured organization, such as TIAY or WTAY. Since the stampede and the Alaska Highway connected us to southern Canada, we have welcomed visitors. The early years brought the truly adventurous and risk-takers. The Alaska Highway and other smaller roads were not for the timid. Move ahead many decades, and Yukon progressed to chipseal, wider roads, bridges, and so many more conveniences for the travelling public.

Growing up in a small destination like Dawson City, it was earlier than 50 years ago that the locals realized that people needed a bit more care when they came to visit. We dressed in costumes to greet the planes; we refurbished old buildings to replicate the originals and even hosted a Broadway play.

The Klondike Visitors Association was a groundbreaking group and wanted to create a revenue source for their crumbling town, but territory-wide, there was more interest as our visitor numbers grew and, in 1973, TIAY was born to be a voice for various concerns. Today, they provide industry updates, programs, forums to grow and inform, as well as attend trade shows and much more.

WTAY formed in 1993 to encourage best practices for wilderness and guiding businesses that took guests out for adventures in our natural, beautiful wilderness. They encouraged their members to provide the highest quality product and best environmental practices to share while protecting the land.

A few years ago, I was on the board for TIA Yukon — a few years — and enjoyed the time there with the movers and shakers of the day: Goody Sparling, Barry Bellchambers,

Giovanni Castellarin, and so many more that helped blaze the way. I will say that it was the best learning experience for new a new business owner, so I encourage everyone to get involved if tourism is your passion.

We wish you both a happy anniversary and best wishes as you continue to advocate for businesses involved in this important segment of Yukon's economy.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus to celebrate two monumental anniversaries within Yukon tourism: the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For a generation and more, these two industry-led advocacy groups have been the voice for tourism operators and businesses across the territory. They have often worked hand in hand to build a common voice for their members, knowing that the tourism industry's voices are stronger together. We have seen incredible adaptability and innovation from these two groups as they supported their members through the pandemic, and although we aren't up to 2019 numbers yet, with their leadership and advocacy, we are well on our way. So, congratulations to staff and board members both past and present. Thank you for elevating the tourism industry to be front and centre where it belongs.

*Applause*

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

### TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I have for tabling the *Yukon Development Corporation 2022 Annual Report*, which is tabled pursuant to section 22(3) of the *Yukon Development Corporation Act*.

I also have for tabling the 2022 Yukon Energy Corporation annual report.

**Deputy Speaker:** Are there any reports of committees?  
Are there any petitions to be presented?  
Are there any bills to be introduced?  
Are there any notices of motions?

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to reverse its most recent increase to the carbon tax and pause all future increases.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House congratulates long-time Yukon artist Jim Robb on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Ms. White:** I rise to give notice of the following motion: THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to:

- (1) call for a ceasefire between Israel and Palestine;
- (2) demand and allow for life-saving humanitarian assistance for Gazans;
- (3) advocate for the release of all hostages; and
- (4) condemn all acts of anti-Semitism and anti-Palestine hate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

- (a) share what traffic and safety analyses have been done on Range Road and the new demands for an additional school will place on it; and
- (b) share the results of those analyses.

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

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit+ strategy

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Madam Deputy Speaker, it is my honour to share an update regarding the second annual accountability forum for the Yukon's missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit+ strategy.

The forum that took place this week in Whitehorse provided an opportunity for the strategy's partners and contributors to share updates, actions, and progress on both the strategy and the implementation plan. It was also an opportunity for partners, families, and survivors to further contribute to these living documents.

Our government is proud to provide funding for the event, as well as logistical and administrative support. The first two days were open to families, survivors, partners, leaders, and contributors. Both days at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre were incredibly moving, bringing us together to reflect, learn, and strengthen our path forward. The final day, today, is exclusively for families and survivors. Led by the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, today provides an opportunity to connect, debrief, and offer mutual care and support.

The fact that we are holding the second accountability forum highlights the progress that our government is making in partnership with numerous Yukon and national organizations that also care deeply about this issue.

I was so proud to release the Yukon's MMIWG2S+ strategy in December 2020 with my co-chairs, Doris Bill and Ann Maje Raider, and the many passionate people on our Yukon advisory committee. I was equally proud to release the implementation plan for the strategy this past June.

This accountability forum was our first since the release of that implementation plan. It provided an opportunity for signatories to further explore the work they can support, discover areas where we can raise each other up, and learn about best practices related to the strategy's milestones. This sets out the groundwork for our collaborative efforts throughout the 15-year duration of this implementation plan. The accountability forum included: Indigenous journalist Angela

Sterritt presenting on her award-winning investigative work, including her own book, *Unbroken*; Jennifer Moore Rattray, the federal government's ministerial special representative on the work to create an Indigenous and human rights Ombudsperson; and Diane Strand, executive director for Shāwthān Nāzhì, who presented on land-based healing. There were also panel discussions on healing on the land and the role of media in the context of the strategy and Indigenous representation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we all have a role to play. Accountability is a key action item under path 4 of the Yukon strategy, and hosting an annual forum is an integral way for us to support this action and remain accountable. This forum is about holding our commitment to each other and to our friends, family, and community members. It is about reaffirming our agreement to do this work in a good way, and I know that it will bring us a step closer toward our ultimate vision, which is violence-free communities where Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit-plus people are safe and respected.

**Ms. Clarke:** First, I need to thank everyone who was involved in the planning and organizing of the second annual accountability forum for the Yukon's missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit+ people strategy. As the minister mentioned, it was held over three days this week at the Kwanlin Dūn Cultural Centre and featured important discussions and updates regarding the Yukon's MMIWG2S+ strategy.

I attended part of the forum and heard powerful remarks from Yukon First Nation leaders about charting a path forward — not only for Indigenous but also for non-Indigenous Yukoners. We heard that there are a lot of stories left untold. We need people to tell those stories. We all need to come together to hear those untold stories.

I certainly agree with the minister that we all have a role to play. We need to highlight the work put into this important strategy and follow and support the implementation plan. We certainly support the work of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which brought this important issue to the forefront.

This implementation strategy guides this work today and into the future. We certainly support the implementation strategy and the work ahead.

In closing, I would like to thank the co-chairs of the Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit People for their work not only with the forum but with the strategy and implementation plan.

Salamat.

**Ms. White:** We thank the minister for her statement and her leadership on this file. More than that, we thank the community, who continues to show up with open hearts and a desire to see real change implemented in the territory with their continued participation in events like this accountability forum.

Sharing oneself deeply and honestly isn't easy, but this is what we continue to see from survivors, families, and community partners who hold the intent and the goals of the

Yukon's missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit+ strategy in their hearts.

We are grateful to see spaces where families and survivors are included in a respectful and kind way. These spaces are an essential part of the discussion and the decision-making process. Events like this forum bring women and community members together from all walks of life, various organizations, and communities to network, build relationships, create and expand their support network, and empower each other. This is a beautiful and powerful thing to witness.

Thank you to all of those who supported the important work that has been done this week, and a big thank you to those who continue to show up, even when it isn't easy.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for their comments and support today. Ending the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and two-spirit-plus people requires long-term commitment, collaboration, and resources from governments, organizations, and society as a whole. It also requires urgency.

The MMIWG2S+ strategy is in every mandate letter, as we recognize the vital role that our government plays both in implementing the plan and supporting others engaged in similar efforts. The accountability forum serves as a powerful reminder that we all hold a responsibility to care for each other and our communities.

Today, I was invited to hear the families, as they debriefed and provided feedback to us. It is very difficult to hear the level of trauma and the struggles that we are seeing in all of our communities.

Within the implementation plan, the Yukon Advisory Committee on MMIWG2S+ proposed that the Yukon government lead or co-lead 108 of the milestones. To highlight a few that were spoken about in the forum, under path 1 — which is strengthening connections and supports — work is underway toward developing an inter-agency system to support affected families. So far, we have had really positive discussions with BC and the Northwest Territories, aimed at strengthening our efforts to provide these services to those in need. This will be done by way of an MOU. We also have interest in having discussions with folks in Alaska to form a similar approach to develop an MOU.

Path 2 speaks to community safety and justice. Under this path, several departments have begun conversations around increasing safe, accessible, and affordable transportation. Also, under this path, work to advance the sexualized assault response team is underway, and communities have been engaged.

Another highlight is that the Department of Justice has been working with community safety planning with First Nation governments, including delivering funding through the community safety planning program of up to \$200,000 for each Yukon First Nation to advance community safety planning and implementation.

Under path 3, which speaks to economic independence and education, the Indigenous microgrant program, facilitated by

Tourism and Culture, has provided support to Indigenous arts and culture industries by distributing over 40 microgrants.

Significant efforts are underway in the field of education, including the establishment of the First Nation School Board and the development of 14 nation-to-nation agreements under the joint action plan.

Finally, within path 4, which underscores community action and accountability, we acknowledge the importance of increased representation of Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit-plus people in media, something that we know is needed in effective and respectful storytelling.

I would like to emphasize that it is not only the Government of Yukon that is accountable to families, who are delivering the implementation plan. We know that many other governments and organizations are accountable as well, including the federal government, Yukon First Nations, municipalities, business communities, and NGOs.

I thank you for the opportunity to deliver this ministerial statement today.

**Deputy Speaker:** This then brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Rent control

**Ms. Clarke:** We are now more than two and a half years into the Liberal government's experiment with rent control. The results do not paint a pretty picture for the Liberals. Data from Statistics Yukon show that none of the results that were promised have come true.

Let's start with affordability. From 2021, when the Liberal rent control policy began, to this year, median rents for all units in Whitehorse are up over 15 percent. That is significantly higher than the rate of inflation over the same period.

Does the housing minister recognize that his failed rent control policy has made renting less affordable for Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** In the run-up to the last election and certainly afterward, we recognized that we need to work on the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, and that's exactly what we're doing. Stakeholder and First Nation government engagement is continuing. We have already started this work. We launched it in June 2023. The goal is to make sure that we have legislation in the territory that addresses the concerns of both the landlords and the tenants in the territory and makes the system much more fair. Stakeholder and First Nation government engagement will continue throughout the fall, and public engagement will begin early in the new year.

Our aim is to be in a position to table updated residential tenancy legislation in the spring of 2025 that will address the concerns that we are seeing in the rental market.

**Ms. Clarke:** Let's take a look at the availability of rentals. Last month, local economist Keith Halliday examined the impact of the Liberals' rent control policy. Here was his conclusion of the impact on the availability of rental units — quote: "So, the rental supply Yukon-wide grew slightly slower than population growth. The rent control experiment has not delivered improved supply."

Does the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation recognize that his failed rent control policy has made rental units less available for Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I think, based on the first and second questions, what I would first point out is we have supported over 470 new housing completions over the last number of years. Also, what we were trying to do is to protect long-term renters. So, when you take the average, what you are also considering are all of the new builds, and all those new builds will bring those units onto market at probably a higher than market rate. At the same time, long-term renters are the folks who have been locked into that relationship with a landlord, and that is where those five-percent rent caps.

I think it is important that we consider that when we take in the information. I think it is a disservice to present those numbers the way the member opposite did. I think anybody listening today can understand that, yes, part of that average would be all of those new units that we have seen — actually more units over the last five years than we have seen over the decade before — so massive growth and lots of support from Yukon Housing.

Of course, we came from a point of recession under the last government to a point where we have seen growth — actually leading growth in the country — so, of course, that has also continued to put more pressure here on our housing stock.

**Ms. Clarke:** In his article about the Liberal government's rent control policies, Mr. Halliday's analysis shows two important things. First, it shows that rent control has not delivered on improved affordability. Second, it has not delivered improved availability. Rents are up significantly, and the number of rental units is smaller than the rate of population growth. What is worse is his ultimate conclusion — and I quote: "... this suggests the availability problem may get worse in the next few years, especially if the surge in new condo rental slows down."

Will the Liberals agree to stop the failed experiment before it gets any worse?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** First of all, I guess I would ask the housing critic: If this is such a failed policy, why did the leader who is sitting next to you commit to doing the exact same thing, and why did he support that, and why are you now flip-flopping and taking one article from the news?

Again, the statistics — playing fast and loose — we have lots of new builds. Yesterday, we saw complete confusion in the line of questioning. Yesterday, I was told that I should be embarrassed, that we should change programs, and the members opposite — at least three in the front bench — had no idea what they were talking about, because they were confused about the program that they were actually criticizing. So, today, yes, you can pick a couple of items from the article. I appreciate the comments, but again, lots of new builds. What we are doing is trying to ensure that those folks — fixed income, long-term relationship with the landlord — have some security in place. We are hearing from them that they appreciate this, and it has given them some safety of not losing their place to live, and I support that decision.

**Question re: Rent control**

**Mr. Dixon:** In the last election, the only party that campaigned for rent control was the NDP. The result of that election was that they received the fewest seats and the least votes. When the Liberals announced the imposition of new rent control policies, the Minister of Community Services admitted that the Liberal Party did not support rent caps, but in his words, a deal is a deal.

Now it seems that things have changed. Last week, the Premier told the Legislature that his mind had changed. He said — quote: “... first, we’re supporting renters, and my belief in the rent cap has become even stronger...” This is despite all of the evidence that we have seen over the past two years: Rents are up massively; the supply of rental units is tightening — the experiment has demonstrably failed.

So, what is it about these results that has changed the Premier’s mind to now support rent control?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Madam Deputy Speaker, again, let’s point out that the Leader of the Official Opposition clearly stated to all Yukoners that he would support the CASA agreement if the NDP would put the agreement in place — so, fully support rent caps. Today — a different story — a flip-flop again.

So, here we are doubling down after yesterday. Yesterday, the Leader of the Official Opposition — off-mic, telling me that we needed to change the policies, not even understanding what program that he was speaking about, and now, today, we are here — one thing that was said to the public — to Yukoners — I will support this. We all heard that. Today — coming and criticizing it. I think we see across the country right now massive pressure being put on individuals. We always said that good ideas can come from any corner of this Legislative Assembly, and I will stand up and say that I think — while we are rebuilding the legislation for the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* over the next 24 months — that this particular item is something that is providing good security for renters. I do stand by that. I think that people would be in a position right now of major vulnerability if it was not in place for long-term renters.

**Mr. Dixon:** It is clear that the Premier’s position has changed since the last election.

The Premier’s new-found support of this failed policy is certainly surprising, but now, not only is the Premier supporting a policy that has so clearly failed, he is now doubling down on that policy with a new subsidy program for landlords.

On one hand, he is limiting the amount that landlords can charge, and with the other hand, he is giving them a taxpayer-funded handout. This is inconsistent; it’s ironic, but worst of all, it is just plain bad policy.

How can the Premier justify this new taxpayer-funded subsidy that is only necessary because of the very rent control policy that he himself has imposed?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Look, I think that taking any advice on housing from the members opposite would be a failure. I remember — and I think the member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, will remember — what it was like to walk from his vehicle into the Legislative Assembly through

the tent city that was out there after the people of Yukon revolted against what was happening.

Also, I am hearing the chuckles from the Member for Lake Laberge after having Yukoners in outrage, based on the mismanagement of funds that were allocated to the Yukon.

What we have seen is a massive catch-up that has to be undertaken, and we are also seeing a piece of legislation that the Leader of the Official Opposition oversaw as Minister of Community Services that was archaic and has to be modernized. Yes, over the next two years, we will do that work. We will work with Yukoners. We will do the consultation that is appropriate. We will support those individuals who could be in a vulnerable position because of what we saw happening with rent increases. We will continue to look at supporting the increase of supply to keep up with the demand that’s here in the market. I also will support a focus on ensuring that, while the legislation is being modernized, our landlords are also supported.

**Mr. Dixon:** Last week, the Premier made it clear in Committee of the Whole what this policy was about. He said that landlords have made considerable investments in their rental units and that, because of the rent cap, there is now a gap between what they can charge and their rising costs due to inflation. So, in order to make them whole, he is creating a new funding program to subsidize landlords.

The irony is that the only reason they need to be subsidized is because of the very policies that the Premier himself has imposed on them. If the Premier is so concerned about the abilities of landlords to make enough money to keep their units in the rental market, why doesn’t he just get rid of rent control? Why is he holding landlords back with one hand and pushing them forward with the other?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Madam Deputy Speaker, until we see significant investment continue into the rental market — where there is enough supply — I don’t want to see people lose their homes. That is why.

**Question re: Teacher staff housing**

**Ms. White:** The teacher shortage in the territory affects everyone, directly or indirectly. Teachers in rural Yukon lead after-school programs; they become safe adults for students; they volunteer for community boards and events and even in services like EMS. They are an essential part of every community, but too often, teachers in rural communities have no choice but to leave it all behind, because right now, as per government policy, teachers can only be assigned housing for up to three years. That is when they are lucky enough to get a place via the government. In some communities, there are simply no places available for rent. So, after three years, their only option is to leave their position and leave the community that they have come to call home.

Where there are no other options for places to live, why is this government evicting teachers in communities that need them?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** The Government of Yukon recognizes that staff housing has a significant role in supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in Yukon



communities. We are continuing to work within available resources to assist staff in rural communities to meet their housing needs. This is challenging and complex work, as housing supply is limited, especially in rural communities.

Currently, there are 53 Yukon Housing Corporation units in the communities leased to teachers. An additional three units are leased by the department and sublet to teachers in a rural community. As well, three additional units are leased by the department from Yukon Housing Corporation for short-term accommodation needs in Pelly, Ross River, and Old Crow. All other staff have private housing, which they either rent or have purchased themselves.

Teachers' ability to receive extensions on staff housing gives them security and confidence. The Department of Education, Yukon Housing Corporation, and the Public Service Commission created a solution in alignment with this policy where the department will recommend extensions annually on behalf of any teachers subject to renewal.

**Ms. White:** We can't afford to lose dedicated teachers because of policies that just don't reflect the unique needs of each community. The Liberals have set up a system where teachers in communities are likely to have to leave every three years because renting a place is just not possible everywhere. We have heard from a Carmacks teacher who was facing eviction last May before the school year even ended. She tried to find housing all summer long without luck, so she obtained a grace period, but that doesn't solve the problem. If she cannot manage to find a place, she will have to resign and leave the community.

On top of being a teacher, she is a superintendent for Emergency Medical Services in Carmacks and volunteers with several other community programs. She is already a part of this community and all she wants is to be able to stay. We know that she is not the only one in this situation.

So, will the government review its three-year policy to allow teachers to stay in communities that need them for longer than the grace period that she has mentioned?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Again, Government of Yukon recognizes that staff housing has a huge role in supporting recruitment and retention of teachers. I have gone through the allocations today already. Teachers' ability to receive extensions on staff housing gives them security and confidence. The Department of Education, Yukon Housing, and the Public Service Commission created a solution in alignment with the policy where the department will recommend extensions annually on behalf of any teacher subject to renewal. This solution ensures that teachers will not receive notices of term end and supports the department's recruitment and retention strategy.

Again, we are working very closely with the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Public Service Commission to ensure that we are meeting the needs of staff. We absolutely know, of course, Madam Deputy Speaker, that housing is a very important aspect of retaining and recruiting teachers. We will continue to work as well with our partners and with the First Nation School Board, who are overseeing many of these schools.

**Ms. White:** The minister likes to blame the lack of teachers on national circumstances, but the reality here in the Yukon is that we are looking at self-inflicted teacher shortages because this government's policies just don't reflect the needs of the communities. The government says that it is trying to recruit new teachers, yet teachers outside of the territory are starting to avoid the Yukon because of the uncertainties in housing.

Teachers in communities don't have guaranteed housing in their contracts. The three-year policy makes no sense for communities that are already critically short of teachers, and an annual extension is not a permanent solution. The Yukon needs a plan in place to keep teachers at their schools and in their communities. A community cannot exist without a school and a school is nothing without teachers.

When will this government provide guaranteed housing for educators in rural communities?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the member opposite is making it seem quite simplistic; it is not. First of all, the reason that there have been three-year terms in place, with the opportunity to extend, is because we have seen teachers in many communities who have stayed in subsidized housing for a long portion of their actual professional career.

I can remember sitting in Watson Lake over the last year and having individuals from the community talk about how one teacher was in a four-bedroom house, I believe, and there were people in that community who needed an opportunity to get that access to housing, sitting there with young children who were underhoused, and they met the criteria.

So, what we're trying to do is ensure that those teachers, after a period of time, commit to that community and that they become part of the fabric of that community.

Concerning Carmacks, after we finished last night, I drove to Carmacks and I sat with mayor and council last night until about 10:00 p.m. We talked about the challenges and also the opportunities in Carmacks. We talked about the lots that have just been let and some of the building that's going to happen, but also, part of the commitment that I made on behalf of Yukon Housing was to ensure that private sector developers who may want to build a duplex or a fourplex — that we can de-risk that by ensuring that we do long-term rent on some of those units so that new teachers have a place to live and that the asset is owned by the private sector — by somebody who is an entrepreneur in that community.

So, we will continue to work on this complex challenge, but we want people to stay and be part of those communities.

#### **Question re: City of Whitehorse drinking water**

**Ms. McLeod:** Many folks in the municipal world, and even staff in the Department of Community Services itself, have been raising an eyebrow about the Minister of Community Services' recent letter to the City of Whitehorse about their drinking water.

The letter has been described as bizarre, and it clearly was intended to antagonize the municipal government, but the letter also seems to include some inaccurate information. For instance, the minister referenced giardia parasite husks being

found in the aquifer; however, earlier this week, city officials clarified this wasn't accurate.

"... I don't think that's language that appeared in any of our reports," said the city manager. Our drinking water is not contaminated, he clarified.

Why did the minister share inaccurate information in his letter to the city?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Madam Deputy Speaker, we are concerned about ensuring that residents of Whitehorse continue to have access to safe drinking water. We are aware of a draft report to the City of Whitehorse that states that Whitehorse's seven drinking-water wells are showing signs of groundwater influence and that giardia parasite husks have been found in samples taken from the aquifer.

This is an emergent health and safety issue facing the City of Whitehorse. Water treatment facilities and utilities are Whitehorse's responsibility under the Yukon *Municipal Act*. The integrity of the city's water system is central to municipal affairs. We look forward to the City of Whitehorse addressing this issue in a timely and responsible manner.

**Ms. McLeod:** The minister's controversial letter to the City of Whitehorse also made a number of references to boil water advisories. He said that he was — quote: "... concerned that council's lack of support for investment in this area could mean a prolonged boil-water advisory for citizens of Whitehorse."

In response to that, city officials declared that the minister was wrong. The city manager made it clear that Whitehorse was not facing the prospect of a boil water advisory. Yet again, the minister seemed to be sharing exaggerated and inaccurate information.

So, why did the minister share this inaccurate information?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Once again, I just want to reiterate — and I think it's an important statement to make that, right now, the city's water system is safe and we should all be using it with no fear. However, there are concerns that have come before the City of Whitehorse that suggest that it is under the influence — groundwater is under the influence of surface water and that information leads to other things, such as better treatment of our city's water supply.

We provide funding to municipalities for projects that they identify as priorities. When we became aware of the draft report provided by the City of Whitehorse regarding groundwater influence, we looked into their funding requests. The City of Whitehorse identified their infrastructure needs, listing the project for the Selkirk PH second barrier treatment, estimated at a cost of \$56 million, as the 20<sup>th</sup> of 20 identified priorities. We are concerned about ensuring that the residents of Whitehorse continue to have access to safe drinking water. It is currently safe, but investments have to be made to continue that world — it's one of the best drinking water systems we have in the world. We want to make sure that continues.

For this reason, I wrote a private letter to the Mayor of Whitehorse — which we spoke about publicly on the floor of the House. In it, I raised concerns that, on April 11, the majority of Whitehorse city councillors voted to refer this issue back to

administration due to the substantial estimated cost of the project. We want that project to proceed.

**Ms. McLeod:** After criticizing city council for what he called second guessing the technical experts, the minister characterized the issue as an emergency. He said — quote: "I am heartened to learn the city has roughly \$70 million in reserved funds for just such an emergency."

In response to that, the city's director of corporate services corrected the minister, saying — quote: "We do not have any particular fund with \$70 million in it waiting to be spent on a project."

So, once again, the minister was inaccurate on top of being bizarre and combative. This letter from the minister is also full of inaccurate information. So, my question is simple: Why did the minister send this combative and inaccurate letter?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I will disagree with the preamble that the member opposite is putting before the House. We have seen them, over the last week or so, once and again putting erroneous information before the Yukon public.

We are concerned about ensuring residents of Whitehorse continue to have access to safe drinking water — full stop. For this reason, I wrote a private letter to the Mayor of Whitehorse, which she spoke about publicly on the floor of the House and said that it was a public letter; it was not. I sent a letter to the Mayor of Whitehorse. We communicate on a regular basis. We write letters to one another. We talk on a weekly basis, and I continued that good relationship with a letter to the Mayor of Whitehorse expressing my concerns about the April 11 meeting of the Whitehorse council, where they voted to refer this issue back to administration due to the substantial estimated costs of the project.

The city has had \$3 million set aside to address this issue, starting in the spring of 2022, before the council decision. This funding, earmarked for design of a solution to this issue, had not been spent. We look forward to the City of Whitehorse addressing this issue in a timely and responsible manner with the funds they have available to them.

#### Question re: Better Buildings program

**Mr. Istchenko:** So, the Liberal government's Better Buildings program has faced considerable challenges right from the start. First, the minister tabled legislation to create the program without consulting properly with municipalities, as required by the *Municipal Act*. It wasn't until the Yukon Party and the NDP threatened to defeat the bill that the minister agreed to actually go back and consult.

After that, the minister had to amend the legislation on the floor of the House. Now we see the budget for this program being cut by two-thirds. Why is the government cutting the budget for the Better Buildings program?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The amendments to the *Assessment and Taxation Act* and regulations for the Better Buildings program were proclaimed on October 20, 2022. The Better Buildings program offers new low-cost funding to eligible property owners to complete energy-efficient retrofits. This means more property owners will have the means to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint. The

funding is repayable by a local improvement charge attached to the property.

We have worked closely with municipal governments, as partners in this program, and have developed administrative processes to ensure its successful delivery. All municipalities have signed agreements indicating their participation in the program.

The member opposite did reference the to-and-fro between the opposition parties and this government to actually get the program in place. The sad reality is that to-and-fro actually lost a season in which the interest rates were a lot lower, and it has actually impacted the uptake of the program, because interest rates have now gone up.

Even though they are still a good deal, they are certainly not as good a deal as they were. I wish it had come into existence sooner, but we are going to deal with it and make this program great for citizens in that they will save money on their houses and keep the energy use down.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Well, you can't make a program great by cutting the budget for it.

The most recent budget cut to the program is just the latest in a long history of missteps by the minister that he has made on this file. When he tabled the legislation in the fall of 2021, there was an uproar from municipalities about it. The Association of Yukon Communities, Teslin, Mayo, and Watson Lake all sent letters raising concerns. When the program finally got off the ground, several municipalities wondered if it would even work in their communities. Now we know that the program is undersubscribed, and the minister has had to cut the budget by \$1 million.

The minister said that the goal of this program was to retrofit 2,000 buildings by 2030. How will the minister meet that target if the program is being cut by two-thirds?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** When Yukoners go to apply for this program, they go through the Energy branch across the street at the Energy Solutions Centre. We just have not had a lot of uptake so far. I think that it has to do with interest rates and how busy the building market is right now. I think I announced this in one of the supplementary budget speeches, but we have just had a half a dozen projects so far come through. I have seen the first one that was being worked on in our communities — I think it was the community of Haines Junction — so, it's on its way.

Just because the uptake has been slow, we have just reallocated that money out. It's not that we're not going to do it; we are promoting it, but when people haven't been coming through the door yet, we just adjusted the budget for it — that's all. We are happy to work with Yukoners to retrofit their homes. We think that this is a very good program. We think that there is a great opportunity for Yukoners to reduce their reliance on home heating fuels, for example, and just reduce their energy needs, period.

So, the program hasn't gotten off to as fast a start as we want, but we are ready, willing, and able to work with Yukoners.

**Mr. Istchenko:** We know that this program has had a long and difficult path and that it has been plagued by

mismanagement by the minister. He failed to consult on the legislation and had to take the rare step of deferring it, then amending it on the floor of the Legislature.

Since the program was created, we have heard skepticism from rural communities about how this program would work in communities other than Whitehorse. We know that the program is undersubscribed and, as a result, the Liberals are cutting the budget to it.

So, can the minister tell us: Since the program was created, how many successful applicants have accessed the program, and how many of those were from rural Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I think that I just said that. I think that there has been roughly a half-dozen projects that are processed and through. The first one that I have seen in our rural communities is now in processing. The first one, I believe, that is there is Haines Junction.

We want this program to go; we welcome Yukoners. Please come on down to the Energy Solutions Centre and talk to the folks there. See what the possibility is. I started engaging on this program — I don't know — three or four years ago when *Our Clean Future* first came out; that is when I began talking to the Association of Yukon Communities and all of our municipalities. If there are folks out there who are concerned about working with the Energy branch, please let me know. It is a great group of public servants who are over there. They really know their stuff, and they want to help Yukoners through this program. So, we welcome Yukoners through the Better Buildings program; it is good for all Yukoners.

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

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BILLS

#### **Bill No. 28: Act to amend the Environment Act (2023) — Third Reading**

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 28, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Clarke.

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** I move that Bill No. 28, entitled *Act to amend the Environment Act (2023)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Deputy Speaker:** It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 28, entitled *Act to amend the Environment Act (2023)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I sincerely appreciate the comments and questions from the members of the Official Opposition and the Third Party regarding producer responsibility yesterday in Committee of the Whole. Yesterday, we discussed extended producer responsibility as a framework and what it could look like in the Yukon. So, today, I would just like to take a few minutes to highlight the bill and its context. Extended producer responsibility is a framework that will provide the financial and regulatory certainty to allow the Yukon's waste diversion system to flourish in the long term. It

will reduce costs for Yukon government and Yukon taxpayers and contribute to a greener, healthier future by reducing waste and its related greenhouse gas emissions.

As I mentioned at second reading and discussed during Committee of the Whole debate, we are amending the *Environment Act* to enable the implementation of a robust and modern extended producer responsibility regulation. Without these changes, there is the potential for certain large producers to not be captured under the act and regulations, which could unfairly place the burden of these programs on Yukon businesses and groups that are not the ones who are most responsible for the introduction of materials and waste into the Yukon.

Yesterday, we addressed a lot of components of an extended producer responsibility framework that will be finalized in the regulation and stewardship plans. I want to clarify that the intent of extended producer responsibility is to set up a framework to allow the private sector to take over the collection and recovery of waste. As a result, many of the details of the system will be determined by producers at the stewardship plan development stage. Right now, the regulation drafting is proceeding and will incorporate the input received through the engagement process.

It is expected that the regulation will be in place by this winter. Upon adoption of the regulation, an implementation period of approximately two years will commence. The implementation period will start with stewardship plan development and approval and, in 2025, with the producer-led waste-diversion programs in operation.

The target materials of the extended producer responsibility framework include paper products and packaging and hazardous and special products. These categories include materials you would typically place in a blue bin or would bring to Household Hazardous Waste Day.

As I said yesterday, it is currently our intention to include glass and Styrofoam in our extended producer responsibility system. Producers of these materials, or producer responsibility organizations on their behalf, will be responsible for developing a stewardship plan. The development of the plan will require engagement with stakeholders. This is another opportunity for Yukon businesses to shape extended producer responsibility in the territory in order to ensure that it meets their needs and the needs of all Yukoners.

The plan will outline waste-diversion metrics and associated targets, targets for accessibility and service levels of the collection network, and plans for public awareness efforts. The plan will provide financial and operational details, including how the proposed targets will be met and how collected products will be managed at end-of-life in accordance with the waste management hierarchy where top priority is placed on waste prevention, followed by reuse, recycling, recovery, and finally disposal.

The plan will be submitted to the Department of Environment for review and approval. The review and approval stage allows the Minister of Environment to ensure that stewardship plans align with service level expectations and with our waste diversion objectives. The plans will be reviewed

every five years, and more ambitious targets may be proposed. Once the plans are operational, producers will report annually on their program performance, and these reports are expected to be available publicly.

The passage of this bill will allow the Yukon government to continue to work with the business community, municipalities, recycling and waste management processors, and the Yukon public toward the implementation of an extended producer responsibility system. We are on track to be the first territory to adopt extended producer responsibility and to meet the *Our Clean Future* commitment to have a functioning extended producer responsibility system in place by 2025.

Once again, I thank all members for their contributions to debate at second reading and in Committee of the Whole, and I look forward to the passage of this bill.

**Mr. Dixon:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise at third reading of this bill. We have indicated some concerns that we have around the prospective system that the government is developing. However, we will be supporting the bill today. There is nothing in the bill that we find objectionable; however, as I have said in both my second reading speech and since, we do have concerns about what the government is proposing in the regulations that are not public yet. So, I have, over the course of debate, urged the minister to ensure that future consultation is conducted with the benefit of full visibility of the regulations, once they are approved, before they come into force. I think it's important that both the industry and municipalities and the public have a good sense of what this system is going to look like.

Without seeing the details, it's difficult to comment on, but I remain skeptical that this proposed program won't increase the cost of living for Yukoners, that it won't increase the cost of many goods. I think that any costs that are imposed on producers will be passed down to consumers eventually, and that's a concern that has been raised by a number of other businesses with the government as well.

I note that, in Committee of the Whole, the minister discussed meeting with the Retail Council of Canada during this time and the CCME. He seemed to indicate that the Retail Council of Canada didn't have any concerns or that their concerns have been addressed, but nothing that the minister said during Committee of the Whole, I think, addressed the real concerns that have been raised by the Retail Council of Canada in their submission to the Yukon government on the public consultation. I will quote from that now. This is a letter from the Retail Council of Canada to the Yukon government on February 17, 2023. The quote is: "RCC's primary concern is about the cost per capita of an EPR system in Yukon. Our concern is that it will be high because of low population, low material volumes and significant distances for collection and transportation. In addition, the creation of thresholds for low volume/revenue producers will be extremely complex because an exemption that excludes a small business would likely also exclude many national producers because those producers sell a relatively small volume to Yukon consumers. This means that

customers patronizing a small number of businesses will shoulder the cost disproportionately. Our view remains that one of the best ways of solving the cost and threshold dilemmas is to merge Yukon's obligation and program entirely with either British Columbia or Alberta."

Madam Deputy Speaker, I share the concerns raised by the Retail Council of Canada. I do have questions about what the system will ultimately look like, but again, as I have said, it is difficult to raise those concerns without the benefit of seeing the regulations. So, as I've said, we will vote in favour of the bill today. We generally support what's in the bill that is before us today, but we do maintain concerns with the regulations, and we hope that the government will consult early on those before they come into force.

**MLA Tredger:** I will start by saying that the Yukon NDP will be supporting this bill today. The Yukon NDP have been advocating for extended producer responsibility for years. We have a really strange recycling system in the Yukon right now, where most of it is done by non-profit organizations. We don't have a mechanism for an obligated funder of producers, so the Yukon government, municipalities, and non-profits seem to work this out between them, which has done really remarkable things for a long time, but it is high time that we moved to a more sensible system. It is really high time that producers started taking financial responsibility for the products that they create.

What is unusual and a bit strange about us discussing this bill today is that most of what will actually determine what the EPR system looks like will be in the regulations, which we aren't voting on today. However, I have learned quite a bit about what the government's intentions for these regulations are over the course of debating this bill. What I have learned is mostly very concerning, so I am going to take this opportunity to encourage them to reconsider a number of the choices they intend to make around the regulations for extended producer responsibility.

I am deeply concerned about the amount of power that is being given to the producers. As we have heard, the plan is that the PRO will submit a plan and propose things like targets. That's quite unusual. A lot of jurisdictions have actually legislated targets. I feel very concerned about leaving the power to submit this plan in the hands of businesses — we are talking national-level businesses here — whose ultimate goal is to make profits, not to protect the environment.

It is this government's responsibility to make sure that we have goals, targets, and metrics that do achieve these responsibilities, but they are being left in the hands of the PROs. I know that the government can approve or not approve them, but at this point, we haven't even heard what the government's targets might be — what they think an acceptable level is.

They are planning to leave the definitions of the categories to the PRO. Yesterday, I talked about how, if you lump all packaging products together in one category, that's a big concern. Paper, for example, weighs a great deal; plastic weighs very little. If you were to set a target that was about recovery of

those materials based on weight alone, you could easily achieve it by only recycling paper and ignoring plastic completely. So, unless those categories are subdivided, they are somewhat meaningless, and that decision is being left in the hands of the producer responsibility organizations.

Furthermore, the stewardship plan — once they propose it and the government agrees to it — is not even going to be made public. The public will not have a chance to see or weigh in on whether they think those targets are appropriate.

I have asked whether producers will have to provide recycling services outside of Whitehorse. The answer is a little bit vague, but it did reference matching current service levels. I think that's a missed opportunity. I have been to many communities outside of Whitehorse in the Yukon where there is little to no recycling available. This is a chance to improve that, but this government doesn't appear to have the intention of making that an expectation.

We have heard a lot about consultation on the stewardship plan, with references yesterday to the stewardship plan being developed in consultation with local and national businesses. What about environmental organizations? What about Raven ReCentre, which has been doing this work for decades? Their mandate is to reduce waste; businesses' mandate is to make money. So, I really worry about whose voices will be included in that consultation and whose voices will make it into the final plan, which will be approved by this government without ever going to the public.

I finally want to bring up — I have heard many times that we are referencing these regulations in British Columbia, and I am concerned about that. British Columbia was the first jurisdiction in Canada to have extended producer responsibility, and kudos to them for paving the way for the rest of us, but being the first means that you are figuring things out for the first time and that there are going to be opportunities to improve. Other jurisdictions — for example, Ontario and Québec — have set much more ambitious targets, and they have more carefully thought-out and progressive regulations. I think that we would be better to look to those other jurisdictions, as we decide how to move forward with this.

So, as you can see, there are significant concerns about the way that this project is progressing. As I mentioned, none of these are in the act that we are debating today. The pieces that are in the act that we are debating today are fine, and so, we will be supporting those changes, but unfortunately, most of what will determine the success of this program will not be debated or overseen by the Legislature or even the public, so I have taken the opportunity today to raise those concerns. I hope that the minister will take those very seriously, as they move forward with the regulation.

**Deputy Speaker:** If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** Thank you for the comments from the Leader of the Official Opposition and from the Member for Whitehorse Centre. I certainly take their comments — and I

have heard their comments, which are substantially similar to comments that I have heard at second reading, but of course, the devil will be in the details with respect to the drafting of regulations and the implementation of a stewardship plan, so I won't go into a lot of detail with respect to debate that did occur yesterday.

Just briefly, the producer responsibility organizations are required to consult, develop, and deliver on a stewardship plan that sets out how they will manage the supply and collection of designated materials based on the waste management hierarchy. Far from out of sight or out of mind, the stewardship plans act as a permit to producers before they can even sell their products into the territory. The *Environment Act* contains provisions for compliance and enforcement of the plan. This could include audits, extra reporting, new service requirements, and notices of non-compliance to the public in order to obtain compliance with the government's established outcomes.

I've heard the Member for Whitehorse Centre loud and clear on this topic, and I certainly commend them for their attention, interest, and passion with respect to this file. I am certainly — as well as our Cabinet team and the Member for Whitehorse West, the Minister of Community Services — very interested in moving this file forward in a positive manner. Certainly, we are not necessarily bound by everything that British Columbia has done. There will be somewhere between 18 and 24 months to continue consulting on best practices. If there are better, or objectively better, practices out of Québec or Ontario, I'm sure that the relevant officials and stakeholders will be looking at those as well.

Just briefly for the record, just to conclude, with respect to the five amendments that are taking place today, clause 2 — section 105(a) will be amended to expand on the definition of “producer” to ensure that persons supplying designated materials into the Yukon are captured under the regulation, regardless of where the supply of the material occurred. This section is necessary to ensure that producers are captured under the regulation even if the financial transaction occurs outside of the territory. This amendment will ensure that online retailers, such as Amazon and others, are captured under the regulation.

The next amendment is section 105(b), which will also be amended to expand the definition of “steward” to ensure that the Yukon is able to assign producer responsibility to groups involved in the design, marketing, manufacturing, importation, or supply of a designated material inside and outside of the Yukon. The existing definition of “steward” is currently too narrow and will not allow the Yukon government to assign responsibility to brand owners, product designers, or franchisers who do not directly supply a designated material to a person in the Yukon. The definition provides a high-level definition of persons who may be captured as stewards under the act and allows the Yukon government to further define “steward” in regulations.

Next is clause 3, which is section 109.01 and is proposed to be repealed. This section was made redundant with the expansion of the definition of “steward” in section 105.

Clause 4 is section 109.02, which is replaced, and it broadens the Commissioner in Executive Council's ability to

exempt specific classes of stewards from some or all of the requirements of the regulations. While the current list of exemptions in the act may appear exhaustive, there is a potential for future small producers not to be captured by the groups currently listed in the act.

This amendment also intends to clarify that the Commissioner in Executive Council can assign responsibility to a class of stewards rather than individual stewards, avoiding a scenario where the Yukon government must list each steward individually in the regulation.

Finally, clause 5 — section 144 will be amended. It is intended to ensure that producer responsibility can be assigned to a class of stewards rather than to individual stewards, avoiding a scenario where the Yukon government must list each steward individually in the regulation.

Once again, I would like to sincerely thank members of the House for their time and valuable contributions to the discussions of this bill. This is an exciting step forward in order for the Yukon to have our own extended producer responsibility regime in place in 2025. I look forward to moving this file forward and to reducing waste, reducing consumption, and incentivizing innovation in the packaging of materials.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I look forward to a vote on this matter.

**Deputy Speaker:** Are you prepared for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

#### Division

**Deputy Speaker:** Division has been called.

#### Bells

**Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Agree.

**Mr. Kent:** Agree.

**Ms. Clarke:** Agree.

**Mr. Cathers:** Agree.

**Ms. McLeod:** Agree.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Agree.

**Mr. Hassard:** Agree.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Agree.

**Ms. White:** Agree.

**MLA Tredger:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the results are 16 yeas, nil nays.

**Deputy Speaker:** The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 28 agreed to*

**Deputy Speaker:** I declare that Bill No. 28 has passed this House.

**Bill No. 33: Act to amend the Registered Nurses Profession Act (2023) — Second Reading**

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 33, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Mostyn.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I move that Bill No. 33, entitled *Act to amend the Registered Nurses Profession Act (2023)*, be now read a second time.

**Deputy Speaker:** It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 33, entitled *Act to amend the Registered Nurses Profession Act (2023)*, be now read a second time.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** It is my privilege to introduce Bill No. 33, which amends the *Registered Nurses Profession Act*. We know how important nurses are to our territory's health care system and the well-being of Yukoners. These incredible, highly trained civil servants are the vanguard of caregiving in our territory, and we need them. We are growing fast, and there is a shortage of health care workers in Canada, which makes it challenging to recruit the nurses we need to provide Yukoners with the health services that they have grown accustomed to.

All Yukon communities — especially rural communities with limited access to health care — require a robust health care system to support them.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Registered Nurses Association regulates registered nurses and nurse practitioners in the territory under the *Registered Nurses Profession Act*. The Yukon's regulatory framework for nurses is out of date. It does not reflect current practices in professional regulation, contemporary nurse practitioner practice, and national trends for licensing and labour mobility. The Yukon Registered Nurses Association has asked us to do better. They requested amendments allowing entry for graduate nurses and nurse practitioners as well as internationally educated nurses.

We have listened. These amendments will improve labour mobility and will allow Yukon to attract health professionals under a more flexible system. By amending the *Registered Nurses Profession Act*, we can implement these changes to the *Registered Nurses Profession Regulation*. Bill No. 33 will simplify and speed the registration and licensing process for nurses and nurse practitioners in the Yukon and provide much needed support to our health care system.

We have experienced cancellations and rescheduling of surgeries and longer wait times for all services at our hospitals due to staffing shortages. Community health centres have had to close temporarily due to staff shortages and vacant positions and to give nurses some needed time to recharge.

We have outstanding nursing staff but simply not enough to keep up with what is required. Nurses burn out without sufficient rest or support. They retire or simply move elsewhere to pursue other options. There are many improvements needed to support our wonderful nurses throughout the territory. Legislative amendments are part of the solution. This will help attract and retain qualified health care professionals, utilize the

health human resources that we do have to the full scope of practice, remove barriers for health professionals, and protect the public.

The amendments follow through on the Yukon Registered Nurses Association's request to establish four new membership classes to allow registered nurses and nurse practitioners from other jurisdictions, newly graduated students, internationally educated nurses, and student nurses to practise in the Yukon.

I will now take a few moments to talk about the proposed four new membership classes that will provide paths for licensed nurses to work here in the territory.

We begin with an interim class, allowing newly graduated nurses, nurse practitioners, and internationally educated nurses to register directly in the Yukon. Also, applicants waiting for other documents can apply under this class. This reduces red tape and allows internationally trained nurses already working here in other roles to apply. Today, some health care services are limited in the territory, and Yukoners often need to leave for tertiary medical care.

So, we are creating a virtual class. Registered nurses and nurse practitioners from other jurisdictions will be able to provide care for a specified purpose via virtual means, such as telehealth. This will mean less travelling for patients who otherwise would not go out for care. It will also help keep Yukoners in their homes and communities, rather than having to travel for treatment.

We are also creating a courtesy class for licences limited to a specific purpose and time. This allows specialists who practise in the Yukon for a limited time to bring their own specially trained nurses with them — or someone who provides training or workshops.

The student class of licence will allow student nurses to be registered to work here for, say, a practicum. They will practise under supervision and support the health care system. Even during their short practicum time, they will contribute to caring for patients, for Yukoners.

Our government is publicly committed to multi-jurisdictional licensing to reduce barriers and increase access to health care professionals. There are currently national discussions regarding multi-jurisdictional registration that will simplify and speed up licensing and registration for registered nurses and nurse practitioners.

While no model has yet been selected as the national model, the Yukon's legislation must be modern enough to allow us to participate in a national agreement. This will significantly speed licensing of health care providers who are registered and hold a full licence in either the Yukon or any other participating jurisdiction. This is also consistent with the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*.

To support the new classes and increase mobility, we are removing reference to an annual licence throughout the act and regulation to allow the registrar to issue licences for less than 12 months. Providing more licence paths will help to recruit registered nurses and nurse practitioners in the Yukon. These changes are consistent with my mandate letter, as well as that of the Minister of Health and Social Services. They support the recommendations and overall goals of the *Putting People First*

initiative to remove barriers and improve access to health services.

Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses rank as the second of eight of the most in-demand professionals for skilled foreign workers in Canada, according to immigration.ca, using data from the federal Job Bank. Specialized health professionals who come to the Yukon for a limited time or provide virtual care to Yukoners will be able to work in the Yukon. Student nurses will also be able to gain their practical experience in the Yukon and potentially come back to stay.

By working with other jurisdictions, we can develop cooperative models of care that address gaps in our health care system and improve health outcomes for Yukoners. This is a national problem and staffing shortages in the health care system are triggering provinces to make multi-jurisdictional mobility agreements, reduce processing time from months to weeks, and introduce aggressive bonuses and hiring programs to attract and retain nurses, nurse practitioners, and internationally educated health professionals, which will improve the overall access to health care in their areas.

Provinces are developing multi-jurisdictional licensing, specifically the Atlantic provinces. They introduced a model for physician licences on May 1. This gives these provinces an advantage in their ability to shift resources in support of each other. In this fast-changing environment, we must be nimble and forward-thinking or we will lose out. For instance, in Alberta, the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta introduced a new streamlined registration process on April 4 for internationally trained nurses. As of May 10, they had already registered 1,413 internationally trained nurses, more than two and a half times the number processed in the last four years combined. Once registered, these nurses began working immediately.

In British Columbia, they received more than 3,200 applications since their new nursing community assessment service was launched at the end of January. On May 1 of this year, Nova Scotia's nursing regulator launched its new licensing system. It received 1,490 applications from internationally trained nurses in the first two days. The new system allows them to become eligible to be licensed in a few weeks, instead of waiting for more than a year as they did previously.

In Ontario, legislation was introduced to allow health care workers licensed in other jurisdictions to work in the province without having to register in their respective health regulatory colleges in Ontario. That's the competition we are up against here in the Yukon. It is critical to make our legislation as flexible as possible as quickly as possible to attract more nurses to work in the territory.

Recent incentives introduced by the Yukon government last winter are good, but we must address all the barriers that nurses face in coming to work here.

The Government of Yukon is acting on its commitment to protect the public and improve the regulation of health care professionals. Once proclaimed, this bill will help the Yukon compete in the increasingly tight market for nursing

professionals. It will also provide the support needed to attract health professionals to the territory.

I want to thank the Yukon Registered Nurses Association for many things but most of all today for their patience as we work to make these amendments. With the association's advice and support, we are amending this legislation to meet the needs of Yukoners, as well as the needs of nurses who are already here or who want to make Yukon their home.

I also want to thank the officials in my department for their incredible work in preparing this bill in such a short period of time. I know how much work went into this, and I really do appreciate all the work they have done in paving the way for better health care for Yukoners.

**Mr. Cathers:** I would note, in speaking to this, that we will be supporting this legislation. We recognize that changes were asked for by the Yukon Registered Nurses Association, and we will support those being put forward into law.

However, we do have some concerns with this — particularly what is not in the bill, which includes other changes that the Yukon Registered Nurses Association asked for that government chose not to act on.

As well, it's interesting; in the minister's remarks at second reading, he spoke about internationally trained nurses, but in this legislation and in the explanatory note for the legislation, there is no reference to internationally trained nurses falling under the category of student nurses, as his remarks at second reading indicated. Based on the information that was shared with us by officials at the briefing, it was our understanding that this was not being facilitated in the way the minister's remarks would suggest. It seems that either the minister may need to get a briefing to better understand the legislation he tabled, rather than relying on his speaking notes, or perhaps he could explain in detail which clauses of this legislation will actually do anything in relation to internationally trained nurses and how that will occur.

A third and very concerning point that I need to address, and also draw to the attention of media and others listening, is the fact that we were told that the draft legislation was not shared with the Yukon Registered Nurses Association and the government does not intend to share the draft regulations with the Yukon Registered Nurses Association. There are two points regarding that which I want to address. One is that there is nothing preventing government from choosing to share the fine print of proposed legislation or regulation with stakeholders who will be directly affected by it. My colleagues and I believe that this is just good practice.

Secondly, in this particular case, the Yukon Registered Nurses Association is not just a stakeholder; they are actually the regulator that will have to be responsible for implementing any legislation or regulation. So, to not share the fine print with them is bad practice, incredibly secretive, and is not in the public interest. I hope the government will reconsider that plan and actually share the draft regulations with the Yukon Registered Nurses Association and allow them to share it with their members so that it can be improved by that consultation



with them, as both regulator and stakeholder, before it is enacted.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in this particular area, as I have addressed in the past, we have been critical of the Liberal government for years for their lack of action on the issue of training, recruiting, and retaining health care professionals, and that includes a particular focus in questions that we have asked in the past on both doctors and nurses. Of course, there are many other professions and specialties that the Yukon also needs, but those were where our questions focused in the past in largest part.

Despite the fact that the Yukon Party Official Opposition, as well as health care professionals, have been calling for more action on this area for years and we have specifically and repeatedly called for the development of a new health human resources strategy, it was not until the vacancies in rural nursing hit, by the government's own admission, almost 50 percent before the government realized that they were overseeing a health care crisis that was especially impacting rural nursing and that they finally agreed to develop a new health human resources strategy. We are pleased that they have finally and belatedly recognized this need for action, but it does not excuse being asleep at the switch for six years on this very important issue.

I would also note, as I mentioned — contrary to the minister's assertion — that there's nothing in the explanatory note of the legislation that makes any reference to internationally trained nurses. We do recognize — one thing I do agree with the minister on are his remarks about other jurisdictions that have taken steps to speed up the licensing of internationally trained nurses.

We know that the Province of Alberta and the Province of Nova Scotia, as well as Ontario, have all taken action to speed up the recruitment of internationally trained nurses. In the case of Nova Scotia — which you'll recall, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we have previously identified in an earlier Sitting the steps that they were taking in this area to fast-track the licensing of nurses from a short list of seven countries — as a result, they have had thousands of applicants coming in through that process.

However, what we've seen in the Yukon is no indication, to date, that the government is changing the regulatory structure to speed up the ability for foreign-trained nurses to practise in the territory, other than the Premier's trip to Nova Scotia for a memorandum of understanding and a photo opportunity with the Premier that could have easily been replaced with a phone call to the Premier, which would have achieved the same outcome, that being that Yukon officials would have the opportunity to talk to health officials in the Province of Nova Scotia and seek their advice on how to deal with the issue of expediting the licensing of foreign-trained health professionals.

So, we've seen a lot of show here to date from the government, but what we have not seen is the action that is required in this area.

Additionally, I have to point out that there is the odd situation this fall of the Premier's Asia trip. His trip to India was supposedly to recruit health care professionals, in large

part. The Premier himself confirmed that during debate with my colleague the Leader of the Official Opposition on October 16, when my colleague asked — and this is from Hansard, page 3991. My colleague the Leader of the Official Opposition asked the question: "... who picked India? Who decided that Yukon should send a delegation to India?" The Premier replied — and again, I quote from Hansard: "Well, part of what we were doing is focusing on health care attraction. What we're seeing right now is that it is a primary destination to look for health care attraction."

However, the problem at hand is that, if the government hasn't taken the steps to actually allow foreign-trained nurses from India or other countries to move forward in getting licensed to practise in the territory more quickly than the current structure, even if the Premier had been successful in convincing nurses from India to move here to the Yukon, the government is in a situation where they wouldn't be able to allow them to practise anytime soon, so it begs the question: What was the point of the Premier's India trip? Even before the embarrassing situation of the federal government — the Prime Minister — calling out the Indian government and provoking the largest diplomatic dispute between those two countries in history — even before that occurred, it raises the question: If the Premier had been successful in convincing nurses that the Yukon was a good place to move, what would then happen once they came to the territory and found out they were going to have to wait a long time before they would actually be allowed to practise?

In summary, we are looking for more clarity from the government on what steps, if any, they are actually taking to address the issue of expediting the licensing of foreign-trained nurses. If they are taking the approach — as some provinces have — and we have suggested that they consider this in consultation with the YRNA — of developing a shortlist of countries with similar standards in health care education where we are confident, from a government perspective and a regulator's perspective, that they can be allowed to practise in the Yukon and provide the high-quality, reliable health care services that Yukoners need — several provinces have taken that approach — we believe that it is a model worth looking at. But it does importantly require consultation with the Yukon Registered Nurses Association and with nurses generally as well to understand how that can be done, potentially, in a responsible way while ensuring the high-quality standards of health care that Yukoners quite rightfully expect here in the territory.

On the issue of health care recruitment and addressing the health care crisis that has grown under the watch of the Liberal government due, in large part, to their lack of action, press releases aren't going to fix the problem.

We need to see action; we need to see details, and it is important that those details and the specific actions taken by government are actually shared with the YRNA and other stakeholders in advance of the government taking those steps so that it is not a situation of the government acting unilaterally in isolation but is, in fact, true collaboration with Yukon health care professionals, particularly in the case of the Yukon

Registered Nurses Association. Since they are actually a self-regulating profession, it is very important that they be involved in developing the details of the legislation and regulation which they are required to administer. It is important that not just staff of the YRNA but also the board and other members have the ability to see what is being considered.

I want to emphasize that we do believe that action is required to address our health care needs quickly, but “quickly” does not mean that government should act unilaterally. It is important that they actually consult with our health care professionals who are affected by it, particularly, in this case, the Yukon Registered Nurses Association.

I look forward to additional information during Committee of the Whole, and we will have a number of questions.

**Ms. White:** I did reach out to the Yukon Registered Nurses Association when the *Act to amend the Registered Nurses Profession Act (2023)* was tabled last week. I also asked them if they had a chance to see it prior to tabling, and they said that they were involved and that there was consultation ahead of time, but they didn’t get a chance to see it. So, they had a chance to read it and then we talked again. They said that most of what they had asked for is seen in the amendments before us, and that is a good thing. At the centre of all their work, the Yukon Registered Nurses Association upholds patient safety, cultural safety, and protection of the public. By expanding the definition of who can be registered, we are expanding the number of nurses who will also uphold patient safety, cultural safety, and public protection.

But I do have concerns about what we won’t have a chance to look at, and that is what possible regulations for future things could look at. There was an e-mail sent from an employee at the Department of Community Services that stated that the minister’s intent is to repeal all health professions legislation and replace it with a single act. So, I want to know if the *Registered Nurses Profession Act* will be repealed as part of that process.

The 2021 mandate letter, July 5 — the Premier’s mandate letter to the Minister of Community Services included direction to begin work to revise the *Health Professions Act* to improve how we regulate health service professionals, which brings me to this report, which is called *An Assessment of Yukon’s Framework for Regulating Health Professionals*.

The YRNA was asked to participate in a review process when this report was being done — with other health professionals. When they were going through this process, they believed that if government was going to a separate act that was going to have an arm’s-length regulatory process — away from government — that they were in support of that. So, based on their understanding and their participation in this assessment — the review that was done for this report, *An Assessment of Yukon’s Framework for Regulating Health Professionals* — they passed a motion to dissolve the Yukon Registered Nurses Association in favour of a new arm’s-length-from-government regulatory body for all health professionals.

But it seems that the government has chosen not to do what the YRNA and others had asked for, nor what was

recommended in the report regarding the regulation of health care professionals in the Yukon, and so I do have questions about that.

Is the government planning on becoming the regulator of nurses in the territory as well as other health professionals in the future? Does the minister see a conflict of interest with the Yukon government being both the service provider, the employer, and the regulator all at once? And does the minister think that his department fits the definition of “arm’s length from government”? Again, it is really important to note that the core principles of the Yukon Registered Nurses Association are that of upholding public safety, cultural safety, and public protection. When they participated in the review process, they really believed that those would be core principles that would be held in any path forward.

So, knowing that an e-mail has been sent from the Department of Community Services that said that it is the intent of the minister to repeal all health professions legislation and replace it with one single act, the question begs: Is this act that we are amending right now one of those acts that is going to be removed? If what the YRNA had thought the top recommendation was hasn’t been accepted by Cabinet, what does the path forward look like? How will that work?

We will have questions around that on a go-forward basis. We do look forward to the debate, because we have questions that we would like the minister to answer. But, really, I think that there is a question for all of us in this room, which is: Do we believe that government can be the employer, the service provider, and the regulator all at one time? Because when we look to other jurisdictions, the answer there is no.

So, I look forward to the debate.

**Deputy Speaker:** If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** As always, it is very interesting to hear the remarks from the Official Opposition on such matters. I noted that the Member for Lake Laberge is again pandemic-washing, trying to strike the two and a half lost years from the record and not give it any credit whatsoever in this House. Of course, I look forward to the discussion we are going to have in Committee in the next little while where we can get into these issues a little bit more robustly.

To the Leader of the Third Party, I appreciate her comments and the fact that she helped correct the record — the incorrect information put forward by the Member for Lake Laberge that there was very little work done on this thing with the nurses. Of course, we worked very closely with the nurses, as did my colleague the Minister of Health and Social Services, who met with the nurses on this and many other issues over the last several months.

Of course, as far as the professional licensing is concerned, yes, we are working on a much more robust, bigger piece of legislation that is going to require a lot more work. This is sort of the first phase of some of that work and, of course, we will get into it in more detail when the Committee comes together.

As far as the Leader of the Third Party's remarks are concerned, we are working with the nurses on some of the concerns that she has raised this afternoon and we will continue to work with them to address them and come to a suitable resolution of those concerns. We will have these much more robust conversations in Committee. I look forward to that discussion.

With that, I am going to take my seat and get on to the vote, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Deputy Speaker:** Are you prepared for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

### Division

**Deputy Speaker:** Division has been called.

### Bells

**Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Agree.

**Mr. Dixon:** Agree.

**Mr. Kent:** Agree.

**Ms. Clarke:** Agree.

**Mr. Cathers:** Agree.

**Ms. McLeod:** Agree.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Agree.

**Mr. Hassard:** Agree.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Agree.

**Ms. White:** Agree.

**MLA Tredger:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the results are 17 yeas, nil nays.

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

*Motion for second reading of Bill No. 33 agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Deputy Speaker leaves the Chair*

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Deputy Chair (MLA Tredger):** Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the committee is general debate on Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

### *Recess*

**Chair (Ms. Blake):** Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

### **Bill No. 211: *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24* — continued**

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

### **Women and Gender Equity Directorate**

**Chair:** Is there any general debate?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Madam Chair, I would like to start our debate today by first welcoming our officials from the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, Deputy Minister Sierra van der Meer and the acting director of women and gender equity, Clare Daitch. Thank you very much for being here to assist with the debate today.

I am very pleased to rise today to present first supplementary estimates for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate for the 2023-24 fiscal year. This supplementary funding speaks to the tremendous work that the directorate is doing to support equity for women and gender-equity-seeking organizations in the territory. Like all the work currently underway at the directorate, it has the potential to create real systemic change for Yukoners.

These supplementary estimates reflect the directorate's priority focus on preventing and reducing gender-based violence. We were pleased to announce our bilateral agreement and Yukon's implementation plan under the federal government's *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence* on October 11, only a few days ago. I will likely be referring to this as the "NAPGBV" throughout my comments.

Gender-based violence is a significant and complex issue that affects the Yukon at rates three to four times higher than the national average. We were pleased to jointly announce with our federal counterparts that the Government of Canada will be investing close to \$16.4 million over four years to support the implementation of the NAPGBV plan.

I am proud of the work we did with the departments of Justice and Health and Social Services to leverage federal funding to make a positive difference and implement concrete actions in the territory for Yukoners. The plan is focused on three priority areas: increasing prevention efforts, reaching underserved and at-risk populations, and stabilizing the gender-based violence prevention sector.

The four-year implementation plan includes many new programs that will reach underserved and most at-risk populations. In order to meet our commitment under this agreement, we requested an additional \$1.895 million in funding for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, all of

which is fully recoverable under the agreement with the Government of Canada.

We will use \$251,000 of this funding to support two full-time term positions to support the work under the NAPGBV. These positions will help play an integral role in supporting the Government of Yukon's role under the agreement. They will help coordinate, communicate, track, and report on the agreement.

We will use another \$220,000 to conduct a program review and stakeholder engagement on gender-based violence. This program review is necessary to work with the gender-equity sector. It will allow us to do an internal scan to understand what is and isn't working within the sector. We will then use the information that we have gathered with the sector to inform future initiatives under our implementation plan. This will ensure that we are both stabilizing the sector and ensuring our investments are effective at preventing and reducing gender-based violence.

Finally, we are asking for approval to use \$1,424,000 in transfer payment agreements to support new initiatives or to enhance existing initiatives related to victim supports and prevention programming. This amount includes \$60,000 to support the work of the Yukon Women's Coalition, and the remainder will be used for two new funding programs that will be managed by the directorate: victim support and other prevention programs. This exceeds the funding request made by the Yukon Women's Coalition on behalf of the sector.

We are requesting approval for \$175,000 in transfer payment agreements for the fiscal year 2023-24. This will support our work with Canada under the crisis hotline agreement. Again, just like the supplementary funds in the NAPGBV, this money is fully recoverable from the Government of Canada. The funding will support increased call volumes and will also increase capacity under this program. This will go a long way to supporting existing crisis hotlines in the Yukon that are responding to gender-based violence. We had this agreement in place with the Government of Canada since 2022-23, and this will continue until 2025-26.

Our last item is for increases under the collective agreement. We are requesting approval for \$95,000. This is to cover collective agreement commitments.

The tangible actions that the Government of Yukon is taking are important in the fight against gender-based violence in Canada and the territory. We look forward to seeing the positive impact that these initiatives will have. I am happy to now take questions from the opposition parties.

**Ms. Clarke:** I would like to thank the officials from the Women and Gender Equity Directorate for joining us here today and also for the briefing provided to opposition members.

My first question is under the gender-based violence national action plan, which is NAPGBV. There is \$220,000 in the budget allocated to conducting a program review and stakeholder engagement on gender-based violence. We were informed that this will be contracted out.

Can the minister provide some more information about this contract? Has it been contracted out and to whom? What is the timeline for this review?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Madam Chair, I'm happy to answer the questions about this important new program and initiative that we have underway for the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*. We have just, in the last couple of weeks, concluded our discussions with the equality sector to determine what their thoughts and needs are. We have concluded those discussions and are now working toward finalizing the details for such a contract. So, we have not awarded any contract as of yet. We'll be making announcements when those contracts become available to the public.

**Ms. Clarke:** The eight organizations that make up the Yukon Women's Coalition wrote the Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate in response to a meeting with the minister focused on the implementation of the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*.

In this letter, they explained that, in order to participate in a coordinated approach to end gender-based violence, these groups need proper core funding. To quote from the letter: "Core funding for women's sector non-profit organizations is at the heart of achieving the goals of the NAP..."

My question is: Why did the government choose to limit the use of the available funding for these organizations strictly to project funding?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** We are doing project funding, as we have identified a need to work with all stakeholders on a program review to understand gaps and strategic investments for the future. While we recognize that there are core funding needs for women and gender-equity-seeking organizations, this will be addressed in the short term through the project funds for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 years. Long-term investments will be considered following program review and engagement.

Our commitment has always been to work with our gender-equity-seeking organizations and to ensure that this sector is stabilized while we go through this review, and we believe that the amounts that will be received exceed the request from the Yukon Women's Coalition.

**Ms. Clarke:** These women's organizations have also requested a formal working relationship with the Yukon government on the rollout of the national action plan funding from the federal government. In particular, they requested an MOU that would demonstrate their inclusion as decision-makers on prioritizing how the funding should roll out.

My question is: Will this project funding allow these organizations to complete and collaborate on the national action plan, as requested?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I want to, of course, reassure the House that we are working directly with the equality-seeking organizations through the program review and engagement process. We worked closely with them throughout, and the equality seeking organizations really worked closely at the national level to inform the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*. I think that the other point is that these negotiations happened across Canada, and they are bilateral agreements between each jurisdiction and Canada.

Again, one of the goals is to stabilize the sector. We are doing that over these first two years. As a result of the program

review and engagement process, we will determine years 3 and 4 in terms of spending, so we are working directly with the organizations through this entire process.

The other part of this is the consideration of other government responsibilities in terms of our relationship and work that we will be doing with this national action plan with Yukon First Nations as well. We just wrapped up the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit-plus accountability forum. I can assure this House that there are a lot of needs throughout the territory, and we need to make the best use of these funds in order to get to the really vulnerable populations who are in immediate need.

**Ms. Clarke:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thanks for that answer. I am going to continue on with the MOU. Has the Yukon government developed such an MOU with the Yukon Women's Coalition? If not, will this be taking place? When does the minister anticipate that being completed?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I believe that the request was for an MOU to be involved in the negotiations for the bilateral agreement. Again, I have to emphasize that this is a bilateral agreement between Yukon and Canada. We chose the approach that we are taking to work closely with the sector to get resources out to them as quickly as possible as they had urgently requested. This is an agreement, as I have described. Throughout Canada, each jurisdiction has an agreement with Canada and those are all bilateral in nature. I think that Yukon is in a really great position to be able to work directly with our equality-seeking groups along with our other partners to ensure that we are meeting the needs in terms of ending gender-based violence in our territory.

**Ms. Clarke:** Madam Chair, can I just get a clarification? I heard that there is a bilateral agreement and that this negotiation is between Yukon and Canada. So, is it the Canadian and the Yukon governments, or is it Canada and the eight organizations?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** It is a bilateral agreement between Canada and Yukon.

**Ms. Clarke:** I will move on to another question.

The \$1.424-million transfer payment agreement for the project funding for these organizations works out to \$62,000 to support new initiatives and \$62,000 to enhance existing initiatives within these organizations. This totals \$124,000 for each organization if they subscribe to both funding streams.

I have three questions. Which organizations are eligible for this funding? Does each organization have to apply for each of the two streams of funding? Has the minister considered streamlining this funding to avoid administrative burden on these organizations?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Organizations currently funded on an ongoing basis by the Women and Gender Equity Directorate can apply for funding related to projects that provide supports to victims and survivors of gender-based violence as well as their families. I will name these organizations: the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, the Yukon Status of Women Council, les Essentielles, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Yukon Women in Trades and

Technology, Queer Yukon Society, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, and the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition. What is available — I believe that there was a correction made within the briefing. It is actually \$69,000 per organization per stream. These organizations are eligible for \$138,000. This is over and above their existing funding.

We have certainly streamlined the application process, because we are already funding these organizations. We already have a lot of the base information, so there has been a simplified funding application process that has been developed that will allow folks to access these funds rather quickly and without a lot of administrative burden. Those are the three questions.

**Ms. Clarke:** In the briefing, we heard that if these eligible organizations do not use the whole \$1.424 million available, any leftover money will be offered to other NGOs. I am wondering if the minister could elaborate on how that might happen. How do you determine which NGOs would be able to apply? What is the deadline for the current eligible groups to apply? When and how will the other NGOs be notified if they are eligible to apply?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** The streams of funding will be open until mid-November. We will know by the end of the calendar year if the funds are used completely by the organizations that are initially eligible. The second intake for NGOs and First Nation governments will be in January. Again, we will determine whether that is needed at that time for this particular part of the fund.

The purpose of the fund is to support two-year projects from 2023-24 and 2024-25 that fulfill one or more of the objectives that we have set out to enhance existing gender-based violence initiatives that support victims, survivors, and their families. Projects that have started and are ongoing are eligible. For example, a program that is being offered two days a week could be offered more frequently, creating new gender-based violence initiatives that support victims, survivors, and their families. This may include, but is certainly not limited to, healing circles, retreats, support and advocacy services, training programs, and professional development. Not eligible for funding are: any organizations not listed above for the initial round; organizations with overdue reporting and financial obligations to Government of Yukon; and any profit-making ventures, fundraising events, and proposals for projects that have been concluded already.

As you can see, we are really working to make this as easy as we possibly can and to really and truly bridge our equality-seeking groups as we go through this review process, which is part of the funding that we are asking for today — for that process to happen.

**Ms. Clarke:** I just have to repeat one question, because I don't think I heard the answer. I might be wrong.

How will the other NGOs be notified when they are eligible to apply? I heard that the second intake for NGOs would be January 2024, so my question is: How will the other NGOs be notified when they are eligible to apply?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** That will be done through a public call for proposals.

**Ms. Clarke:** I have a few questions about the Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity, formerly the "Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues" or "YACWI".

Can the minister please provide more information on this council's mandate and what work they are doing or have done in the last few years?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** What was formerly the "Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues" is now the "Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity". This advisory council has been in place since 1992. So much changed over the last 30 years, including scope and capacity of the directorate — the emergence of equality-seeking community organizations and our understanding of gender really overall.

In recognition of this, we modernized the legislation during the 2023 Spring Sitting. The name of the council was updated to the "Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity". The mandate and membership were also updated to improve effectiveness and better align with the name and mandate. The updated council structure changed, as well, to include two subcommittees.

These changes were developed after years of work with the council members to review the function and focus of the former advisory council. There was extensive work that went into this.

The gist, I think, of the Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity is to advise me, along with all other ministers, on issues affecting women and gender-diverse folks in the Yukon. That is a significant change in terms of being inclusive of the 2SLGBTQIA+ people and communities.

The subcommittee on gender equity will have a focus on equity for women — and the subcommittee on gender equity with a focus on gender diversity and equity for individuals who may face discrimination because of sexual orientation. I will stop there.

**Ms. Clarke:** As of this spring, there were four vacancies out of eight on the council. Are there currently any vacancies on this council? When will these be filled? What have you done for recruitment to fill these since the spring?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Yes, there are vacancies on the Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity. We are in the process of recruiting new members for the council and its subcommittees. This process has been underway. I am looking forward, of course, to working with the council to ensure that gender equity is fully considered across government. Filling these vacancies is extremely important. There are currently three members who were on the previous Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues who are considered to have been appointed to the Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity and would be eligible for appointment to subcommittees with a focus on equity for women.

Currently, there are eight vacancies on the council. The act requires a minimum of four members and two members on each subcommittee.

The advertising — we have worked with the council. I had a chance to meet with them at their last meeting to discuss all of the changes that have happened. The Women and Gender

Equity Directorate has worked closely with them as well. Those postings will be starting next week.

**Ms. Clarke:** This will be my last question, Madam Chair, and then I am going to give the floor to my colleague here.

As we have heard, this council will now contain two subcommittees — gender equity for women and gender diversity for individuals who may face discrimination on gender identity and equity.

My questions are: When will these subcommittees be formed, and who comprises them? How many members? Will these committees meet together or separately?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Again, I have stated that there are eight vacancies on the council. The act requires a minimum of four members and two members on each subcommittee. Also, what the act says is that it will come into force once the members are recruited and appointed to both subcommittees. So, once that occurs, then the act also states that the council and the subcommittees will determine how they interact with each other. We will work closely with them to support them in this regard.

**MLA Tredger:** I will start by thanking the minister for their answers so far and thanking the officials for the briefing and for being here today. I particularly appreciated getting copies of documents related to the national action plan — the year 1 actions — and there are a bunch of things in that pile of documents that we got which have been really helpful, so I appreciate that.

I am really excited to be here, because there have been two really big things that have happened since the last time we were discussing this department between the NAP and the implementation plan for the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls strategy, so I am really excited that we can discuss both of those today.

I want to start with a connection between the two of them. In the document that is called "National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence — Year 1 Actions," I am looking under "Pillar 4" and it says that the Government of Yukon "... will develop a plan in order to identify items that require YG participation."

I will actually start at the beginning of the item. It says: "Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy includes actions to prevent and address gender-based violence perpetuated against Indigenous women, girls and Two-spirit plus people in the Yukon. Government of Yukon (YG) will develop a plan in order to identify items that require YG participation as well as related work that is underway or planned in response to the Yukon Advisory Committee on MMIWGS2+ Implementation Plan for Yukon's MMIWGS2+ Strategy."

I am excited to hear that, because there is a lot in that implementation plan that does require YG's participation. I am wondering if the minister can tell me a bit more about that plan. It says that it's going to start this year and take multiple years, so I am wondering who is leading that plan, how long it is expected to take, and any more details that she can provide.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Again, yes, pillar 4, "Implementing Indigenous-led Approaches" — I believe that Yukon has taken

a tremendous lead in the country in terms of how we've developed the strategy for MMIWG2S+. When we were working toward the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*, pillar 4 was really taking in all of the work that we've done, and MMIWG informed that particular pillar. As shared at the accountability forum — and as I shared this morning in the ministerial statement — a lot of work is already underway. This document that was shared is a tool for tracking the progress and also looks at the intersectionality of the strategies, and that is incredibly important.

We felt that when we were advising and the Indigenous groups were advising on the national action plan, it wasn't something that we had to recreate, because we really had done the groundwork through many years of working with families, working with Yukoners, working through the national inquiry, and then working through assessing all of that information and determining what items and what actions should be in our strategy.

We landed on 31 action items under those four areas — four pathways — and then further determined the implementation plan, which includes 180 milestones. As I shared today, 108 of them — the Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-spirit People identified Yukon government as either a lead or a co-lead to those 108 items. It's very important that we track and keep track.

It seems complex, but in our world, we've been working on it so intensely for, really, seven years, since the inquiry started, to get to where we are today.

In the last couple of years, the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence* — over the last four years, because it would have been a different minister when I started the work at the national level and then bridged it through until now when we took the declaration to end gender-based violence in Canada, and it has resulted in this national action plan. We felt that it was very important and advised at the national level to ensure that we're not having to recreate approaches, especially in jurisdictions that have already defined what those Indigenous-led approaches should be.

**MLA Tredger:** Thank you to the minister for that. I understand that a tremendous amount of work has gone into getting us to this point of having this action plan. My questions really are about making sure that we have next steps and that this gets carried forward.

I am wondering about who is going to track all of these 108 actions that are happening across YG. Who keeps track and who plans and makes sure that they are all happening? I know that there are two positions to do that for the national action plan. Are there similar positions to track the progress on the implementation strategy and for *Changing the Story*?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** The accountability for, well, not only the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit+ people strategy — accountability has been a foundational principle throughout the entire development of it and is with the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence* as well. They are so connected, to the point where we have really committed, within the accountability forum, to also

having a written annual report to be released at the end of the year every year.

That is written into the strategy. Women and Gender Equity Directorate will be the lead in tracking on behalf of our government and ensuring that we are working in such a way that will — because it is such a cross-government commitment and is in every single one of our mandate letters within government.

As we move forward with the Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, we are in the process now of — and I did speak about it a few times during the accountability forum. We are working to now re-vision that Yukon advisory committee to work toward really implementing this strategy. We are working closely with all of our partners. We have committed to working toward having a new structure in place by April 1 that will include the accountability, leadership, and the technical side of implementing this, because there are many, many partners in this. The advisory committee has identified different leads on a number of these initiatives that include a number of milestones. At the technical level is where much of that will be sorted out in terms of who will be leading and how that will be done. There isn't another, I think, strategy in Canada that is like this. We have not been able to identify one, so this is very different in terms of taking a whole-region approach to addressing these deep systemic issues in our territory.

I know that, even at the national level, we had a great presentation from Jennifer Moore Rattray, who is looking at the establishment of an Ombudsperson for Indigenous matters in Canada. It was a call — I think 1.7 — within the inquiry's final report that is to establish this Ombudsperson. In her report to the Yukon this week, she actually made it part of the recommendations to mirror some of the work that we have done in the Yukon around accountability.

It's definitely a work in progress. We have done this through the entire process, and I think that's another thing I would like to speak to quickly. The Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls has evolved over the whole time and we have redefined our terms of reference from 2015 to 2023. Initially, they were formed to ensure that an inquiry happened, and then we redid our terms of reference to support the inquiry to happen, then we redid our terms of reference again to respond to the inquiry, and now we are at the stage of implementing. It's part of future-proofing the work that needs to be done.

**MLA Tredger:** I thank the minister for that answer. I am looking forward to seeing how that council evolves and what shape and form they take. I do think it's going to be important that, within the Yukon government, there is someone or some people who are responsible for coordinating all these many actions through all the different departments in the same way that there are positions to do that for the national action plan.

I hope that this can be prioritized, because there are so many pieces to this, so many different departments, and so many different public servants who are going to have to carry it out. I think it's going to be really important that there is that central piece.

What I would like to do now is talk a little bit more about a couple items from the implementation plan. There are many, many there. I have pulled out a few, which is not to say at all that the others aren't important. I want to start by discussing a few of them, and I am going to start with 2.8a, which is about transportation, because this is actually where we left off in the spring when we last debated this.

I had asked about, in particular, taxi safety. The minister said that she could bring back more information about what was happening within the Yukon government regarding taxi safety at that time.

I am wondering what the Yukon government is doing to ensure taxi safety within Whitehorse and then inter-community transit. Specifically, in the taxi safety report, there were a number of recommendations specifically for the Yukon government. One was that the Yukon government reviews the criteria they use to select taxi companies to transport vulnerable individuals.

I will leave it with that one and maybe the minister can comment.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Ensuring safe transportation has been a long-standing issue in Yukon communities but in the City of Whitehorse as well. I certainly appreciate the report that was released in 2022 by the Yukon Women's Coalition, which reinforces that more work needs to be done to ensure that women and all Yukoners can get where they need to safely. We are very pleased to see there have been steps taken by the City of Whitehorse to improve taxi safety. More work is needed in order for women, girls, and two-spirit people to feel safe while they use taxi services.

Within the strategy, you will see it detailed a bit more in the implementation plan. This has been one of our 12 priority areas. We are looking at this from a number of different perspectives — from the sexualized assault response team and that work that we are doing right now to look at the transportation and communication needs around that work as we bridge it into the communities.

I was very happy to hear Mayor Cabott reconfirming her commitment to the strategy for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit-plus people. This is an area that we will be working closely with the City of Whitehorse on around the taxi services. I think we all have a role to play, but I see that as being one of the areas that the City of Whitehorse — in regard to transportation here in the city — can take a lead on, and we will be working closely with them around this. It remains one of the top 12 priorities within the strategy.

When you go through the strategy, you will see that identified at the top of each one. There was a standalone document for this, and now it's embedded into the whole document.

**MLA Tredger:** Just to really focus on the Yukon — the things that lie within the responsibility of the Yukon government — has the Yukon government reviewed the criteria that they used to select taxi companies to transport vulnerable individuals?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** This is part of the actions that are underway now. Each department, especially the public-facing departments, has a different approach. I think I spoke a little bit about this at our last debate. This is part of the work that is still underway.

**MLA Tredger:** Does the minister know when that review will be completed?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I didn't hear that; I'm sorry.

**MLA Tredger:** Does the minister know when that review — the review of the criteria that YG uses to select taxi companies to transport vulnerable individuals — does she know when that review will be completed?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I'll just go through some responses that we have provided previously to reassure the member that the work is underway.

Yukon's strategy on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls — as has been identified here today, on 2.8 on transportation and communication to create safe and affordable transportation and communication options to and between Yukon communities — the Yukon advisory committee is actively working on this part of the implementation plan. Again, I have already spoken about those 12 priorities that this remains part of. When you look at the strategy itself and the now full implementation plan, you will see a number of key considerations that will be taken into consideration. Part of that is the Yukon Women's Coalition's *Taxi Safety Report* of 2021, but there are a number of other key considerations in the strategy that we will be considering as this work continues and is underway.

Victim Services adjusts the taxi companies based on feedback from their partners and clients, including information obtained through the taxi survey. The sexualized assault response team weekend accompaniment team, through Victim Services, has developed an operational policy on transportation for workers to transport victims to and from services to avoid the use of taxis for victims. If providing transportation isn't a possibility for the sexualized response team, weekend accompaniment team workers can also offer to follow the taxi in their vehicle to destinations or to accompany the victim in the taxi.

In terms of the Department of Education, they select taxi companies through a competitive tendering process and follow procurement directives and awards based on that. They have developed the terms and conditions with the Student Support Services unit, based on the needs of the student and family who access the program and feedback received regarding the overall operation and level of service. Education also has specific criteria for drivers and the vehicles, including requirements for vulnerable sector checks and first aid, among other performance requirements. The contractor will make every effort to maintain driver assignments to provide a consistent and predictable service for the students. The department has previously cancelled a contract when the company was not meeting the contract performance requirements.

Terms of the Department of Health and Social Services and the Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services provide taxis to support some vulnerable Yukoners. The Mental Wellness



and Substance Use Services offers taxis for clients coming to and from withdrawal management. The Referred Care Clinic may also provide taxi slips to and from appointments, if necessary and appropriate. Income support provides funds for taxis as well as services to support clients in accessing transportation for reasons including accessing medical services, fleeing abusive situations, or other emergent appointments.

Additionally, clients of income support who are eligible for schedule B items are provided with transportation funds to use at their own discretion, which may include accessing taxi services. Income support only provides authorization orders to vendors in good standing. There are a number of areas — this continues to be work that we are focused on, as it relates to a number of key strategic initiatives, such as the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls strategy. It is also a consideration, I believe, under *Putting People First* and the substance use health emergency, and it is also an area under the sexualized assault response team.

There are a number of ways that we are focusing on this — not just in the City of Whitehorse but throughout the entire Yukon.

**MLA Tredger:** Thank you to the minister. I actually really appreciated that level of detail, and if I can offer a suggestion, I think that there are a lot of people who are still really nervous, for lots of good reasons, about taking taxis, and I think that it would be helpful to them to know about the work that the Yukon government is doing to make sure that the taxis they take are safe.

I want to talk a little bit about some of the counselling services that are described in the implementation plan for *Changing the Story*. In 1.2.a., it talks about dedicated counselling services and supports for family members of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit-plus people. In 1.2.b., it talks about dedicated counselling services and supports for families affected by the unmarked graves.

This might be a slightly different question, but I will mention it now in case it isn't. In 1.6.b., it talks about dedicated family-focused counselling and therapy support services to support family units.

The Yukon government is at least a co-lead on all of those. I am wondering what that is going to look like.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** In the areas that have been identified by the member opposite, the Yukon government has been named by the advisory committee as a potential co-lead, and there are a number of other leads within those that we need to work with — one of them being the Yukon advisory committee. As we are working through this next step of restructuring the oversight, leadership, and accountability for this entire strategy that connects to so many others, we will continue. That is really at the place where many of the details will be worked out in terms of who will be the full lead on the items that have been mentioned. I do know for sure that we will be a partner to it, but I am not exactly sure if we will be the lead on it, so we can't really speak on behalf of others who are named in this until we have worked with them more closely.

**MLA Tredger:** I wonder if the minister can explain a little bit more. I understand there is an implementation plan, and it sounds like there is another more technical plan coming, which will have the details of who is going to be the lead and some of the details of what those will look like.

That might not be quite accurate, so perhaps the minister could just explain to me a little bit more about how we are going to get from this implementation plan to services on the ground and what the steps there are and the timelines, if possible.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Again, it is still early days in terms of the entirety of this plan being released. We did release, in 2022, those first 12 priority areas. For a lot of our partners, it is still very early days in terms of working toward really determining the leads. As we report out on this on an annual basis, it is at that technical table where we will start to identify — we have a good sense of what that will look like right now, but we will be identifying the departments within the Government of Yukon that will be leading certain areas within this implementation plan. I don't see another — it is kind of a living document, so things may become more of a priority than others, as time goes by.

The way I have always envisioned it is that there would be, you know — as the leads are identified, then there would be a little bit more detailed action plans that will be addressed, and then a way for us to easily report back to all of our partners but to our families as well around the steps that are being taken to fulfill the milestones and reconfirm some of the milestones, as well, because this was an implementation plan that was developed by the Yukon advisory committee. There will be more detail that will go into achieving each of the milestones, and I think that will be determined as we go forward.

**Chair:** Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Is there any further general debate?

**MLA Tredger:** I thank the minister and the officials for being back to answer just a few more questions — I promise.

I have some questions on the national action plan. I want to dig into the numbers a little bit. There is approximately \$1.4 million for transfer payment agreements that were discussed earlier. I was doing the math on this. There are 10 organizations eligible for \$69,000 per stream — so, two streams — and I think, based on my back-of-the-napkin math, that adds up to about \$1.38 million. So, there is about \$44,000 left over, and I am just wondering what that extra money is for.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** We are actually including funding — and I did talk about it in my opening comments. There will be \$60,000 for the Yukon Women's Coalition. It actually is approximately \$20,000 more than the ask that we have today,

which we will be funding through dollars that are already existing within the Women and Gender Equity Directorate.

**MLA Tredger:** Thank you. That's really helpful, and sorry for missing it in the opening comments. It's really good to know that the Yukon Women's Coalition will also be getting some funding through that.

So, in those transfer payment agreements — usually, in a transfer payment agreement, there is a percentage that can be used for administrative fees — or not fees, administrative costs that typically include things like the executive director salary, like the electricity bills, the phone bills, and all those things that aren't project-specific but really do need to happen in order for the organization to be able to administer that project.

What's that percentage for those TPAs?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** The administrative costs within the funding streams will be up to 10 percent of the total request from the Women and Gender Equity Directorate.

**MLA Tredger:** Thank you for that. One of my concerns about this funding, which has already come up, is that it is project funding and not core funding. So, it's for, from what the minister said, either expanding existing projects or starting new projects — and that's great. Of course, we want to see expanded and new projects, but that's not what was asked for by the organizations; they asked for core funding. What they said is that they don't actually have enough money right now to do the work they are doing right now.

The solution to not having enough money to do the work that they're doing right now is not to give them new money for a new project; it's to fund them for the work that they're already doing.

Core funding is so hard to get for organizations, and it's so key, because when you're chasing proposal after project to try to get enough money to cobble together to pay your staff and pay your ED and keep the lights on, make sure you have computers that work and make sure you can pay a janitor to come clean your space — like, there are so many costs that aren't project-specific, but they really and truly are crucial in order to keep these organizations running, and that's not addressed here. I think that's a missed opportunity; I think that's a shame.

I was interested in the number for admin fees, because I'm curious — I want to say this question really respectfully, because I have a huge amount of respect for the work that the Women and Gender Equity Directorate does, and I think they're well-resourced to do it. I don't think the organizations on the ground are — the NGOs — are as well-resourced to do it.

So, I'm wondering what percentage of the national action plan is going to go toward administering it. I know there are two positions already — the two positions we have here to coordinate, track, and report on the agreement. That's about six percent of what the funding will be for this year. I'm wondering if we have a sense, across the government, of what percentage of that funding will go to administration.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** We have committed to working with the equality seeking groups to do the review. It is very important, and we are funding that; we don't expect the

organizations to fund that. We have allocated part of our supplementary budget to include that work to do the review, and we have worked with organizations to determine this process that we are in right now to include the bridge funding. We believe that there will be NGOs that the project fund will definitely be a bridge for while we go through the review, and we are very mindful of the needs. We are funding the Yukon Women's Coalition separately for the work that they will do on this review and for other aspects of the NAPGBV.

In terms of your question about our administration, it is seven percent. So, it is lower than what we would be allocating for the 10 percent that will be allowable through the funding agreements.

**MLA Tredger:** Thank you for that, and I appreciate that about the administration. I mean, I think it is also important to consider the amount of resources that are available through the Yukon government. I don't know exactly how the department budgeting works, but when you call IT, when you need a space to work, or when you need a computer — all those things — there is a lot of support provided through Yukon government departments that non-profits have to do on their own. They have to come up with ways to write those policies and find those resources on their own. It is really, really tough for those organizations to try to make ends meet while trying to do their work.

Something I hear — this isn't specific to these non-profits but across the non-profit sector — is that they can't keep up with wages. They cannot afford to pay their workers comparable wages to what people make at the government, and that means that they lose staff constantly to the government. Please know that I am not suggesting that Yukon government is overpaying their employees; I'm suggesting that they are not funding non-profits to pay comparable wages.

I know that this decision has been made for this funding. I think, as I have done every Sitting since I started this job, I am going to say again — just a plea for core funding for these organizations so that they can do that work with some confidence and security, instead of spending so much of their efforts trying to figure out how to get to the next month.

That is all of my questions for this department for now. I do want to thank the department again, and please know that I have huge respect for the work that the department is doing and the people in that department. I think they are doing a phenomenal job, so thank you to them. Thank you to the minister for this conversation today, and I will cede the floor.

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I echo the comments from the member from the New Democratic Party, and I definitely hold my hands up to the directorate, as well, in terms of — you know, it is a small directorate that provides support throughout the entire government. The work I have been able to work with them on over these last many years — almost seven years now when it was the Women's Directorate and now the Women and Gender Equity Directorate — has been phenomenal in terms of the support of all of the work that we did on the national inquiry to — there are so many accomplishments, I think, that we have been able to experience, from that work on the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, to the *National Action*

*Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*, to expanding the sexualized assault response team and the *LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan*. That is a huge area of focus as well.

Now, just really moving into the implementation of all of this — the work on the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and the national action plan. We are so welcoming of the new Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity that is going to be helpful to us. Also, you know, something we haven't talked about for a while is the gender inclusivity and diversity analysis, which is another area that the directorate supports.

I, too, echo that we have a small directorate, but it is quite mighty in terms of the work that they do. We are leading the country in so many ways. I thank you for being here today, and I thank the members opposite for the thoughtful questions and the debate today.

**Chair:** Is there any further general debate on Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate?

Seeing none, we will proceed to line-by-line.

**MLA Tredger:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

**Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, cleared or carried**

**Chair:** The Member for Whitehorse Centre has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Unanimous consent has been granted.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$2,165,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

***Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to***

***Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,165,000 agreed to***

***Women and Gender Equity Directorate agreed to***

**Chair:** The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will recess for five minutes.

*Recess*

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

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

**Department of Highways and Public Works**

**Chair:** Is there any general debate?

**Hon. Mr. Clarke:** Madam Chair, I am pleased to speak to the supplementary budget for the Department of Highways and Public Works in the Fall Sitting of the Legislative Assembly 2023. To my left, I have Richard Gorczyca, assistant deputy minister, and to my right, Catherine Harwood, the Deputy Minister of Highways and Public Works, in support.

This request highlights our department's dedication to going above and beyond for all Yukoners by providing safe and efficient highways, airstrips, buildings, and information systems. HPW is proud to work for Yukoners. We provide necessary services throughout Yukon's transportation network, like road repairs and upgrades. We build, maintain, and upgrade government buildings, including schools. We provide internal services for the rest of Yukon government, including IT, procurement, and asset management. All of this requires careful planning so that, each year, we do our absolute best to allocate the resources needed to do this vital work.

Before I speak about the supplementary budget before us today, I would like to give some updates on some key projects that are improving infrastructure across the territory.

This fall, we are celebrating the completion of the Carmacks bypass project — a component under the Yukon Resource Gateway program. This project has been a collaborative effort between the Yukon government and the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation. The new road and bridge will create safer road conditions by enabling industrial trucks to go around the community of Carmacks. Pelly Construction Ltd. was awarded the \$29.6-million contract to construct the new road and bridge on November 3, 2021. The project is now substantially complete and we will be attending an opening ceremony soon. I am happy to report that this project is coming in on time and on budget and includes three percent more First Nation labour than the contractor's ambitious original commitment — a testament to economic reconciliation.

This past fall, we also made progress on the north Klondike upgrades. The north Klondike Highway is a vital link for industry and a well-travelled route for Yukoners and tourists from around the world. Through the federal government's national trade corridors fund, the Department of Highways and Public Works is upgrading critical sections of the north Klondike Highway over a 10-year period. There are 209 kilometres between Carmacks and the Dempster Highway intersection that are eligible for reconstruction under the national trade corridors fund. These upgrades will increase safety, improve driving conditions, better connect the Yukon's resources to markets, and increase the resiliency of the highway to the impacts of climate change.

Since 2019, we have completed the construction of approximately 57 kilometres of highway. These upgrades also include replacing and upgrading some of the aging bridges. For example, the Crooked Creek bridge was open to public traffic

in the fall of 2022, and for those Yukoners who have driven that, you will know that there is a completely different profile of that valley now because there really was quite a circuitous access to a very small bridge and then you came out of that bridge. It now looks completely different and it looks like an amazing safety improvement, in my opinion. The remaining asphalt paving, minor civil works, and final cleanup was completed this past summer. I am pleased to report that this bridge replacement project came in underbudget.

A second example is the Moose Creek bridge rehabilitation that is now substantially complete, with some final work being finished this fall.

Another major infrastructure project happening along a Yukon highway is the Dempster fibre project. While not fully complete yet, the project is progressing well. This project began back in July 2022; I think that it was sooner than, that but I certainly can confirm that. It will extend 800 kilometres of high-speed fibre line along the Dempster Highway from Dawson City, Yukon to Inuvik, Northwest Territories. This is an essential piece of communications infrastructure, as it will benefit both territories by providing a backup line in the event of a service disruption. As of September 2023, 780 kilometres of cable conduit have been installed and 405 kilometres of cable have been installed inside the conduit. This includes installation under three major rivers: the Mackenzie, the Peel, and the Arctic Red.

This project goes beyond just improving telecommunications. It is an example of how we can work with Indigenous governments in order to create opportunities for local communities. The Government of Yukon is actively engaged with three Yukon First Nations and five Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories whose traditional territories the project passes through.

Under a First Nation and Indigenous participation plan for the project, 20 percent of the contract value is allocated toward subcontracting, employment, and training for First Nations in the Yukon and Indigenous groups in the Northwest Territories. This provides opportunities for First Nations and Indigenous businesses and subcontractors in the form of direct employment benefits and training and capacity development. We currently anticipate that the construction will be complete in the fall of 2024, with the operation of the line beginning in early 2025.

I had the opportunity to travel on the Dempster Highway this past summer and saw the installations and general construction taking place. It certainly is an engineering marvel.

Another exciting project happening in the northern region of our territory is the installation of solar panels and battery energy storage systems at two highway maintenance camps located along the Dempster Highway. These camps currently rely only on diesel generators for power. Installing a renewable energy system at these sites will allow the generators to run significantly less often and will replace approximately 100,000 litres of fossil fuel each year, further reducing our reliance on diesel-generated electricity. These systems are expected to be ready by the end of the fall season. It is great to see these projects move forward and we are actively looking into more ways to incorporate renewable energy.

Highways and Public Works didn't just build infrastructure; we also removed outdated and aging buildings to create space for future development. In 2022, Macaulay Lodge was demolished using a local First Nation company to do the work. This was a great example of the Yukon First Nation procurement policy in action. This year, we demolished the Carmacks district office and the Carmacks grader station, which were beyond their useful life. All three of the demolitions came in underbudget.

The future plans for these sites are still being determined, but we are always seeking new ways to use space better to serve the territory and Yukoners.

As everyone knows, Highways and Public Works maintains our transportation network, allowing travellers to stay connected. While the department does its best to plan for maintenance costs and required upgrades, we cannot control or predict all possible circumstances that will affect our infrastructure.

In recent years, climate change has created unprecedented challenges in planning for our seasonal operation and maintenance costs. We are experiencing increasing impacts to our infrastructure, and the events that cause the damage are often unpredictable and occur with little notice. This spring, there were extremely high snow packs and high groundwater in the Klondike region, which was unusual for that area. When the spring weather finally came, the meltwater quickly overwhelmed the local river systems. Water flooded over the river banks and impacted buildings, highways, and even the Dawson City airport. Within one week, there were multiple washouts along our major highways. These washouts required numerous Highways and Public Works crews to give their full attention and resources to repairing the road.

When the Dempster Highway washed out, we had crews on the ground within an hour to address the situation. While fixing this washout, two more washouts occurred on the Dempster, causing even further damage. The Highways and Public Works crews in the Klondike area worked tirelessly, and the Dempster Highway was reopened two days later to single-lane traffic.

On the same day of the Dempster Highway washouts, the Clear Creek bridge, at kilometre 594 of the Klondike Highway, was damaged due to high water. As soon as the department got word of the extreme high water at Clear Creek, we sent engineers to the site that evening to assess the situation. Based on the severity of the damage, we hired a contractor to assist with the required repair work. Just when the bridge was fully repaired and almost ready to open, the north Klondike Highway also experienced a washout just a few kilometres south of the Dempster cut-off. Thankfully, it was Highways and Public Works staff who found the washout and we had staff on the ground fixing the issue within hours. They were able to repair the washout the same day and have the road reopened by 6:00 p.m. that night.

With all the road washouts, keeping the Dawson City Airport open was even more essential. This required additional workers and equipment to mitigate the loss of power and water pooling on the runway. The total cost for the flood efforts,

including the highway washouts and airport management, was just over \$1 million. I would certainly at this point like to thank all Highways and Public Works crews that responded to the emergency and rose to the challenge. I had the opportunity in my tours of the Klondike area this summer to attend at the Dawson City Airport and get a good visual as to how saturated the ground was there for a period of time. I was advised that pumps were operating almost continuously for 30 days. Those were extraordinary circumstances, and the Highways and Public Works staff, placer miners, and Dawson residents in general rose to the occasion to keep roads open, keep the Dawson City Airport operational, and mitigate any possible flood damage to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in farm. I know that I can speak on behalf of Yukoners when I say that we appreciate the work that you do.

In addition to responding to emergencies in our expansive transportation network, we also help to maintain and open many resource access roads. We know that mining is an important economic driver for the territory and that miners need early access to their claims to maximize the short mining season in the Yukon.

As you know, some roads in the Yukon are only maintained during the summer. In response to requests from industry, the department opened certain roads ahead of schedule this year so that mining companies could better plan for their seasonal operations. On March 10, 2023, the department opened the Hunker loop, which includes Bonanza Creek Road and Hunker Creek Road. On March 17, 2023, the department opened the Top of the World Highway. The crew also continued clearing and maintenance on the Top of the World Highway to Sixtymile in April.

In order to open resource access roads early, Highways and Public Works must dedicate some additional resources to remove snow, clear ice, and patch gravel. The Yukon government recognizes the importance of early access to these work sites for many in the mining industry, which is why we have committed to a planned early season opening once again in 2024. While the opening of any road is somewhat dependent on the conditions of the weather, the department is working toward an early opening before April. Highways and Public Works is developing a schedule for road openings next spring and will communicate with stakeholders in advance of the openings.

In order to provide this level of service in the 2023-24 season, we require an additional \$660,000. The last supplementary request we have is in regard to the collective bargaining agreement increase. Like all other departments, HPW requires additional funds to account for the new collective agreement. The additional \$5.6 million will go toward paying the hard-working employees at Highways and Public Works.

Beyond our supplementary request, I would like to speak to the capital reductions in this supplementary budget. The Government of Yukon evaluates capital budgets on an ongoing basis in order to improve the efficiency of capital spending in alignment with the territory's capital infrastructure needs.

Each year, the supplementary budget provides a chance to address new and emerging opportunities. The Government of Yukon is currently negotiating with the Municipality of Skagway on the construction of a marine service platform, which we have heard about in the House at some length already. It will be capable of supporting ore export infrastructure for Yukon mining companies as part of the municipality's port redevelopment project. This is an important project in order to secure long-term tidewater access for Yukon's mining industry. As part of the supplementary budget, the Department of Highways and Public Works has identified several initiatives where funding can be reallocated in order to support the ore export opportunity.

Before I close, I would just perhaps provide some additional detail about some of the specific work that has been done in the last year. For the 2023-24 season, final resurfacing totals by the end of the construction season will be approximately 136 kilometres of BST application and 45 kilometres of gravel road resurfacing.

Line painting of approximately 80,000 litres of paint was applied in 2023. The painting trucks travel at an estimated 14 kilometres per hour. For persons listening at home, we have 3,340 kilometres of white lines and 2,224 kilometres of yellow lines to maintain across the network. Line paint in the Yukon lasts anywhere between one and four years, depending on traffic volumes. To keep lines in an acceptable condition, in 2023, we painted approximately 800 kilometres of white lines and 950 kilometres of yellow lines.

With respect to vegetation control, which I am sure will be the subject of some conversation and debate with Highways and Public Works, since the beginning of the program in 2019, we have brushed 2,387 kilometres and mowed 1,014 kilometres of vegetation. This totals 3,401 kilometres cleared by the department. We issued 57 contracts for vegetation control in 2022, 17 of which were awarded to First Nation businesses. We issued 23 contracts for vegetation control in 2023-24 for 984 kilometres, and we completed approximately 620 kilometres of clover mowing in 2023-24.

With respect to bridges, there were approximately 200 overweight requests that were processed each year. In 2022-23, the bridge inspection team conducted 35 safety and monitoring inspections, 70 detailed bridge inspections, and 120 structural culvert inspections.

I just would conclude that I would like reaffirm our commitment to providing Yukoners with safe and efficient transportation systems. The Department of Highways and Public Works prioritizes the safety of Yukoners, and we are proud to continue providing these services. I look forward to answering questions in Committee of the Whole debate for Highways and Public Works, but now, seeing the time, Deputy Chair, I move that you report progress.

**Deputy Chair:** It has been moved by the Member for Riverdale North that the Chair report progress.

*Motion agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

**Deputy Chair:** It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

*Motion agreed to*

*Deputy Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Deputy Speaker (Ms. Blake):** I will now call the House to order.

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

### **Chair's report**

**MLA Tredger:** Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*, and directed me to report progress.

**Deputy Speaker:** You have heard the report from the Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

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

*The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.*

### **The following sessional papers were tabled October 18, 2023:**

35-1-114

*Yukon Development Corporation 2022 Annual Report*  
(Streicker)

35-1-115

*Yukon Energy 2022 Annual Report* (Streicker)