



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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Number 220

1<sup>st</sup> Session

35<sup>th</sup> Legislature

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## HANSARD

Monday, November 18, 2024 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## 2024 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	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Joseph Mewett
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Monday, November 18, 2024 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

**Withdrawal of motions**

**Chair:** The Chair wishes to announce changes to the Order Paper. Motion No. 1115, notice of which was given by the Member for Lake Laberge, was not placed on the Notice Paper, as it is out of order.

In addition, Motion No. 1119, notice of which was given by the Leader of the Third Party, was not placed on the Notice Paper, as it is out of order.

**DAILY ROUTINE**

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

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**Speaker:** Are there any visitors to be introduced?  
*Visitors introduced*

**Speaker:** Tributes.

**TRIBUTES**

**In recognition of the Yukon Screen Media Industry Awards**

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of all members of the Yukon Legislature. I had the honour this past weekend to speak at the Yukon screen media awards. It was the second annual.

This is the second year that we have had the pleasure of seeing these awards as part of the Yukon Screen Media Industry Conference, and it is already clear that they will be an annual highlight. I want to commend the Screen Production Yukon Association for hosting this conference, with special thanks to the SPYA board. The event is an excellent venue for film professionals to connect, and I hope that all in attendance had a great weekend of panels, screenings, and conversations.

And now, of course, I want to offer big congratulations to the winners of this year's awards. Congratulations to Kelly Milner of Shot in the Dark Productions, the recipient of the Viewfinder Award. The Viewfinder Award recognizes exceptional talent and innovation — someone who is committed to raising the bar.

Kelly is being recognized particularly for her creation of *Northern Tails* and developing talent and infrastructure to create a puppeteering production here in the Yukon. I hope that many people have the chance to enjoy the *Northern Tails* screening this past weekend and coming. I think that Kelly let me know that the release is this January maybe. From bike trails to local furs to traditional knowledge, thank you, Kelly, for the impact that you have had on Yukon professional film.

For the Big Picture Award, congratulations to the Yukon Film Society. The Big Picture Award is bestowed for significant contributions or long-standing participation in the screen media industry. The Yukon Film Society is being recognized for their contribution to their production and exhibition of film here in the Yukon. This includes equipment rentals, training, reopening, and operation of the Yukon Theatre and organizing the Available Light Film Festival. The society has been producing the film festival for over 20 years. It is the largest festival in Canada's north and fosters connection between local filmmakers and the wider industry. We recently stood in tribute to the Yukon Film Society for supporting film and screen media in the community for 40 years, since 1984.

These awards are a celebration of the talented and innovative professionals who are truly bringing this industry to new heights. And, of course, this sector greatly contributes to the enrichment of our lives through art, promoting connection, and sharing the Yukon's story.

Young people growing up north of 60 can sometimes struggle to see how their interests and passions can lead to a career without leaving for the Outside. These professionals, makers, and creators are showing young people that a job in this industry can be a reality here in the Yukon. They are proving that an interest in skills like directing, production, design, and even puppeteering can lead to a fulfilling and impactful career right here in the north.

*Applause*

**In recognition of the Yukon Public Legal Education Association and Law Line service 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to celebrate a significant milestone in our community: the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yukon Public Legal Education Association and its Law Line service.

Yukon Public Legal Education Association traces its roots back to the public legal education subcommittee, which was tasked with ensuring that the public was aware that young offenders could access a diversion program rather than proceeding through what was called at that time "juvenile court". The public legal education subcommittee's mandate was gradually broadened to include more general legal information and they began publishing weekly columns in a local newspaper on legal information. Then, on December 3, 1984, the members of the subcommittee created the Yukon Public Legal Education Association, which we call YPLEA today.

For four decades, YPLEA has been dedicated to helping Yukoners navigate the law with confidence by providing free legal information and resources that empower individuals to better understand their rights and responsibilities. One of these services that they provide is called the Law Line. Any Yukoner can call in with an issue that they are facing and find tools to connect maybe with a lawyer or to walk them through applicable legislation or to find out what resources are available or next steps that they can take.

The Law Line has become an essential service offering accessible, reliable legal information on many topics like

family law, wills and estates, civil litigation, business corporations, bankruptcy law, adult protection and guardianship, small claims, criminal matters, and summary conviction matters. For many Yukoners, the Law Line is the first step in gaining information about legal matters, helping Yukoners make informed decisions.

In 2022-23, YPLEA provided services to approximately 1,155 individuals, with 15 percent of their total call volume from communities outside of Whitehorse. YPLEA's core mission has always been to promote access to justice and to ensure that all Yukoners have access to the knowledge and support that they need when a legal issue arises.

Their public commitment to public legal education has helped to bridge the gap between legal complexities and the people who need to understand them. Their work has directly contributed to a stronger, more informed community where individuals feel empowered to address legal matters with greater confidence.

The Law Line has been a valuable resource for thousands of Yukoners, providing them with the tools that they might need to navigate legal challenges. I want to extend my sincere congratulations to the Yukon Public Legal Education Association on their 40 years of dedicated service to Yukoners. Their expertise and passion for legal education has made a lasting impact on our community.

*Applause*

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yukon Public Legal Education Association, formed in 1984 as an organization to assist Yukoners in accessing legal services and information.

Its Law Line service has been instrumental in helping people from across the territory make sense of what can be a very complicated judicial system. A lawyer is on staff at the association to provide legal information, answer questions about process and legislation, and help with forms and referrals. In addition to having a lawyer on staff, the association also has an administrative director and community navigator who help Yukoners access a variety of resources online and in print to help navigate judicial matters such as family law, civil litigation, wills and estates, and much more.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Yukon Public Legal Education Association staff and board members past and present for their service to their fellow Yukoners and congratulate them on this milestone.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP in recognition of the Yukon Law Line and 40 years of helping Yukoners with questions about legislation and legal processes.

The law can be intimidating, but the Yukon Law Line has been empowering people with the information that they need to navigate the system. We should never underestimate what this organization's commitment to justice, education, and community service has meant to Yukoners over the last four

decades. Their dedication to providing accessible legal education and resources has made a profound impact on countless people and families across the Yukon.

So, we thank the team at the Yukon Public Legal Education Association for their unwavering dedication and for being a pillar and resource of knowledge in our community. Here's to many more years of success, support, and service.

*Applause*

## TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Speaker:** Under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling a letter from the chair of the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform to Members of the Legislative Assembly dated November 15, 2024 and, pursuant to section 18 of the *Human Rights Act*, the 2023-24 annual report of the Yukon Human Rights Commission.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

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

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly, pursuant to subsection 12(1) of the *Elections Act*, recommends that the Commissioner in Executive Council appoint Maxwell Harvey as the Chief Electoral Officer of the Yukon, effective November 22, 2024, for a term as stipulated in subsection 12(2) of the *Elections Act*.

**Mr. Dixon:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to join calls for the Government of Canada to immediately reform the bail system by eliminating credit for time served in jail for repeat and violent offenders.

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to revisit the operating model of the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and conduct public consultation on the impacts of the current model.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to expand childcare spaces in Dawson City by providing funding for the expansion of the Little Blue Daycare.

**Mr. Hassard:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to make carbon-price rebates to Yukon businesses tax-free.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the residents of Mendenhall to address their concerns with the current school bus schedule.

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

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Investments in Old Crow

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to provide an update on the ongoing work between the Government of Yukon and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation focused on shared priorities in Old Crow.

This past year has been one of significant progress with key initiatives moving forward. In September, we proudly opened — and I beg the House’s indulgence on the next name — the new health and wellness centre, Natr’idizhii Sree Tr’agwandaii Hah Zheh, meaning “place for healing and wellness”. This state-of-the-art facility has dedicated health care staff who are helping to bring it to life. The centre is a significant milestone for Old Crow, offering a range of services including primary care, mental health support, substance use counselling, home care, and family support programs, all based on a collaborative care model. Its design was developed with input from the community, ensuring that it meets the specific health care needs of Old Crow residents.

Alongside the health and wellness centre, we have also completed a tenplex staff housing complex, another key initiative in the partnership with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. This project addresses a long-standing need for stable quality housing for essential service staff in Old Crow. Of the 10 units, seven are designated for Yukon government employees, such as health care professionals and teachers, while the remaining three are leased by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for their own staff and citizens.

This new housing development, built on a 60-year land lease, will help both governments retain skilled workers and maintain vital services in the community. Together, the \$55-million investment in the health and wellness centre and the staff housing project has generated an estimated \$13.6 million in local economic activity, bringing jobs and training opportunities and supporting local businesses.

In addition to these major infrastructure projects, we have continued to support other initiatives in Old Crow. We signed a \$3-million transfer payment agreement with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to fund the construction of a new shop for the community’s water delivery trucks, ensuring efficient and reliable water services for the health and safety of the community.

We have also increased funding for cultural preservation at the Rampart House and LaPierre House historic sites, doubling the budget from \$60,000 to \$120,000. This increase supports larger work crews, creating jobs and skill-building opportunities while preserving important heritage sites.

Mr. Speaker, every Yukon community contributes to the diversity and unique character of this territory that we are proud

to call home. This Liberal government is committed to supporting all of them.

**Mr. Dixon:** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition, I thank the minister for the update. I am sure that the residents of Old Crow and Vuntut Gwitchin citizens welcome the investments in their community. The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation has a long history of strong representation in working with the Yukon government to provide the appropriate services and investments for the people of Old Crow.

We acknowledge their work and look forward to seeing a healthy and vibrant community.

**Ms. Blake:** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this update on the community of Old Crow, and the community is grateful for the new health centre and tenplex. Health care and housing are key needs in the community and I am glad to see additional resources and support dedicated to better meeting those needs.

We continue to struggle with our education system, family and children’s services, food security, and mental health and substance use supports. Currently, the school in Old Crow is operating with only half of the required teaching staff. I would like to know what is being done to address this gap. There are many children with disabilities in Old Crow who currently cannot attend school, as there are not adequate supports in the school to meet their needs. What is being done to address these gaps and to ensure that these children can get an education?

Food costs are estimated to be almost double that of Whitehorse, and many community members in Old Crow struggle daily with food security and adequate nutrition, particularly those who rely on social assistance for income. What is being done to address food security and nutrition in the community?

The community has asked for a permanent child welfare social worker to be placed in the community to support families and children, but only a visiting social worker continues to be available. What is being done to hire a permanent social worker for Old Crow?

The community has also been asking for years for repairs to a loader owned by Highways and Public Works. Can the minister update on when these repairs will be completed?

In the Spring Sitting, I asked about supports for survivors of sexualized violence in the community of Old Crow. Can the minister update on what is being done to improve those supports?

In the ministerial statement, the minister describes the construction of a new shop for water delivery trucks. How is the government working with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to replace the skating rink that will be dismantled to make this new shop?

How will the government work with the First Nation to make sure that there are designated spaces for youth in the community?

The ministerial statement also talked about larger work crews, creating jobs and skill-building opportunities. How much of the funding for this will go to creating jobs for Old

Crow residents? How much time and what resources will go toward training local youth for skills that will lead to employment on these work crews? What rules and policies have been set to ensure that local companies and local workers get priority for positions with the work crews?

I have had the privilege of sitting in homes with those who struggle with addiction. As I listen to their stories of grief, loss, abuse, and so many other challenges that they face on their journey, I was reminded about how we can become blind to the fact that people who use drugs, people who struggle with addictions, and those who are faced with selling drugs in order to support themselves continue to be stigmatized or ostracized across our community.

For me, this is something that is important to highlight. How are we working toward ensuring that supports are welcoming for all people no matter what path they are on in their lives? This reminds me that a critical step in addressing crises like the substance use emergency is making sure that people don't fall through the cracks of government systems that should be there to support them where they live.

Finally, I would like to ask more about emergency medical services in Old Crow. It's good to know that there is a health centre, but right now, there is no ambulance or emergency services. What is the plan to bring emergency medical services to Old Crow?

Mahsi' cho.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for the remarks on the ministerial statement this afternoon and also the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for her very detailed list of questions that she has provided to us this afternoon, coming on the heels of the record investment that we have made up in Old Crow.

I will say that the school in Old Crow is a First Nation school, and we are working with the school to help it provide the staffing and resources that it needs to provide the proper education for students.

As well, the sexualized assault team is available by telephone 24/7, and I urge the member opposite to make sure that message gets to the community.

But really, Mr. Speaker, as we reflect on the progress made in Old Crow, it's important to acknowledge both the challenges that we have faced and the real lasting benefits that our recent projects have brought to the community. The member opposite has brought to light many questions that will have to stem from the work that we are doing up there and continuing to improve services both in Old Crow and in communities across the territory.

The new health and wellness centre is a prime example of how focused investments can address the specific needs of the community. Designed with input from residents, this facility consolidates vital services such as primary care, mental health support, and substance use counselling, making health care more accessible for everyone. This integrated approach is especially critical in remote communities like Old Crow where access to services can be limited.

The completion of the tenplex staff housing project is another key initiative responding to the community's needs. Stable housing for essential workers like health care professionals and teachers is essential for maintaining consistent services in Old Crow. By addressing this critical need, we are helping to ensure that the community has the support it needs.

This year, we also signed a government-to-government accord with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation formalizing our shared priorities and creating a framework for future collaboration. This accord focuses on community wellness, economic development, and education, laying the foundation for ongoing projects that will benefit the community.

Our collaborative efforts extended to emergency preparedness this past spring when Old Crow faced the risk of a severe flood with record high snowpack and the potential for a one-in-200-year flood. We worked closely with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to ensure that the community was prepared. An incident management team was established, bringing together personnel from various Yukon government departments and private contractors. Thanks to this coordinated effort, we were able to prepare for the worst. The \$1.57-million expenditure on flood preparations will be partially recovered from the federal government. While the flood was less severe than expected, these efforts laid a strong foundation for future emergency response.

Together with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, we have made substantial progress over the past year, but we realize that there is still more to be done and the member opposite has laid that foundation.

We hear the renewed concerns from the Gwich'in across the north about the protection of the Porcupine caribou herd, a significant issue both culturally and environmentally, and we will continue monitoring the health and sustainability of this and other species.

Mr. Speaker, by continuing our collaborative efforts, we will build on these successes, address emerging challenges, and ensure that Old Crow remains a strong and vibrant community for generations to come.

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

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Educational assistant allocation policy

**Mr. Kent:** Mr. Speaker, it has been several months since a number of important education stakeholders wrote to the minister about unilateral changes to the educational assistant, or EA, allocation policy that her department was making. The minister first defended the policy changes, noting that the groups were mistaken and that the changes were simply minor administrative changes. However, after realizing that she was wrong, the minister backed down and agreed to pause those changes and engage with stakeholders to understand their concerns.

Can the minister tell us how many meetings between the stakeholder groups and the department have occurred since she

made that commitment? When can we expect a new EA allocation policy to be in place?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Mr. Speaker, all students definitely deserve the support that they need to meet their potential. That is our goal with the Department of Education. The allocation of educational assistants in schools across the territory is a collaborative process involving Student Support Services, superintendents, school board executive directors, principals, and learning assistance teachers. All partners play a very valuable role in ensuring that students receive the support to learn and to be included. There is a range of student supports available and an educational assistant is one of the most intensive options.

Both the First Nation School Board and the CSFY have requested to manage their EA allocation, and so that's a bit more information about EAs. I know that the member is asking very specific questions about changes to the EA process. I can confirm that there is certainly a lot of work that has gone into it over this last while, but I just want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that we have allocated the educational assistants and we are working with partners to make changes.

**Mr. Kent:** Mr. Speaker, my question was about how many meetings have taken place with these stakeholder groups on a new policy and when the new policy will be in place. Hopefully, the minister gets a chance to address that.

We're hearing from schools and families who are reporting that learning assistance teachers, or LATs, are being pulled away from regular duties to fill in as substitute teachers. We have also heard that EAs are filling in and that the students they work with are sometimes being asked to stay home on those days that their EA isn't available.

Using LATs and EAs as substitute teachers affects our most vulnerable students and often causes them to fall further behind their peers. So, what is being done to ensure that EAs and LATs can perform their assigned duties rather than covering for teachers who are absent?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I'll come to the question as we go through the questions that the member is bringing forward today, but we began the review of how we allocate educational assistants in the fall of 2023. We heard from many partners on how EAs were allocated. We met with every school in the 2023-24 school year to review each educational assistant request. During this time, we gathered feedback from the schools on process.

Schools continue to provide feedback to Student Support Services on processes and EA supports. On April 25, 2024, the department staff met with partners to hear concerns regarding an update to the EA allocation process. Formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and EA allocation process began in the spring of 2024.

For the 2025-26 school year, we will continue consulting with our partners and, for now, maintain the current allocation process; however, the data that we request will be refined to more accurately and transparently reflect student needs. Again, I will move into the next question with our vacancy strategies —

**Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Kent:** Mr. Speaker, my question was about what is being done to ensure that EAs and LATs can perform their assigned duties rather than covering for teachers who are absent. Hopefully, the minister is able to answer that in her final response.

As mentioned during the Spring Sitting, several organizations raised concerns with a new process on how EAs were being allocated. One of the big concerns was that, under this new process, EAs would be allocated based on school population, not based on individual student needs. In spite of the minister backing down on this new process, this problem persists. We have heard from families who are not receiving EA coverage because the school's allotment has run out, even though their children require the support and have had it in the past.

Why are families running into this problem, and what is the minister instructing her department to do about it?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** Mr. Speaker, I have gone over the current process and how we are allocating EAs. We are adding a number of new EAs as well as part of our CASA commitment but also for our response to the Auditor General's report of 2019.

I just wanted to go over temporary vacancy management. Operational management for schools routinely requires regular adjustments by administrators. I commend our administration teams for their ability to effectively adjust their temporary vacancies that have put increased demands on staff resources.

Schools have several options available to help them manage, should they have a need. These include but are not limited to temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments, adjusting to student learning groups, and the use of teachers on call. We have certainly increased our teachers on call this year. We have, right now, 226 registered TOCs. If a school indicates that it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, there are steps that we will take beyond that.

We are working hard to make sure that our children are supported.

#### **Question re: Teacher recruitment and retention**

**Mr. Dixon:** Earlier this Sitting, we asked about the state of negotiations between the Liberal government and Yukon's educators. Following those questions, the president of the YAEP spoke to media and confirmed that, at the time, there were over 50 vacancies for educators across the Yukon. He went on to say that one of the biggest issues facing the education system in Yukon is the ability to attract and recruit teachers. He said this — quote: "... right now if you're a young teacher coming to the Yukon it doesn't make financial sense..."

So, Mr. Speaker, what is the government doing to address the concerns expressed by Yukon teachers that it doesn't make financial sense for new teachers to come to the Yukon?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** The ongoing national labour shortage and limited housing options, particularly in rural communities, continue to impact our overall school staffing recruitment efforts. For the 2024-25 school year, we are taking many strategic recruitment actions. We posted positions earlier to be more competitive with other jurisdictions, and we visited

universities and placed advertising on all of the tools that we have in the social media world and through Canadian universities.

As of September 9, 2024, human resources consultants have attended six in-person education career fairs in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Alberta. On May 9 and 10, 2024, our human resources team, along with the First Nation School Board and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, attended an outdoor education job fair and conference in Alberta. On September 9, human resources attended a job fair hosted by Simon Fraser University. We attended a career fair at the Lakehead facility of education and have taken many other steps to work toward recruiting teachers into our vacancies. The numbers are decreasing.

**Mr. Dixon:** Well, the simple fact is that Yukon teachers are telling us that, in this current economy, it simply doesn't make financial sense to come to the Yukon. Here is more of what the president of the YAEP said on October 7: "... and it's about economics. They are saying to themselves, I'm better off staying close to home where I have family or support, rather than venture north because it doesn't make economic sense any longer."

Mr. Speaker, that means that, if the Yukon government doesn't do more to address the economic concerns of teachers, we are never going to be able to fill the vacancies that are creating so many issues for our education system. Will the Minister of Education commit to providing Yukon teachers with adequate pay and resources to help it make economic sense for teachers to move to the Yukon?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** I know that the member opposite is well aware that Government of Yukon is currently in collective bargaining negotiations with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals. I wanted to point out that the Government of Yukon definitely recognizes and values the important role that education professionals play in nurturing the intellectual, social, and personal development of Yukon students.

In accordance with the 2023 CASA agreement, the Government of Yukon has committed to allocating an additional \$1 million to each budget of the mains until the 2025-26 fiscal year. This funding is intended to enhance the recruitment and retention of current and new rural education professionals across the Yukon. In an effort to meet the commitments, the Public Service Commission engaged with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to secure their agreement to implement a signing and retention bonus for rural school staff for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. However, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals did not agree to the proposal, and again, the Government of Yukon is currently in collective bargaining negotiations with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals now.

**Mr. Dixon:** Well, we're certainly well aware of the negotiations that are ongoing between the Liberal government and the teachers, because we have discussed it before. In fact, during that time, the Minister of Finance dismissed the concerns of the YAEP and accused them of being misleading.

In fact, here is what he said — quote: "... if YAEP did not send out misleading information, then we would not have felt it necessary to correct the record from our perspective..." The Minister of Finance went on to say that it was not fiscally responsible to pay the teachers more. The president of the YAEP's response to that was this — quote: "Are we being fiscally responsible by not fully staffing ourselves?"

So, Mr. Speaker, how does the Minister of Education plan to address the vacancies in our schools if they aren't willing to address the economic concerns of Yukon's teachers?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Public Service Commission did not say that.

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

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Yukon recognizes and respects the hard work, expertise, and devotion of our education professionals, and we are committing to securing a renewed collective agreement that is fair, balanced, fiscally responsible, and that supports ongoing efforts to attract and retain highly qualified educators in the Yukon. And, Mr. Speaker, we know that our teachers are among the highest paid in Canada, and we plan to continue with that trend.

#### **Question re: Women's support in Ross River**

**Ms. White:** In July of this year, the Yukon government announced that it would be investigating allegations of sexual assault and misconduct against one of its employees in Ross River. This investigation comes after eight years of concerns being raised by community members.

ATIPP records show that this issue was first raised with the Yukon government in 2016 back when the Yukon Party was in power and since then has been raised to this government repeatedly year after year, yet the employee continued to work in the community for eight more years.

It was only after a letter was sent to the Premier by members of the Ross River Dena Council this past spring that the government finally removed the employee from the community.

Why did it take this government eight years to take these allegations and the safety of women in Ross River seriously?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, first, I think it's important to note — I won't get into specifics about any employee here on the floor, but what I will say is that I did receive a communication on this topic, and I will say that, within hours of receiving that, there was appropriate reach out to the Department of Justice and I believe then to the RCMP. I know that we have had discussions, as a government, with Ross River Dena Council on this topic.

I will look forward to question 2 and 3 and do my best to answer on a sensitive subject like this.

**Ms. White:** Community members in Ross River describe feeling hopeless and abandoned by the Yukon government and the justice system. A letter sent by members of the Ross River Dena Council states — and I quote: "We are horrified, we say clearly and definitively our women's lives matter, our women's lives deserve to be honoured and



protected ... Your government chose to protect your employee that has been harming our women.”

A CBC article quotes an e-mail between a government investigator and a community member in Ross River — and I quote again: “... it is not accurate to say if the women will come forward or not. Rather that they have never been provided with the support to do such as: counselling services or any infrastructure that supports these women in a manner that is tangible, meaningful and or accessible.”

So, clearly not enough has been done at any point in this process to support the women and the community of Ross River. Will this government commit to sending a specialized team, such as the sexualized assault response team, to the community of Ross River and ensuring that counselling supports are available to support survivors through disclosures?

**Hon. Ms. McLean:** While I cannot speak to the specifics of the Ross River incident, I certainly can speak to ongoing work that our government is undertaking to address systemic issues that lead to gender-based violence as well as missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit+ people. The systemic work that we’re doing is guided by a whole-of-Yukon MMIWG2S+ strategy, the *Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy*, and the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*.

There are also two very specific action items in the MMIWG2S+ strategy and implementation plan that are related directly to sexualized assault, improved victim-centred and crisis response supports for victims of gender-based violence and sexualized assault, which includes our current work to expand SART services and review violence prevention and response programs and services to improve outcomes.

In our last accountability forum, we released an annual implementation report that has been underway to report on the various items, and I know we will continue to build on the answer.

I heard the member’s question and will move through to answer that.

**Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, that’s not good enough. Not recognizing the harm done to the women in the community of Ross River by a lack of government action is harmful, but we also need to talk about prevention here. This never should have happened and it certainly should not have been allowed to continue for years.

This morning, I spoke with Chief Loblaw of the Ross River Dena Council, and Chief Loblaw pointed out to me that, while Kaska people continue to work for the Department of Highways and Public Works, they have never been hired into a role of leadership in the community. Chief Loblaw pointed out that one way to prevent these abuses of the Kaska people is to ensure that Kaska people are promoted and hold government management roles in the community of Ross River.

What is being done to ensure that the Kaska people are represented in Yukon government leadership roles in the community of Ross River?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I think we have two separate questions there. I’ll do my best to answer the first one.

I hope that today in the discussion you had with the Chief of Ross River that it was shared that I have reached out directly to him to engage in a third-party review of what has happened. I know there is a letter that we have drafted and that I have signed off on, and we think that the Yukon Ombudsman would be a great place to do a review of everything that happened on this topic, so I am hoping that this was shared.

The second part would be — I think what the member opposite is really focusing on is *Breaking Trail Together*. That work has been renewed. I think it’s incredibly important that individuals see themselves in those opportunities in the Yukon government in their home communities. We have heard that as well in other visits with others — over the last year, even — a similar conversation in Burwash with Chief Dickson. So, again, what we’re trying to do is ensure that those opportunities exist for individuals in their communities — not just so that they could be working in the highways department but, of course, in a multitude of other opportunities that exist out there.

#### **Question re: Infectious disease control**

**Ms. Blake:** Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, doctors and health organizations across Canada raised alarms about a potential measles outbreak. Measles can cause very serious symptoms, including brain inflammation, and is a common cause of pneumonia, yet measles is entirely preventable. The measles virus is incredibly contagious. In order to have community protection and prevent transmission, vaccination coverage needs to be at least 95 percent.

The most recent data from 2022 show that the vaccination rate for seven-year-olds in the Yukon is 84 percent, well below this immunization target. Can the government provide an update about their plan to raise awareness around measles?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Yukon provides supports, evidence-based targeted health promotion and illness prevention programs and activities, and we work to increase public awareness and support healthier decision-making and lifestyles and create and promote supportive environments with respect to public health. We, of course, have a public health agency and a chief medical officer of health. I can also indicate that there are programs with respect to measles, and I’m just looking for the note that will help provide this. Of course, vaccination is incredibly important. The vaccination rates here in the territory are high. Vaccinations continue to be available for individuals at pharmacies and across the territory at health centres and health professional locations here in Whitehorse.

In February 2024, the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada issued a statement on the global increase of measles, as was noted in the question. It is a serious illness, particularly for children, and highly contagious. It is serious and we must continue to support vaccinations.

**Ms. Blake:** Mr. Speaker, right now, Québec is the gold standard in Canada for how to prevent a measles outbreak in an under-vaccinated area. They had 45 confirmed cases of measles with thousands of potential contacts. Every possible contact was traced and given post-exposure treatment to protect them.

Then they launched a vaccination campaign in daycares, schools, and neighbourhoods with low vaccination rates.

The campaign was so successful that it brought schools from as low as 30-percent up to 85- to 90-percent coverage. What steps is this government taking to improve access to measles vaccination coverage in the Yukon?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, overall, Yukon children have good vaccine coverage and the Government of Yukon proactively informs parents of school-age children by sending letters to schools and early learning centres reminding families of the importance of vaccination. To have the best protection against measles, two doses of measles-containing vaccine — MMR or MMRV — are required and two doses of measles-containing vaccine is considered a complete vaccine for anyone born in Canada after 1970. I should also note that, as of September 12, 2024, there have been no known cases of measles here in the territory in the last 20 years.

**Ms. Blake:** Mr. Speaker, as of late September, several Canadian regions have been reporting outbreaks of massive spikes of whooping cough. Last week, this government issued a notice of whooping cough exposure on a flight from the Yukon. Whooping cough is highly contagious and can lead to pneumonia, brain damage, or a life-threatening illness. We know that here in the Yukon, there have already been some hospitalizations due to whooping cough and there have been outbreaks throughout the Yukon.

The good news is that there are vaccines available, but vaccination rates in the Yukon are not sufficient to prevent an outbreak. How is this government working to increase vaccination rates for whooping cough to prevent an outbreak?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. It is very important to remind Yukoners that we are aware of a single confirmed case of whooping cough, also known as “pertussis”, involving an Air North flight passenger on November 6. That flight was from Whitehorse to Vancouver. Passengers seated in rows 17 to 22 have been identified as having perhaps a greater risk of exposure to pertussis. Yukon Communicable Disease Control and the chief medical officer of health are issuing a press release advising passengers to watch for symptoms.

Whooping cough is a serious medical condition and should require medical attention if people see symptoms. They could be anything from mild cold-like symptoms to severe coughing. Higher risk individuals are also asked to watch closely, including those in the third trimester of pregnancy or infants under age one. Yukon Communicable Disease Control is actively investigating this case and will continue to assess the situation. Our primary goal is to ensure the safety and health of Yukoners and we encourage anyone with concerns or symptoms to reach out to Yukon Communicable Disease Control. To safeguard this preventable illness, the Government of Yukon encourages all Yukoners to stay up to date with vaccinations available here in the territory.

#### **Question re: Carbon tax**

**Mr. Istchenko:** Mr. Speaker, after pressure from the Canadian business community, the Government of Canada

announced last week that it is finally providing carbon tax rebates to businesses. Thankfully, Yukon businesses have received these rebates through the Yukon framework; however, one notable addition to the announcement last week was that Canada was going to make the rebates to Canadian businesses tax-free. Here in the Yukon, the rebates that Yukon businesses receive for the carbon tax are considered taxable income.

So, will the Yukon government follow the lead of the federal government and make changes so that the carbon tax rebates for the Yukon businesses are not taxed?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that the information that we provide here in the House is, of course, accurate, especially as businesses make decisions on their tax policy. What we have been made aware of — and I want to go back and check, and I’m certainly happy to bring this to the House tomorrow in a legislative return from the Finance department here and our specialist — is that they are tax-free. So, I’m going to go back and make sure.

I was taken aback by the motion because it wasn’t consistent with what our understanding is, but let me bring that to the House tomorrow and then we can have clarity on it.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Mr. Speaker, when CFIB raised the issue with Canada, they made a number of additional requests. Those included: fully eliminating the carbon tax altogether, which is something that is supported by over 80 percent of its members; abandoning the plan to raise the carbon tax rate on April 1, 2025; and fully exempting natural gas and propane from the carbon tax.

So, will the Yukon government follow the advice of the business community and accept these recommendations?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I always will sit down with the business community and get advice. That is something that I know — we have been just trying to spend as much time this fall, when we’re not in the House having discussions with the private sector, sitting down to hear what the priorities are and where they feel there are ways to invest as we build the budget out for this year.

I know that there are a number of members of CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. We have a good relationship with them as well. I know that what the member opposite is talking about — I think in this particular case — is, again, the federal policy. What I will say on the floor of the House is that I have made overtures — I’ve done that publicly — that we should get back to the table to talk about the uniqueness of the Yukon. There are areas within the carbon-pricing mechanisms that we think should be improved. We have always said that the federal government should come to the table with all premiers, and really, what you’re hearing is pushback because there are concerns from everybody in their own right about what’s happening.

I also know that CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, is focused on a response to the reduction of emissions. I know that is why businesses across Canada have been really interested in the new investments in a green energy transition.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the Premier committed to getting back to me, but I would like to ask him

this question. In 2022, the Yukon government made changes to the way the carbon tax rebates work for both Yukon businesses and placer mines. This created a new process specifically for placer miners to receive the carbon tax rebate, so can the minister tell us if these rebates that are provided to Yukon placer miners are considered taxable income, or are the rebates tax-free?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Again, I want to make sure that I get the accurate information. I am happy to bring it back. What I can say is that I am glad that was highlighted by the member opposite, because what it really speaks to is that, when we did sit down with the Minister of Finance to craft the exemption that we looked for and to communicate to Canada the uniqueness of many parts of our economy, that was one example of making sure that the placer mining industry was seen in that particular light, understanding traditionally how important that is to the economy of the Yukon and the work that those families do.

I will get back to the House on both that first question and the third question just to make sure that I have clarification that we can then pass on collectively to our constituents.

**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. 43: Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024) — Third Reading**

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 43, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Mostyn.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I move that clause 11 of Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be recommitted to Committee of the Whole pursuant to Standing Order 59(3).

#### **Motion re discharging third reading of Bill No. 43 and recommitting clause 11 to Committee of the Whole.**

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that clause 11 of Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be recommitted to Committee of the Whole pursuant to Standing Order 59(3).

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, on Thursday afternoon, I received an e-mail from a law firm raising issues with the *Business Corporations Act* following the debate we had on Wednesday. On Thursday afternoon, I reached out to the law firm and set up a meeting with the individuals on Friday. We had a very fruitful conversation at that time to explore the concerns that I received in said e-mail.

After that, Community Services and Justice — and I believe other members of this House — got together and started working on this issue. So, here we are today looking to amend the *Business Corporations Act (2024)* to provide more time for

law firms in town to adapt to this new piece of legislation that was called for through a federal framework.

Justice has done a lot of work on this in a very short period of time and came up with an amendment to this law that I would like the House to consider this afternoon. Basically, that's where we are today.

I look forward to hearing from the members opposite.

**Mr. Dixon:** Of course, it's very unorthodox to send a bill from third reading back into Committee. Normally, the debate is conducted during Committee and then maintained in Committee and doesn't proceed to third reading until Committee is complete. However, in this unusual circumstance where the minister has made such an error in proceeding with this bill, we would be willing to send the bill back to Committee to correct that error.

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take a different tack from my colleague from the Yukon Party and thank the minister for being open to addressing the concerns of the legal community and going back to make that change. Unlike my colleague from the Yukon Party, I actually — it pains me to say — view it as a leadership action to be able to admit that there was a mistake and to go back and repair it. So, I thank the minister for that. I look forward to seeing the proposed amendment and correcting what I think was probably just an oversight. I look forward to seeing the amendment.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the members opposite for their remarks this afternoon. The Leader of the Official Opposition is indeed correct; it is unorthodox to be taking this action this afternoon. I know that none of us here would like to be going back in time, but I think the bill will be strengthened through this action. I think it will address some concerns that I heard on Friday from the legal community.

I think in the end we will have a better piece of legislation that is designed to really deal with anti-corruption and white-collar crime in a federal framework. I know that the federal government is looking for this bill to be passed in all jurisdictions in the country; it's important. We're actually going to be assessed by an international team on the nation's adoption of this legislation. I think it will really help the Yukon to be part of it, and I'm happy to make this piece of legislation go forward.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

### Division

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

### Bells

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

**Hon. Mr. 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.

**Ms. Blake:** Agree.

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

**Speaker:** The yeas have it.

*Motion agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare the motion carried and that third reading of Bill No. 43 is discharged and clause 11 is recommitted to Committee of the Whole.

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter before the Committee is clause 11 in Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

### Bill No. 43: *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)* — Clause 11 recommitted

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is revisiting clause 11 in Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*.

*On Clause 11 — recommitted*

**Chair:** Is there any debate on clause 11?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** As we mentioned in the House just a few moments ago, on Thursday afternoon, I received an e-mail

from a law firm outlining some concerns that they had with the bill following debate. We moved into third reading, and now we're back in Committee of the Whole to address some of the concerns that we heard and deal with them this afternoon. Basically, the law firm asked for more time, and that's what we're here to do.

*Amendment proposed*

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** In light of the conversation that I had with that law firm, I move:

THAT Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be amended by replacing clause 11 at page 12 with the following:

“(11) Coming into force

“This Act or any provision of it comes into force on a day or days to be fixed by the Commissioner in Executive Council.”

**Chair:** The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse West:

THAT Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be amended by replacing clause 11 at page 12 with the following:

“(11) Coming into force

“This Act or any provision of it comes into force on a day or days to be fixed by the Commissioner in Executive Council.”

Is there any debate on the amendment?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** After receiving the e-mail on Thursday afternoon and discussing it with my colleagues and also setting up a meeting with the law firm in question — we met on Friday afternoon — we had a discussion; I heard the concerns and what had been raised. We then tasked Community Services and Justice to look for solutions. Justice worked — Justice and Community Services, both departments — worked exceedingly hard.

They came up with this clause amendment. Basically, what we are doing is putting the coming-into-force into the regulations — similar to what happened in BC. It was actually mentioned by the partner in the law firm. By doing this, it will give us the time for the law firm to actually do the work necessary to serve their clients in this change to the law, which is actually designed to curb white-collar crime, money laundering, tax evasion, and a number of other things. It has been asked for by the international community. Canada has signed on to this — all through Canada, most of the provinces in the country — with the exception of Alberta and our two sister territories — have signed on to this law. Alberta is in the process of getting theirs in place.

Canada is going to be judged on its efforts on this matter in the spring. We believe that the territory will help Canada meet its obligations under this international effort by passing this law, but also, by giving a little bit more time to the law firm, it will actually help with their implementation of this law as well.

By coming into force through the regulation, it gives us the flexibility. I had a conversation with the partner this morning at 11:00. I outlined the steps that we are taking to actually address his concerns and how we are doing in law.

They accepted this approach and said that the timeline — I said that the law firm will have 12 months from the time the regulations are released — will give them enough time. I was told in that telephone conversation that this will would give the firm enough time to deal with this matter.

With that, I will open the floor to more questions in debate.

**Mr. Dixon:** Madam Chair, I appreciate that from the minister — his opening comments.

I did confirm with the Clerk that the incorrect date was put on the amendment by the tabler of the amendment, but I understand that is still in order, so I think that is fine. I just wanted to note that.

I generally agree with the idea that we move from a specific date of this coming into force to one that is being fixed by the Commissioner in Executive Council, but can the minister explain what date he intends to bring this forward and bring it into effect? It doesn't set a specific date; it just sets a decision by Commissioner in Executive Council. Can he tell us when he intends to bring that forward?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the member opposite for the question. Our anticipated timeline is for the regulations to be approved in April 2025. That would mean that the offences — the failure to prepare or disclose this information — would come into force 12 months after the regulations are expected, which would be April 2026. In my conversation with the partner this morning, he indicated that this was acceptable. He wanted to know if there were substantial changes to the regulations expected so that he could get his computer system working in line with that. I said that we would work with him on that.

**Mr. Dixon:** I appreciate the minister sharing that timeline with me.

So, in this particular case, we have a situation where the minister has proposed a bill. Last Thursday, we received an e-mail from one lawyer from one firm and now we're making a change based on that.

Has the minister made any other attempts at consultation with the legal community more broadly?

As far as I can tell from what the minister has said, this change has been made based on a single e-mail from a single lawyer at a single firm. We are basing the entirety of this amendment around that conversation that the minister had with this particular lawyer. Has there been any broader consultation with the legal community about the proposal for this amendment right now?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** No, there has not been any wider consultation since my conversation with this single law firm partner late Friday afternoon.

**Mr. Dixon:** I am not going to belabour this point, but I will simply note that this amendment will allow the minister and his colleagues in Cabinet some latitude around the timing for this. Might I make the suggestion at this point that the minister conduct some consultation with the legal community about the implementation of the regulations as they come into force next year? I think it's indeed possible that others may have different views than one particular lawyer who emailed the minister on Thursday afternoon.

It's certainly something that I've heard from other lawyers who share this person's concerns, but I'm not entirely sure that all of them would agree on the remedy. I don't know that to be the case; I'm just simply noting that this amendment to the law on the floor of the Legislature is based on the input from one single person. I think it may be wise for the minister to consider, in the development of the regulations, further consultation with the legal community.

I also wanted to ask a question. When we discussed this in Committee of the Whole before the minister tabled a letter from the First Nation Chamber of Commerce, that letter, as far as I could tell, wasn't included in the Legislative Assembly's website or sent out to Members of the Legislative Assembly. I haven't seen it yet, so I am wondering if the minister can retable that or provide me with a copy of that letter. I assume that it is because the letter perhaps wasn't addressed to him as letters that are tabled are required to be, but could he confirm that the letter he received from the First Nation Chamber of Commerce was addressed to him? Will it be shared with us as well?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for the question and the advice. There are a couple of things that I will say.

As part of the regulation drafting process, we are going to be talking to the community, the First Nation Chamber of Commerce, and the law firms. There are a handful of law firms that deal with this type of law. We have sent letters to them in the past and we will certainly work with them on the regulations and the drafting of the legislation. Moving the coming into force into the regulations gives us the flexibility to adapt if we do hear concerns from other members of the legal community. This will give us the ability to do that and to work with the community on this piece of legislation as we move forward.

As for the letter — it wasn't a letter, actually. It was correspondence from the chamber of commerce — an e-mail, actually — and I will share that with the member opposite.

**Mr. Dixon:** I appreciate the minister's willingness to share that correspondence with us. I would also note that the e-mail that was sent to the minister on Thursday was shared with me as well — cc'd to me — and the Leader of the New Democratic Party as well. I'll table that during the normal tabling of business tomorrow afternoon.

But the concern that was raised in that e-mail was not so much the specific content of the bill, but the individual was raising concerns about the minister's representation of the consultation that had been conducted and the fact that the minister expressed that the legal community had generally thought that what the government was proposing was perfectly acceptable to the legal community, and that term "perfectly acceptable" is what sort of triggered the concern from this one individual lawyer, because he expressed that he had heard from several others that it was most certainly not the position of the legal community broadly — that it was perfectly acceptable to them.

So, will the minister consider sharing the draft regulations with the legal community before they come into force?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** As the member opposite — in his time in government — knows, governments don't normally

share regulations or drafts of legal documents with the public or the community at large. But we have committed and the staff have committed to work with the legal community on the regulations. The partner with whom I spoke this morning expressed his need for information to tailor his suite of legal software so that he could actually make sure that it does what it is supposed to do, and I committed to him to work with our department to make sure that he has the information that he needs to make sure that the regulations don't surprise him and throw some of the software — the very specialized software that the legal firm uses. The bottom line, Madam Chair, is that we have committed to working with and sharing, if not the actual document, the gist of the regulations with the legal community so that they know what's coming and they can actually prepare to implement it in the most efficient way possible.

**Mr. Dixon:** I appreciate the minister's response. I would simply note that I would suggest that you engage with other members of the legal community rather than just this one individual. It sounds like the minister has made that commitment already.

I have in the course of the last few minutes deduced the answer to the question of the tabled document that the minister referred to. The e-mail that was sent from the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce to the department was not included in the working papers of the Legislative Assembly because it was an incomplete document. It references an attachment that was not included.

Can the minister commit to tabling the complete document that includes the attachment of what was sent to the First Nation chamber and their response? Because that is why it wasn't included in the formal documents of the Legislature.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I will endeavour to get the information. I have personally met with the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce with my officials and the deputy of the Department of Community Services. We had a conversation about the legislation. That was the beginning of our work with the First Nation Chamber of Commerce and the president. That was followed up with specific questions with the chamber of commerce and with the officials — Phil and Fred — who are with us this afternoon. I should introduce you: Fred Pretorius and Phil MacDonald are with us this afternoon, and I thank them for being here. They actually conducted a series of conversations with the First Nations, which resulted in correspondence with them, which I have shared with the House. The e-mail from the chamber saying that they were accepting of the legislation — that last e-mail from the president, I believe, of the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce — I will go back — short answer — I'll go back and make sure that the Leader of the Official Opposition has all the correspondence that we had with the First Nation Chamber of Commerce.

**Mr. Dixon:** Just for the record, the correspondence that the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce sent to the department is a single line. It says: "Hi Phillip..." — it is addressed to Phillip MacDonald — "With this information, and

a clear understanding that we will be consulted on the regulations, I will be happy to provide my support."

When the organization says that their support is conditional on this information that has been provided, it is useful for us to see what that information is so that we can understand how those concerns have been addressed.

But, again, the minister has committed to getting me that information, so I appreciate that. I will move on.

I think that we can probably leave it there. We will be supporting this amendment and appreciate the minister's willingness to come back and address the concerns that have been brought to him by the legal community.

**Ms. White:** I thank the officials for joining us again today, and I appreciate the work that was done in order to address these concerns.

There is lots of other legislation that we pass that says it will come into effect at a later date that is not named, so I appreciate the flexibility. I also appreciate the minister's assertions that there will be communication with the legal community. I know that the officials will continue to do that work, so I'm pleased today with the amendment and thank all those who worked to bring it forward.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the members opposite for their input this afternoon and their feedback and for their support of this amendment. Again, as I said, it was an unorthodox journey, but I think that we have arrived at a piece of legislation that will be stronger for it. Keeping our eye on the prize, which is basically making sure that we crack down more on our legal processes to curb white-collar crime, which is basically the genesis of a lot of heartache in our community, is a good thing. We don't want the territory to become a loophole in a nation-wide strategy.

I thank the members opposite for their support of this amendment this afternoon and for the conversations that I have been told that they had this weekend on this piece of legislation. That was helpful, and it really makes this piece of legislation an all-of-government and all-of-Chamber exercise. Thank you very much.

**Chair:** Is there any further debate on the amendment?

*Amendment to Clause 11 agreed to*

**Chair:** Is there any debate on clause 11 as amended?

*Clause 11, as amended, agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, with amendment.

**Chair:** It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse West that the Chair report Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, with amendment.

*Motion agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.

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

### Chair's report

**Ms. Blake:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, and directed me to report the bill with amendment.

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

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3 and notwithstanding Standing Order 59(2), I request the unanimous consent of the House to move that Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be now read a third time.

### Unanimous consent re third reading of Bill No. 43

**Speaker:** The Minister of Community Services has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3 and notwithstanding Standing Order 59(2), requested the unanimous consent of the House to move that Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be now read a third time.

Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

### GOVERNMENT BILLS

#### Bill No. 43: *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)* — Third Reading

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 43, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Mostyn.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 43, entitled *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, in beginning debate on third reading this afternoon, I just wanted to draw attention to the fact — as has been said earlier today — that this piece of legislation is part of a national framework to prevent money laundering and other white-collar crime that we have seen identified and exposed through many stories and incidents over the last several years. The international community has been trying to crack down on this — on how we manage our corporations to prevent this white-collar crime, which really helps to fund so many ills around the globe.

Currently, Canada signed on to this initiative. Virtually every province in the country has passed legislation similar to this. The holdouts at this time remain the two northern territories and Alberta in addition to us. Alberta is in the process of passing this legislation — or similar legislation — to bring itself into compliance with the national framework. This spring, I'm told, an international group will be assessing Canada's action on this initiative, which began in 2019, I believe. So, it has been a long journey for the nation, but we're on the road, and the Yukon is now stepping up to do its part.

We have heard about some of the concerns within the legal community; we're acting to address that through the amendment that we just passed. The bill is — there is a lot of work that has gone into this bill; more work remains with the regulations. I know that this weekend, a lot of work happened to get it to this stage. I thank the opposition for their assistance in this matter and for making the legislation better. I look forward to their questions in third reading.

**Mr. Dixon:** I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill at third reading. Of course, this bill has had a bit of an unusual progression. As members may recall, we had asked questions about this bill in Question Period back in October. Those questions prompted discussion at Committee of the Whole, which was then paused and allowed the minister to go back and consult with affected stakeholders, including the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce.

The First Nation Chamber of Commerce had, of course, expressed concerns to us during the progress of the bill. The minister was required to go back and address those concerns directly with that particular chamber of commerce. We noted then, of course, that it would have been wiser and easier all along if the government had simply consulted before the tabling of the bill, but nonetheless, we were able to get those concerns addressed. Subsequent to that, we had the concern raised to us by at least one member of the legal community about the detail that we addressed earlier today in Committee of the Whole, which was an amendment to the bill.

While we appreciate the minister's willingness to address those concerns, I do need to point out again that this is the kind of thing that wouldn't have been the case if they had just consulted prior to the tabling of the bill and engaged with the legal community and the business community before this bill was tabled.

While I appreciate the intent behind the bill, I do have outstanding concerns. We will vote in favour of the bill and we encourage the minister to ensure that, in the process of developing the regulations, they address the issues that have been raised with them by the legal community. I know that I have heard from a few other folks in the legal community who have expressed some reticence around whether this new process will simply create new red tape and new administrative burden for business corporations and actually do little to address the fundamental issue, which is the laundering of money and corruption.

The way it was put to me by some in the legal community was that those who are using business corporations to launder

money or undertake illegal activity won't be hindered by additional red tape or administrative burdens; they will just continue to find additional new ways to do it.

But, Mr. Speaker, having noted those reservations, I will say that, when it's all said and done, we will support this bill. Like I said in Committee of the Whole earlier today, I encourage the minister today to engage in a robust way with stakeholders who are affected by this so that we can ensure that the regulations are done in a way that works for everyone.

**Ms. White:** Today in speaking in support of Bill No. 43, *Act to amend the Business Corporations Act (2024)*, I will say again that I actually believe that when we're able to make changes that strengthen things — even, unfortunately, if it comes to making changes after it has been debated on the floor of the House — it does make sense. I have been here when bad pieces of legislation have passed from both the Yukon Party and the Liberals at different times, so this is a way to actually strengthen things. So, I appreciate the work that was done — the work by the officials — and I'll look forward to getting the vote through and on to the next things.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the input from the members opposite and I will take their concerns to heart.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

## Division

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

## Bells

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

**Hon. Mr. 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.

**Ms. Blake:** Agree.

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

**Speaker:** The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 43 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare that Bill No. 43 has passed this House.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3 and notwithstanding Standing Order 74, I request the unanimous consent of the House to move that Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, be now read a second time.

## Unanimous consent re second reading of Bill No. 45

**Speaker:** The Hon. Premier has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3 and notwithstanding Standing Order 74, requested the unanimous consent of the House to move that Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, be now read a second time.

Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

## Bill No. 45: *Electoral District Boundaries Act* — Second Reading

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 45, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pillai.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, be now read a second time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, be now read a second time.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today at second reading to speak to Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*. The Electoral District Boundaries Commission was established in January 2024 to review the boundaries' number and names of our electoral districts. This was in accordance with the *Elections Act*, which was amended in 2023, to allow an Electoral District Boundaries Commission to be created before the 2025 general election.

In preparing the final report, the commission considered public input as well as a number of other factors, including population data, density and future growth, and municipal and First Nation boundaries. Its final report was tabled in the House October 9, 2024. Section 418 of the *Elections Act* requires that a bill reflecting the boundaries of the commission's final report be tabled before the end of the next legislative Sitting. This is the bill before us today.

As stated in the explanatory note of the bill, this enactment replaces the *Electoral District Boundaries Act* to establish Yukon's electoral districts in accordance with the final report of the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission.

You will see that Bill No. 45 is different in presentation than the current *Electoral District Boundaries Act*. The 2018 commission's final report provided metes and bounds to describe the proposed boundaries. The bill that was tabled then



reflected the commission's recommendation and used metes and bounds. The use of metes and bounds is difficult to understand and can become inaccurate as the environment changes. This commission provided boundary descriptions through the use of maps. This follows the modern practices of other jurisdictions in Canada and improves transparency and access to justice and improves accuracy.

Upon assent of this bill should it pass, the official digital version of the electoral district maps of the Yukon 2024 will be publicly available through Elections Yukon. The maps will be available digitally and will allow the public to drill down into different areas to see clearly where the boundaries lie. Paper copies will also be available through Elections Yukon.

The commission worked in partnership with Geomatics Yukon to produce the digital GIS data map files. These are currently available on the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission's website.

I thank Geomatics Yukon and the commission for their forward-thinking work on this and for making this information more accessible to the public.

The act requires six months after assent before it can be used in an election. The six-month period can be shortened if the Chief Electoral Officer has published in the Yukon Gazette a notice to the effect that the necessary preparations for the bringing into operation of the amendment have been made.

By bringing this bill forward this Sitting, we will allow time for the Chief Electoral Officer to complete this work. I want to take a moment to sincerely thank the members of the Electoral District Boundaries Commission for their hard work: Chief Justice Suzanne Duncan, Patricia Cunning, Elizabeth Hanson, Warren Holland, and Maxwell Harvey. Thank you for all your work and for your commitment to good governance in the Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, we respect the commission process. We have introduced a bill in accordance with the *Elections Act*. The bill reflects the commission's recommendations from their final report: to create two new electoral districts in Whitehorse, Whistle Bend North and Whistle Bend South; to combine Watson Lake, Ross River, and Faro into one electoral district; and to divide Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes into two districts by including Golden Horn with Mount Lorne and Marsh Lake and merging Teslin with Southern Lakes, Carcross, and Tagish. Vuntut Gwitchin and the Klondike will remain distinct districts.

The proposed changes will increase the number of electoral districts in the Yukon from 19 to 21. Members of the Legislative Assembly — 13 in Whitehorse and eight in rural Yukon. Small boundary adjustments to electoral boundary districts in the City of Whitehorse are also proposed to reflect population changes and the removal of Golden Horn. Additional details can be found in the final report on the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission's 2024 website.

I reiterate my sincere thanks to the members of the Electoral District Boundaries Commission and to every organization and individual who provided input into their work. The overarching aim of the bill is to ensure that the electoral district boundaries are fair and effectively represent the Yukon's population as the territory grows. I thank officials

from the Executive Council Office and the Department of Justice for their help in preparing the bill. I look forward to hearing the debate on this bill.

**Mr. Dixon:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak to this bill at second reading.

To begin with, I would like to note, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that something as fundamental as the structure of an electoral district and the ongoing ability of MLAs to represent their constituents is something that ought to be left up to individual MLAs. So, in this light, while I will be speaking to the bill today as the Leader of the Official Opposition, each of my colleagues who will be speaking to this at second reading will be speaking in their own right and on behalf of themselves and their ridings as they see fit. I look forward to hearing from all MLAs who choose to address the bill at second reading or perhaps during Committee and, of course, at third reading as they see fit.

Mr. Speaker, I will now turn to the specific bill at hand. I'll note that I have been of the view for some time that the current electoral boundaries are in serious need of change. That was why I supported the amendment to the *Elections Act* last year which allowed this to occur. In my view, Mr. Speaker, the variations are simply too large between ridings with outliers at either end of the spectrum. On one end are ridings like Porter Creek Centre. That riding is a result of massive growth in the community of Whistle Bend over the course of the past several years. It finds itself with one MLA representing thousands of Yukoners. On the other end of the spectrum are ridings like Vuntut Gwitchin, which is a riding that finds itself with one MLA representing fewer than 200 voters, according to the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission's report. Between these two ends of the spectrum, Mr. Speaker, there are a variety of other outliers as well. The reason for the growing distance between these two ends of the spectrum is that the ridings have not been adjusted since before the 2011 election — more than 15 years ago. Quite frankly, the massive changes that we have seen over the past 15 years lead us to a situation that requires response and adjustment.

The next thing that I would like to note is that I generally support the process used to make these changes. We have had an independent commission that was made up of five members, three of whom were nominated by each of the three political parties that have standing in the Yukon Legislative Assembly and the other two members were, of course, the Chief Electoral Officer and the Chief Justice, who are independent of partisanship — we hope.

The work of an electoral boundaries commission is certainly difficult and complex. I am in no way envious of those five individuals who took part in this process, but I do want to thank them all for their work. I would especially like to thank the individual who was nominated by the Yukon Party, Mr. Warren Holland, for his willingness to commit so much of his time over the past year to this work, as well as the remaining four members of the commission as well, who dedicated a lot of time and effort into this work.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, this is difficult and complex work and it will inevitably result in some Yukoners supporting the work and some not supporting the outcome. So, to the commission, thank you very much for trying your best to bridge that gap as best as you were able to.

Next, Mr. Speaker, a few words on some of the principles that I think are important in this. As a party, the Yukon Party submitted a letter to the commission on March 16, 2024 under the signature of our party president, Mel Brais, which outlined the broad principles that the party felt should be considered. Those were boiled down to three: The first was that the commission needed to make best efforts to address the disparity that has grown in voting populations in the current districts; second was that the party firmly supports the principle that our electoral boundaries must preserve balanced representation in the YLA between rural Yukon and Whitehorse; and third, we wanted to see adequate opportunities for affected communities to have an opportunity to have their feedback heard and considered through consultation. I think that those principles still stand today, and while the commission may not have charted a balance between those three principles in the eyes of all members, I believe that they made efforts in that respect.

So, following that submission by the Yukon Party to the commission back in March 2024, the commission released its interim report. It was released just a few days before the Association of Yukon Communities AGM in Dawson City. I thought that was notable because it was released, I believe, on a Thursday and then many of us travelled to Dawson and the subject matter of the AYC AGM that weekend was very much dominated by different communities' feelings about the interim report and the overarching concern that some had around a need for balance between rural and urban Yukon.

Throughout the summer following the AYC AGM, I heard a lot from a lot of different communities about that and about how difficult a challenge that is to chart a balance between rural and urban.

But overall, I think what many felt at the time was that the interim report that was first put forward by the commission did not adequately reach a balance and there were many who felt that further work needed to be done by the commission to address the concerns, particularly of rural Yukon.

The final report, of course, came out and it animates what we see before us today in terms of Bill No. 45. I think that when we consider the bill and its contents now, we see — at least in my view — an effort from the commission to try to address that concern that was put forward to them over the course of the summer. Whether or not they got it absolutely correct is obviously a matter of debate and discussion, but I know that there will be further discussion as this bill proceeds through Committee in third reading and beyond as we move into the future iterations of a commission that will be considering this. I think that the nature of balancing rural and urban representation in the Legislative Assembly is something that is going to be an issue in the Yukon for a number of years to come. It won't be something that goes away; it will be something that future legislatures will have to address as well.

On the whole, my view is that, when we consider the need to address the changing population of the territory and the need to update our ridings to reflect the changing demographics and populations that the Yukon has today and we weigh that against the concerns that we have heard from some about the balance between rural and urban, on the whole, I think that the bill, while not perfect, does satisfy me as being something that we can accept. So, on behalf of me as the MLA for Copperbelt North, I will certainly be voting in favour of the bill. I do very much look forward to hearing from my colleagues from all sides of the House about their questions, concerns, and comments about this bill. I know that support for it, as we have seen over the past number of weeks, will not be unanimous, but I think that it is important to reflect on the comments and concerns that we hear from our colleagues and ultimately move forward as best we can to address any future concerns as the Legislative Assembly progresses into the future with future commissions as well.

Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in favour of it at second reading, and I look forward to the discussion in Committee of the Whole here today and ultimately to further debate at third reading.

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted today to be speaking about Bill No. 45, the act to amend the electoral district boundaries, in large part because I didn't actually anticipate that we would get here today. I am grateful that my friend, colleague, and mentor Elizabeth Hanson has been able to join us for a short amount of time.

I am also equally delighted to say that, despite the fact that I put her on a committee that took a solid year, including lots of remote reading from a person who had a hard time retiring as exhibited by the 10 years she served in this House after retiring, we are still friends. I am grateful for that and, of course, grateful for the amount of time she and her colleagues put in to do this work.

We have heard, of course, but I will echo the thanks to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Yukon and the chair, Suzanne Duncan, the Chief Electoral Officer, Maxwell Harvey, the representative of the Liberal Party, Patricia Cuning, of course, Elizabeth Hanson, and the representative of the Yukon Party, Warren Holland. I do appreciate the very long amount of time they all spent working on this.

I will note that there was a strong desire from that committee to reach consensus, and they recognized that they were going to be late in tabling the report. It is my understanding that there was a lot of push at the end to make sure that they could get to a point where they all felt good, and that meant that they were going to miss the five days of the government tabling it — the first five days — which is what brought us up to the unanimous consent to be able to debate it. I do recognize that work, and I thank them for reaching that.

I also think that this is something that's really important. We know that the current Yukon electoral district boundaries have not changed since 2008 and have been used over the last three elections, so 2011, 2016, and 2021. We know that between 2008 and 2024, significant population growth has

occurred in the Yukon, especially in the Whitehorse area. The changes that the commission proposed are in part a result of that unprecedented growth — growth that we couldn't anticipate back in 2008.

The proposed changes result in an increase of two electoral districts from the current 19 to 21 electoral districts, and 13 of the proposed electoral districts are in Whitehorse, while eight are outside of Whitehorse. They go on to note that effective representation relates to the ability of a member of a legislative assembly to represent the people in their electoral district. It is a legally defined concept arising from section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which requires consideration first of the population in each electoral district to strive toward relative voter parity or as close as possible to an equal number of voters in each electoral district so that each citizen's vote has equal weight.

Deviations or variances from the average number of voters in each electoral district in many cases are desirable or necessary to help achieve effective representation because of factors such as geography, community history, community interest, language, culture, and minority representation that need to be considered.

I will note for us in the territory that we struggle with all of those factors, whether we talk about the huge amount of distance between ridings or we talk about the communities of interest or we go on.

So, I appreciate that all of those things needed to be taken into account. The commission was established under the Yukon *Elections Act*, and it operated independent of government. The role of the commission was limited to reviewing the boundaries, numbers, and names of existing electoral districts and making recommendations for changes to ensure that voters have effective representation in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. The recommendations are based on statutory requirements, governing law, jurisdictional reviews, the principles established by the commission, and information about the current Yukon context and anticipated changes. Input from the public, stakeholders, and experts were considered by the commission to ensure that boundaries provided for the fair and effective representation of people in each electoral district. The commission, however, had no mandate to make recommendations about anything beyond this and specifically had no role in making recommendations about electoral reform.

I think that it's important to note that, based on fixed election dates, the next commission — so, the one following the one that we're talking about now — is likely to be appointed six months after the November 5, 2029 election. So, the 2024 commission's scope and mandate was therefore to apply to a period between now and 2030. The effect on boundaries of any anticipated growth and changes past 2030 will be the work of the next commission. I note that because I will highlight — I'm sure that others — well, I know that others in the Assembly have received letters from the Mayor and Council of Faro and the Mayor of Watson Lake who have highlighted this. But the response that I will come back to is that this isn't forever; this is a two-election change, and if it doesn't work, then the next commission I believe will be able to address that.

The commission identified the following unique aspects of the Yukon context affecting their review of proposals. All of the statutory factors were considered; there were aspects that were viewed as significant, and they are: unprecedented recent and projected population growth in Whitehorse and a high percentage of the Yukon population centralized in Whitehorse; widely dispersed communities and smaller population outside of Whitehorse; communities of First Nation people, especially outside of Whitehorse; and the large proportion of electoral districts well outside of the 25-percent variance.

The population of the Yukon has increased significantly over the last several years, and this trend is expected to continue. Notably, three of every four newcomers to the Yukon are expected to settle in Whitehorse. This is evidenced by the rapid growth of the Whitehorse population as the Yukon's population increases. It's important to note that, over the same period of time, the population of communities outside of Whitehorse have remained stable or have modestly increased. So, it's interesting to note that the Yukon's population distribution is unique in Canada; no other jurisdiction in Canada has such a high-density population centralized in one city as the Yukon has with Whitehorse.

The Yukon Bureau of Statistics estimates that the current Yukon population of 46,260 people with 32,740 people in or near Whitehorse — so, that's approximately 80 percent of the Yukon's population lives in or near one community, the community of Whitehorse, with the rest of the 20 percent of the population living in other parts of the 482,443 square kilometres of the territory.

So, this unique situation of having so much of the territory's population centred in or near one urban location presents challenges for representation in the Assembly. Those in Whitehorse need to be effectively represented, and the larger the population of each electoral district in Whitehorse, the more under-represented they become; yet those living outside of Whitehorse also need to be represented, and their interests are different from the interests of those in Whitehorse and can also be different among the various communities.

The need for the Legislative Assembly to include representation of individuals throughout the Yukon is essential, and finding that balance when such a high percentage of the population lives in Whitehorse is and was a challenge.

I'll note that the difference between the interim report that recommended that we lower the rural representation from eight to six ridings — that it made the recommendation of combining the riding of Vuntut Gwitchin with Klondike — that was problematic. I think as we look into the future and we talk about that rural and urban split, it's important that we don't lose out on rural, which is interestingly enough the reason why I brought forward Bill No. 308, which, I'll note, is not going well, but it is recommended interestingly enough — similar things are recommended in this report.

In its interim report, the 2024 commission strove to reduce the number of electoral districts with high deviations from the average — so, I just mentioned that — as well as the degree of those deviations. The commission was concerned about the current electoral district situation's marked departure from

voter parity. The 2024 commission's interim report showed that the result of trying to achieve greater voter parity in the Yukon — but let's be honest: When the commission went out to hear from folks, they got a lot of feedback that said that it wasn't understood, it wasn't appreciated, and it didn't make sense to folks. I heard that universally at all the meetings that I went to.

So, after hearing from the public both during the public hearings and through the written submissions and after further vigorous discussion, reflection, and consideration, including of the legal parameters and past commission reports, the commission members were of the view that there were good reasons to change some of the proposals made in the interim report even though those changes will create an increase in deviations from voter parity in the interim report. The deviations both in the number of electoral districts and the amount of the percentage deviation are lower than the current deviations.

The consistent concern the commission heard in response to the interim report recommendations was the detrimental effect of the reduction of seats outside of Whitehorse from eight to six, especially with the increase of seats within Whitehorse from 11 to 13. The concern expressed was that the Legislature would be overwhelmingly Whitehorse-based and Whitehorse-focused and that people's voices outside of Whitehorse would be reduced or lost. The interests and concerns of those in communities outside of Whitehorse were seen as very different from those in Whitehorse as well as different from those in other communities. The centralization of government priorities, attention, and funding in Whitehorse is perceived to have increased in recent years. Frustrations are significant, and the commission's interim report recommendations were perceived by some to exacerbate this existing and troubling trend.

The commission accepted that there are unique factors in the Yukon that provide justification for great deviations from voter parity: the Yukon population distribution, its geography and size, the presence of 14 Yukon First Nations throughout the Yukon and predominantly outside of Whitehorse, the number of communities, and the responsibility of MLAs outside of Whitehorse to represent a broad range of interests and concerns.

I appreciate the efforts that went into making the final boundaries commission recommendations. I have already spoken about this and I am going to speak about it again, and it is from page 15, which talks about "The Challenge." The reason I want to highlight this is that the commission — they highlight that the *Elections Act* doesn't give enough direction. It is not page 15 — I apologize; it is page 75. One of the things that the commission highlighted — it said — quote: "The Commission would like the Legislature to consider future amendments to the *Elections Act* related to concerns that arose during the Commission process.

"There were two significant challenges for the Commission: first, the Vuntut Gwitchin electoral district, given its very small number of electors, and the special nature of the community; and second, the effect of the high percentage of population in and around Whitehorse compared to the population outside of Whitehorse. The Commission recommends that the Legislature consider amendments to the

*Elections Act* to address both challenges, in order to prevent future Commissions from difficult and repetitive deliberation and consultation efforts on these same issues, and to provide clarity and certainty to the electorate. Neither of these challenges..." — they highlight — "... will be disappearing in the foreseeable future."

And I agree, which is why we brought forward Bill No. 308, which was to ensure that there would be eight rural electoral districts.

But all of this, Mr. Speaker, is to say that I appreciate the work done by the electoral boundaries commission. I appreciate their thoughtful consideration. I appreciate that they recognized with their interim report that the vast majority of Yukoners felt that the mark was missed and that they did a press release to let folks know that there were going to be changes and to know what those changes would be.

I am also going to reiterate that I read the words from the Mayor of Watson Lake and the Mayor of Faro and I understand the concerns that they have highlighted, but I will also point out again that this is for two elections. By 2030, we should have a new boundaries commission. We will have more of an idea of what that reality will be then, but I think it is very important that we move this now.

I will also note that my very own riding is changing. That was something that I couldn't really pay attention to. I have to say that I spend a lot of time in trailer parks, and losing both the Prospector Trailer Court and Northland for me personally is hard because I have spent the better part of 13 years on a yearly basis going through those places to make sure that people felt supported. I think it comes down to the reality that it's not just for the few — it's for the many — that I believe these changes are important.

With that, I look forward to conversations in Committee of the Whole and, more than that, I as MLA for Takhini-Kopper King will be voting in favour.

**Ms. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to be fairly brief this afternoon. I believe that the Town of Watson Lake and the people have been clear on their position both in several letters to the commission and at the public meeting where we were informed, not consulted.

At that public meeting, which was held in the middle of the day because it was convenient for the commission and apparently not about the citizens being heard, the commission repeatedly told the citizens that there was a ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada that all ridings were to have 2,000 voters per representative. While it may be true that the court said this, the commission has decided to set the court's position aside. The evidence for this is in the report itself where we see a number of ridings with substantially less than 2,000 voters. Why is this? Well, let's call it what it is: Politics. Some ridings must now comply with this number, but it's okay for others to maybe comply by 2030 and others are never expected to comply.

The people of Watson Lake said that there were two specific issues for them: One was their opposition to the

grouping of Watson Lake with Faro and Ross River. Clearly, this will diminish representation for all of those communities.

In the final report, the commission says that the state of the Campbell Highway was identified as a deterrent to combining Watson Lake, Ross River, and Faro but goes on to say that the First Nations did not consider this a problem. So, where and when was this stated? Not at the public meeting in Watson Lake — and I did not find correspondence to substantiate that statement. In fact, at the public meeting, the Chief of the Liard First Nation said that the geography of this merger was likely a problem.

The other was the loss of rural ridings and representation. The dissolution of the riding of Pelly-Nisutlin is evidence of this loss. But, Mr. Speaker, the commission believes by their recommendations that creating a new riding just outside of Whitehorse maintains the rural aspect of ridings, and I disagree. There has been a de facto reduction, and it seems that the only people who care are the citizens of the two ridings most affected: Watson Lake and Pelly-Nisutlin. Now, arguably, there are other ridings considered to be rural but overlap with the City of Whitehorse. We should all remember the boundaries commission report in 2018. That report proposed another riding, but it was a rural riding, and this Liberal government wasn't having it and voted against their own bill.

At the public meeting in Watson Lake, the commission had these questions put to them by more than one person: Why are we here? Is this a foregone conclusion? No, the commission said — another untrue statement, because it was absolutely a foregone conclusion; nothing changed. The public meeting was a farce, Mr. Speaker. The people were ignored and their concerns were not considered, and the big question is: Why? And I think that we know: Politics. In order to appease one community or riding, someone has to lose, and the people of southeast Yukon were the sacrificial lambs.

The government tabled a motion last week designed to circumvent the rules of this Legislature to force this legislation through potentially without any debate — politics again, Mr. Speaker. This NDP-Liberal government is so desperate to push this legislation through, they don't care one bit about the ability of MLAs to represent their ridings. So, why is that, Mr. Speaker? Politics again.

Now, I make my comments knowing that the decision has already been made. My comments on behalf of my constituents will fall on deaf ears, but the people know and they will remember.

**Ms. Blake:** On behalf of the citizens and residents of Vuntut Gwitchin, I know that there is a lot of gratitude in my riding for the changes that have come through the final report. I would like to express my gratitude to the boundaries commission and all who were involved in doing the hard work of travelling throughout our territory to hear from citizens in rural Yukon and taking into the considerations that came from my community of Old Crow.

I know that coming from Old Crow, we're considered a unique community because of our location. We don't have highway access. Our culture is one of our own. Our nation

spreads across Alaska, Yukon, and NWT, and Old Crow is one of the only recognized Gwich'in communities in the Yukon. That makes us unique.

Our world view, our tradition, our culture, and the way we live in the community make us unique. We have a lot of modern amenities and services in our community, but being raised in a community like Old Crow, we're raised closely to our land, our waters, our birds, our animals, and all the natural resources around us. That's how we determine how we live in the world. That's why it's so important to my riding that we stay as our own riding.

I know that there have been conversations throughout the summer in the community with concerns about Old Crow becoming combined with the riding of Klondike, and there were many concerns about that because of the small population of Old Crow. When I think of my riding of Old Crow, the majority of our citizens who live in Old Crow are from Old Crow. Some have never left that community for years.

Our community at the same time is becoming more diverse with Outside people who are coming to work for our nation. Those changes are very new to our community. Despite the hard changes that we see in our community, our people still hang tight to our culture, our values, our belief system, and everything that tells us how to live in the world.

So, I give my thanks to the boundaries commission for taking that into consideration. I just hope that, as we move forward and with future reviews, those concerns from the community of Vuntut Gwitchin continue to be taken into consideration.

Mahsi' cho.

**Mr. Hassard:** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand today to speak to Bill No. 45. I say that it's an honour, but I am not very happy about the bill and today I will explain why.

Firstly, I would like to clarify a couple of items. Last week, I voted against unanimous consent to bring this bill forward. Many listening may wonder why I would do that, so I will explain it. I have always been a firm believer that if you are going to do something, then do it to the best of your ability, and if you strongly believe in something, then it is worth fighting for.

Many of my constituents and Yukoners from far and wide have expressed displeasure in this bill to me. Yet knowing that only the Member for Watson Lake and I will be voting against the bill, denying unanimous consent was a last-ditch effort to save it from moving forward, and I could only hope that the Yukon would see an election in the spring and then we could move on.

So, you may ask: Why not deny unanimous consent again this afternoon? Well, as the Member for Watson Lake has mentioned, the government has brought forward a motion that would ram this bill through, possibly with little to no debate. The end result would be the bill passing and I just wouldn't have the opportunity to stand up for rural Yukon and get my point on public record. So, here we are, Mr. Speaker.

There are two main points in my argument against the bill. One is that I don't believe that merging Watson Lake, Ross

River, and Faro together is a good thing for any one of those three communities, and possibly even more important is the urban/rural split in representation.

I will start with my first point. I have yet to find anyone who attended the meetings in those communities who felt that this was a good idea. Secondly, the mayors and councils from both Watson Lake and Faro wrote letters explaining their positions against such a merger. I will also note that both of those communities' mayors and councils have sent follow-up letters just in the last few days.

The previous commission from 2018 proposed merging Ross River, Faro, and Carmacks, and that made much more sense to most of the residents, but that was not even considered by the current commission. I have been the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin for 13 years and I can attest to the fact that having a seven-hour trek from Teslin to Ross River is very doable but certainly makes it a challenge to be in Faro and Ross River nearly as often as a person would like to. So, just to point out that I can get up on any given day and travel to Old Crow more easily and quickly than I can to Faro or Ross River.

My second point, Mr. Speaker, is the urban/rural split. I have lived in rural Yukon for over 50 years, and I'll never expect someone from the city to understand why I think that rural Yukon is so unique. This is interesting, because I have had people say over and over that they understand, and it came to light in a very different way during the commission's visit to Teslin. One of the members of the commission said to me that they understood because they had lived in a rural community in eastern Canada. It was at that point that the Mayor of Teslin spoke up and said that he disagreed with that member. You see, Gord Curran, the Mayor of Teslin, grew up in rural New Brunswick, yet after 16 years in Teslin, he understood exactly what I was saying.

The commission also talked a lot about voter variance and the importance of the numbers, but I believe that the uniqueness of rural Yukon outweighs that importance. The other reason against the variance is that Old Crow continues to be its own riding, and one could argue that a community such as Ross River should be entitled to have its own riding — the key difference being that Ross River isn't a fly-in community, but as I mentioned earlier, I can get to Old Crow faster and easier than I can get to Ross River.

Mr. Speaker, we know that Whitehorse is likely going to grow faster than rural Yukon, so as long as future boundaries commissions stick to the variances being the key factor to how boundaries are selected, then we will continue to see the urban/rural balance get progressively more skewed. As I said earlier, someone who doesn't live in rural Yukon probably won't realize the significance.

The proposed 13-8 split is too much in my mind and in the minds of many Yukoners, so to continue down this road will be very disastrous. At some point, the Yukon could be in a situation where a political party could win a majority government while not holding even one rural seat. That, Mr. Speaker, is not a Yukon that I care to see.

I could go on at great length and debate all day on this issue, but I do appreciate what others have to say, and I look

forward to hearing their thoughts. I'm sure that some of them will stand up and criticize my words — and I don't have an opportunity to rebut those criticisms — but I would end my comments by saying that I do respect the work of the boundaries commission and thank them for their time and commitment; I just respectfully disagree with them — with their final decision.

I will continue to stand up for rural Yukoners, and I urge all members of this House to do the same. The irony of all of this is that, had the government not taken the unprecedented step of voting down their own bill when they voted on the last boundaries commission's recommendations, we wouldn't be here in the first place.

**Mr. Kent:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am going to be brief in my remarks here this afternoon. I would like to start by thanking the commission members and the support staff for their work and for the time that they spent away from family and friends while working on this important aspect of our democracy here in the territory.

I wrote to them in late summer asking them to publish submissions, and I am happy that they agreed to do so, because it was helpful to inform myself and I'm sure colleagues on both side of the floor with what Yukoners were saying during that consultation period that happened between the interim report and the final report, especially.

This will be my third time voting for new boundaries in this House. The first time was in the early 2000s. My riding of Riverside at the time was removed from the boundaries, so because of constituency concerns, I voted against party lines, although the boundaries at that time did pass in spite of me and a couple of colleagues voting against it.

In 2018, I supported the new boundaries, but as mentioned by others, those were defeated when the government voted against those new boundaries. The reasons for that can be found in Hansard.

That brings us to where we are today in 2024. Two of my colleagues, the Member for Watson Lake and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, have talked about concerns from their constituents which will lead them to vote against this bill. I want to thank them for standing up for the Yukoners whom they represent. I am sure that they would have been joined by one or two additional members if changes in the interim report that were combining Vuntut Gwitchin and Klondike, for instance, hadn't been reversed by the time the final report was tabled.

There are changes to Copperbelt South. The riding shifts north to city limits, so as mentioned earlier I believe by the Premier, the area around Golden Horn will now be in a new riding of Mount Lorne, Marsh Lake, and Golden Horn. New individuals will join the riding of Copperbelt South from the Lobird Trailer Park south right down to city limits, so that will be the new boundaries of Copperbelt South.

I want to thank everyone who is currently in Copperbelt South and, of course, I am still the Member of the Legislative Assembly representing them until the next election. I am looking forward to the campaign next year and meeting a number of new potential constituents at that time.

I will conclude my remarks with that. Again, I want to thank the Member for Watson Lake and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin for standing up for those rural Yukoners and those whom they represent here in the House.

I should conclude also by saying that very few constituents of mine had concerns with this riding. So, standing here representing those members of the Yukon public — that is the foremost reason why I will be supporting this bill here today.

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise here today, and I'll be relatively brief in speaking to this, but I do want to make a few remarks.

The current electoral boundaries have been in place since 2008. In the years since, there has been unprecedented growth in the population, especially in Whitehorse, which makes some changes to electoral boundaries necessary. In one riding in particular, the population is significantly over the average population. In fact, most of the ridings that are currently in place are out of line with the normal standard.

In its interim report, the commission proposed changes to respond to that growth in population without increasing the total number of ridings from 19. That resulted in a proposed reduction of two seats for rural Yukon, dropping the number of rural ridings to six. People across the Yukon, including at the Whitehorse public meeting I attended and at the public meeting held in Ibex Valley, expressed concern about that significant change in the rural/urban balance and the increased concentration of power in Whitehorse and urged the commission to increase the number of rural seats from what was proposed in the interim report.

The Leader of the Official Opposition, several of our colleagues, and I also wrote to the commission urging them to increase the number of rural seats from what was proposed in the interim report.

And to quote briefly from a letter that I wrote on June 25, 2024 to the chair of the commission — quote: "Population concentration in one city is unique in Canada

"As noted in the Interim Report and the report Dr. Keith Archer, former Chief Electoral Officer of British Columbia did for the all-party committee on electoral reform, no other province or territory has so much of its population living in just one city. That situation is unique in Canada.

"I would respectfully suggest this also means court cases that set the legal standard did not consider such an extreme population concentration in one city, and some adjustment beyond the 25% standard is both reasonable and necessary to ensure Rural Yukon is represented effectively."

In the letter that I wrote, I suggested "... that perhaps there be specific provision in Yukon legislation that would be an appropriate way to clearly define exceptions to the 25% variance standard for the purpose of ensuring rural representation."

I do want to thank the commission for listening to the concerns expressed by many Yukoners, including myself, and in its final report, rather than proceeding with the reduction of rural seats to six as contemplated in the interim report, kept eight rural ridings and responded to the large population growth

in Whitehorse with the same increase in urban ridings it had proposed in the interim report and thus recommended an increase of the Legislative Assembly to a total size of 21 ridings. I do thank them for listening to Yukoners about rural/urban representation.

The interim report also proposed moving Ibex Valley out of my riding of Lake Laberge into Kluane based on trying to get the population closer to the average size. However, that idea was opposed by many of my constituents in Ibex Valley, including those who attended the public meeting, as well as people in the Kluane riding. I appreciate that the commission also listened to the request made by my constituents and those in Kluane, and the final report includes Ibex Valley as staying part of the Lake Laberge riding, as it has been for the last 22 years.

The interim report also moved residents of the Cousins Airfield Road and Forestview areas out of Lake Laberge into a Porter Creek riding. I raised this with the commission, noting the differences in the characters of the area, and they clarified that it was a mapping error and changed it in the final report. So, on behalf of my constituents, I thank the commission for listening on both of those matters.

In a letter to the commission early in their work, I explained some of my concerns with the work of the previous commission that culminated in 2018 and what I felt was a lack of due process and public consultation with affected voters, stating in part — quote: "Importance of Public Consultation

"First and foremost, I urge the Electoral Boundaries Commission to consult with Yukon voters affected by any significant proposed changes to riding boundaries.

"The last commission made a decision not to do additional public consultation that was, in my view, a serious error.

"In their Interim Report, no changes to the boundaries of the Lake Laberge electoral district were contemplated. Area residents who followed media reports were informed repeatedly over the course of that commission's work that no changes were being proposed which would affect them. It was not until a somewhat poorly-attended public meeting at Porter Creek Secondary School in February 2018 that the former commission indicated they were thinking of moving the Hidden Valley and MacPherson area into another electoral district, where residents' votes would have had less power due to a higher riding population. At the time, over 350 residents of the Hidden Valley and MacPherson area would have been impacted.

"The Returning Officer for Lake Laberge wrote to the former commission to express opposition to the proposed change."

Further in that letter, I noted: "On March 9, 2018, I wrote to the former commission, stating my belief that my constituents have a right to be consulted on any proposed change to electoral boundaries, especially a change which would see their individual votes have less power. I urged the commission to publicly consult on the proposal, especially with people affected by the proposed change, including holding a public meeting."

Quoting again from the letter: “The former commission made a decision not to do more public consultation...”

Mr. Speaker, as I noted, I had particularly asked the commission to ensure that, if there were significant changes proposed after the interim report, they provide an opportunity for additional comment. I do appreciate that the commission did that and, in September, provided an opportunity for Yukoners to comment on what the draft proposed changes were for the final report.

In closing my comments, Mr. Speaker, I think that the commission had a very difficult job in trying to respond to large changes in the population of the territory, particularly the growth in the Whitehorse area, in a way that reflects the Canadian legal standards while also dealing with the issue that no other province or territory has such a population concentration in one city. I acknowledge and respect that some rural communities and their citizens are not happy with the end result and that two of my colleagues are voicing that concern on behalf of their constituents. I acknowledge that both the MLA for Watson Lake and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin are representing concerns that they hear from their constituents in their communities.

I will be supporting this legislation. I believe that the final report is not perfect but reflects an attempt by all five members of the commission and their support team to fairly balance competing challenges and public submissions and come up with a recommendation that provides for effective representation of all Yukoners. I thank them especially for recognizing the importance of the rural/urban balance and the many Yukoners who asked for more rural seats and indeed adding more rural ridings to reflect that.

All three political parties were able to nominate one member to serve on the commission. Once there, their job was to work in a non-partisan way on behalf of all Yukoners. I echo the Leader of Yukon Party Official Opposition in giving special thanks to the member we nominated, Warren Holland, for his many hours of work on this. I also want to thank the other members of the commission, Chief Justice Suzanne Duncan, Chief Electoral Officer Maxwell Harvey, Patricia Cuning, and Liz Hanson for their work and all of their support staff, including — I will single out Helen Fitzsimmons for suspending her retirement to take a leading role in supporting this important work.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will wrap up my remarks, and as I noted, I will be supporting this legislation.

**Ms. Clarke:** I wanted to speak briefly to address the impacts of this bill on my constituents. As of right now, Porter Creek Centre is the biggest riding by population in the territory. The main reason for this is that my riding includes Whistle Bend, which is one of the largest and fastest-growing neighbourhoods in the Yukon. While I am sad that I will no longer have the opportunity to represent all of the people whom I do currently, I am pleased that the work to represent them will now be spread a bit wider.

Under this bill, Whistle Bend will have two ridings, and Porter Creek Centre will remain in name but will change in

shape and composition. Overall, I believe that this is a good thing for all of these constituents, because they will have per capita representation that is much closer to the median than they do currently. In short, I believe that these changes are a good thing for my constituents and I will be supporting this bill.

That being said, I do appreciate the strong words from my colleagues about the need to protect and enhance rural representation and look forward to exploring ways to do that in the future.

Salamat po.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank other Members of the Legislative Assembly, colleagues from all sides of the aisle, who had an opportunity to speak to this.

I feel that my role here today is just to bring to the public and the Legislative Assembly the significant work that has been undertaken by the commission, knowing that under the guidance of our judge as well as folks from the Legislative Assembly Office and the Elections Yukon office, the individuals who were chosen to lead this work were in good hands and well-supported.

There were a number of comments that caught my ear during second reading. I will probably hold on responding. I am going to have an opportunity to go back and really have a look, with some time, at what was said by other members. I respect the fact that individuals were coming in making sure that they reflect the comments and concerns, in some cases, of some or a large portion of their constituents. I think it's important.

I will just note one key fact from 2018 that we didn't touch on. There were some comments about governments voting on that. In that particular case, today we see two members from the Yukon Party who are not supporting this bill, but we know that in the past, in 2018, there was one member — the Member for Lake Laberge — who voted against that bill due to what I think the member had heard from his constituents. I think that is important to note. As the Member for Copperbelt South identified, there is a long conversation from Hansard and maybe we will even speak about it in Committee of the Whole.

With that, I think that it is important to go into Committee of the Whole and answer questions that need to be answered in the debate with the opposition. We will have officials here who helped to draft this. I look forward to that next process.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

**Division**

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

*Bells*

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

**Hon. Mr. 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:** Disagree.  
**Ms. Van Bibber:** Agree.  
**Mr. Hassard:** Disagree.  
**Mr. Istchenko:** Agree.  
**Ms. White:** Agree.  
**Ms. Blake:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results are 15 yeas, two nays.

**Speaker:** The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion for second reading of Bill No. 45 agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*.

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 general debate on Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*.

### Request for Acting Chair of Committee of the Whole

**Chair:** At this time, I will ask if there is a volunteer to chair debate.

*Member for Takhini-Kopper King rises*

### Bill No. 45: *Electoral District Boundaries Act* — Second Reading

**Acting Chair (Ms. White):** The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*.

Is there any general debate?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Madam Acting Chair, I just want to thank the officials who are here with us today. First, I want to welcome Susan Hardy, who is the chief legislative counsel for the Department of Justice. I want to thank her for all of her work on this and for being with us here today in her visit to the Legislative Assembly and also Jamie Mellott, who is our assistant deputy minister with the Executive Council Office. Again, thank you for all your work in preparation for today.

I look forward to questions from members of the Assembly.

**Mr. Dixon:** I appreciate the Premier's opening remarks. I would note that the Premier is the sponsor of this bill but, of course, isn't responsible for the content, as it is the work of the Electoral District Boundaries Commission.

So, the only question that I will have today is: Can the Premier confirm that this bill is a true and accurate representation of the 2024 final report of the Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Yes, I can confirm from officials that this is an accurate representation of the work of the commission and it is reflected here today in the legislation.

**Acting Chair:** Are there any further questions?

Is there any further debate on Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*?

Seeing none, we will now proceed clause-by-clause.

*On Clause 1*

*Clause 1 agreed to*

*On Clause 2*

*Clause 2 agreed to*

*On Clause 3*

*Clause 3 agreed to*

*On Clause 4*

*Clause 4 agreed to*

*On Clause 5*

*Clause 5 agreed to*

*On Clause 6*

*Clause 6 agreed to*

*On Clause 7*

*Clause 7 agreed to*

*On Schedule*

*Schedule agreed to*

*On Title*

*Title agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Madam Acting Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, without amendment.

**Acting Chair:** It has been moved by the Member for Porter Creek South that the Chair report Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, without amendment.

*Motion agreed to*

**Acting Chair:** The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 215, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2024-25*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

**Bill No. 215: *Second Appropriation Act 2024-25* — continued**

**Acting Chair:** The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 215, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2024-25*.

**Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — continued**

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

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** First of all, I would like to welcome Deputy Minister Haney and Deputy Minister Moore back here. When we left off late last week, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King had posed this really interesting question about diesels, so I reached out to the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation to ask them about this.

The first thing to remember is that overall our system is largely renewables for providing electricity. Last year, I think it was over 90 percent. For fossil fuels, LNG was the largest and diesels came in — I think that the rented diesels came in at 1.3 percent of our overall electricity production and our diesel plant came in at 1.3 percent. Every year, it changes a bit. This year, we are anticipating that, because the Aishihik did not recharge with water, it is lower and it means that we will have less hydroelectricity. That will force us to have more diesel and/or LNG in use.

The next thing to note is that, by and large, if we're talking about diesels, a set of rented diesels and a set of permanent diesels often have similar characteristics, including with greenhouse gas emissions, but there are subtle differences. I will go through them, but really, what happens at that point is trying to make the decision about cost. The cost decision is typically driven by how long you intend to use those diesels. So, if we're talking about backup, that is for the long term, because we always believe that we are going to need that backup. Then, almost always — every decision that I've seen has led us to say that we should purchase those diesels and put them in place somewhere. We might want to choose those diesels so that they are modular and flexible, but still, they should be purchased.

If the use that we have in front of us is shorter in duration or is intended to be replaced with renewables, then you might move to the rental side of it. But let me give some of the advantages and disadvantages that the folks at Yukon Energy and the Development Corporation shared with me.

So, for rental generators, you can typically get more rapid deployment in place and you might even choose where you are

going to deploy them. There are still rules around air emissions and things like that, but generally, they are more flexible.

They can be cost-effective in the short term, as I have already stated. Sometimes, in the rental agreements, you can get support from the supplier or the dealer that will assist, but overall, I think the team at Yukon Energy would say that from a reliability perspective, they prefer the owned plant. So, those are the main advantages of a rented set of diesels.

If you're talking about a permanent set of diesels, then I think the main advantages are that overall your reliability goes up and generally that's because you just have more control over the maintenance history of these and then that gives you more certainty around your generation and your options around generation. If you do it well, you can design your permanent plant to have some other energy-efficiency measures. For example, you could do a heat recovery and things like that. If you do that and if you can use that heat, then you also would ultimately be getting more energy out of the system than you would otherwise, so that could bring your greenhouse gas emissions down a little bit.

I should also talk about LNG. LNG plants — different from diesel plants — are not as quickly responsive as diesels are. So, when you have an LNG plant, you have to spool it up and you typically need more infrastructure around them because of the liquefied natural gas itself.

Usually, when you're talking about greenhouse gas emissions within the Yukon or the place where you are using an LNG versus diesel, it will tend to show that you have lower emissions, but that isn't always true from a life-cycle analysis.

So, in the way that we account for emissions, they are accounted for where you purchase the fuel, but with LNG, you have this added problem around fracking where you get fugitive emissions, and they add to greenhouse gases significantly, and it's hard to measure them. Maybe that has changed in recent years — I'm not sure; I'm not as up on the science. Anyway, overall, it really comes down to cost, and the cost question really comes down to how long you hope to use that generation system — whether it's diesels, LNG, or whatever system you're talking about.

I think that you have to always then be watching — whenever we're talking about backup, we're pretty confident that's needed for the long term, so then we almost always land with owning the diesels. Sometimes now, when we look at — like, because we definitely — Yukon Energy still agrees with the direction that we have been giving, which is that we need to try to bring on more renewables here in the territory. So, even when you look at the sort of renewable projects that we're considering for a dependable winter capacity, then you are often looking at things like wind/battery backup, but as soon as you say the word "backup", that's often going to mean diesels, and you want to bring it in.

So, I trust Yukon Energy; I just simply asked them the question about which is the better option from a financial perspective and does it align with the overall goal to continue to head toward renewables. Then they usually just tell me which one they think is best for the Yukon based on their analysis.

**Mr. Kent:** I will welcome back the deputy ministers here as well this afternoon.

I'm just going to jump right in. I just have a variety of questions that I wanted to get through here today on different topics. The first one is the confidence and supply agreement — the 2023 version, section 4(f) on housing is a commitment to reform the land lottery system through a process that includes public engagement. I'm just wondering if the minister could give us an update on that, because I believe that would be something that Energy, Mines and Resources would be responsible for.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Just a reminder that, under successor lands legislation, we have been going back to work. First Nations asked us to reset that process. I recall attending I think the launch of the public engagement process. It happened over the summer, and we were doing a couple of things within the broader notion about the successor lands legislation. We had conversations happening about the previous work that had been done toward a new lands act, and we also had a specific focus on the land lottery.

I think that we will eventually get to a “what we heard” report on that broader engagement. We do have some policies that we are going to be releasing very shortly around interim solutions for the land lottery. These are interim in the sense that we are trying to improve the system or tweak it to make it better right now, but we will continue to work on reforming it overall under that new legislation. We will continue to work with our communities around that, including the City of Whitehorse, as we get those deeper reforms in time. Part of what I am hopeful for is that, with interim improvements that we put in place, we will still be getting feedback over time and can adjust as we go.

**Mr. Kent:** The minister mentioned “interim solutions”. Can he tell us what those interim solutions would be while we wait for the land lottery system reform, which I believe he said is being done as part of the *Lands Act* changes?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'm just a couple of days away from some sort of more public-facing announcement about it. What I can say for the member opposite is that when we went into that public engagement, we heard things like: Restrict land lotteries so that successful candidates can only reapply after a certain number of years; allow for conditional lot sales, for example, to enable the Government of Yukon to suspend interest payments until successful applicants who have signed an agreement for sale can access their lots — we had that problem, I think, two building seasons ago; and allow for variance in agreement for sale terms so that applicants can receive more of their 20-percent down payment back for unforeseen issues — for example, a health emergency.

So, there was a range of input that we heard from the public, and I'm looking to try to get these in front of the public — these changes — within the next couple of days.

**Mr. Kent:** Just moving over to the issuing of decision documents — with the mining conference in town over the weekend and over the next couple of days, my colleague from Pelly-Nisutlin heard from one placer miner who has had a recommendation from YESAB sent to decision bodies, which I believe are YG Energy, Mines and Resources — that was sent

in July, and he still has not received a final decision document on that.

So, I don't want the minister to zero in on that specific concern, but I'm just wondering if he can — if he has them today, that would be great; if not, he can perhaps get back to us with the number of projects that are currently in EMR awaiting decision documents and the average time it's taking. I think the rules set 30 days, but that may have changed since I last looked at it.

So, I'm just wondering if the minister has those stats available or if he can direct me to where I can find them — the YESA board has their stats in their annual reports. I'm just wondering where we can find the stats for Yukon government's time in issuing decision documents as decision bodies.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The first thing that I want to say is that, if there is a specific person who has been waiting, please ask them to let me know — or not even me. I can just direct them to Kelly Constable, who is our director of Mineral Resources.

She is our person. I know that Ms. Constable had spoken at the Klondike Placer Miners' Association workshop yesterday and was talking about timelines and processes. So, hopefully, if there is a person out there, they got that message, but if they did not, I hope that they can get them to that point.

Every year, the Mineral Resources branch has roughly 600 projects that are going through, decision documents, and those things require us as a government to consult on aboriginal and treaty rights, so there is pressure. The numbers that I have in terms of placer and days to issue — it depends. If I am looking at class 1, it has been averaging about 36 days. If I am looking at class 3 and 4, it has been averaging just under 50 days, so it is definitely past the 30 days.

But some of that might be skewed because, for example, some of those placer operations will be in Na-Cho Nyäk Dun traditional territory and we put a pause on things once the heap leach slide at Victoria Gold happened. The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun asked us to stop all. We landed on agreeing to put a 60-day moratorium in place so that they could catch their breath. Some of those things will affect that throughput for sure.

**Mr. Kent:** I am just hoping that the minister can perhaps direct me to some sort of a public source where I can have a look at the statistics, similar to what we see with respect to YESAA.

I did want to jump over to a couple of questions about the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board. I am just wondering if the minister can tell us if YMAB is participating in an official or unofficial way with the *Quartz Mining Act* and *Placer Mining Act* review. Are there any outstanding vacancies with the board? Are all members fully subscribed to the maximum number, and if not, how many vacancies are there with respect to YMAB?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I know that with the Minerals Advisory Board, there are a couple of appointments that are working through the system right now, so I'm expecting to have a couple more shortly. I did meet with the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board over the weekend during Geoscience.

I think that the other question was around successor minerals legislation and what the Minerals Advisory Board's role is. I guess it's twofold. I have supported that they be a part of the industry table to provide advice to the steering committee that is working on the legislation. But I also have said to the Minerals Advisory Board that, as we start to see developments come in around the new minerals legislation, I would ask for their considerations or their feedback directly. So, I anticipate them to have a couple of roles as we look for industry perspectives on new minerals legislation.

**Mr. Kent:** I appreciate that from the minister. Hopefully, those two outstanding appointments can get expedited so that the board is either full or as close to full as needed.

Jumping over to the Vangorda Plateau Project and Broden Mining — I think that the last time we talked about this, there were outstanding consultations required with the Selkirk First Nation. I'm just wondering if the minister can give us an update on that — whether or not those consultations have been completed or what stage we're at with respect to that project.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** We do continue to work to support the Selkirk First Nation in this engagement question around the Vangorda project, so it is ongoing.

**Mr. Kent:** Just recognizing the time today — I committed to my colleague from the NDP that I would split the time. I do have some additional questions, but I will probably send them in a letter or as written questions to the minister. They involve an update on mining in municipalities and the policy. I am just curious about the expiration and development numbers. I saw the NRCan estimates, but I am wondering what was released at Geoscience with the update I believe earlier today.

I also have some questions about the Beaver River land use plan and the status of that or if it has been abandoned in favour of a larger regional plan.

Finally, I have questions about — I believe it was the Chief of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun who mentioned a Yukon critical minerals strategy, and I'm just wondering if the minister can comment on that. I wasn't aware that there was one in place.

And then finally, this may be something that I have to send a letter about, but I have had some questions over the weekend about potential compensation from the Energy Corporation for future effects from the relicensing of the Whitehorse hydro facility. I will probably send that in a separate letter as that would more than likely be a YDC or YEC question.

With that, I'll thank the minister and thank the officials and turn it over to my colleague for Takhini-Kopper King.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I will look forward to that letter. I can quickly provide, for some of the details, some information here right now. No, the Yukon does not have a critical minerals strategy. I think the Premier talked about that today when he was in — I don't know what you call it — the conversation with the president of the Chamber of Mines in a plenary session at 11:00 a.m. this morning.

In terms of Natural Resources Canada, they did refine their exploration numbers. It was in the presentation that came just

after me, so I didn't get to hear it directly, but my recollection is that they were coming in at around \$137 million or \$138 million. The numbers that I have had from the department are in the range of \$130.5 million, but it's still preliminary, so I think it's still being refined.

And, yes, the last question that the member raised is best directed to the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation. I look forward to seeing the details of that question and getting information for the House.

### Request for Acting Chair of Committee of the Whole

**Acting Chair:** As I would now like to participate in debate, can I have a volunteer?

*Member for Copperbelt South rises*

**Acting Chair (Mr. Kent):** Member of Takhini-Kopper King, please.

**Ms. White:** Who says we can't work together in here? This is just a perfect example of "baby watch 2024". Maybe that's what we can call it.

I thank the minister for his reply earlier to the final question I had last week about energy capacity. I just wanted to jump back into that a little bit.

I think I mentioned this last time, but I'm not entirely sure. In 2016 when having conversations with folks from the Yukon Energy Corporation, one of the things that they said the real risk of rental diesels was that it wasn't just the generators themselves but all the pieces that went together with the generators. I think that one of the challenges, as we look at trying to see whether we're able to actually meet what our capacity needs as we look at moving toward developing renewables on the grid, is looking at the best place to put what I would call the "backup generation". No one has the intention to run diesels 100 percent of the time, but for example, if we get toward Moon Lake or let's say the Carcross/Tagish First Nation decides that they are going to put wind turbines on Montana or we look at these different things, it's the diversification of where we put those plants or those storage solutions.

I want to know if the minister, in conversation with the Yukon Energy Corporation, has looked deeper into that. Maybe just for clarification, because I was listening but not fully listening, did the minister say that — actually, can the minister just tell me again where he landed on the rental versus purchasing of diesel?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** If I can just back up for a question. I missed one of the questions — about the Beaver River plan. The plan is to work with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to do land use planning in the northern portion of the Northern Tutchone regional planning area — sort of the remaining traditional territory of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun that has not yet been planned — and to take the Beaver River plan work — which did not get over the finish line, but there was work there — and use it to inform the regional planning.

When I talked with the Energy Corporation and Development Corporation, I think that it's complicated, but the basics are — you do have to worry about reliability, and parts

for all electrical infrastructure have gotten more in demand, whether that is diesel generators or whether that is our hydroelectric system or whether that is the distribution system. It really is everything — from transformers on up have gotten tougher to supply. Supplying parts for diesel generators is an important consideration. It is one of several that go into the thinking. Usually, it comes back down to cost, and usually the largest driving factor of that cost is how long you think that you are going to need that diesel generator in place.

I don't want to lock Yukon Energy into any specific answer, because I think that there is still a lot to unpack there, but generally speaking, if you are going to be using the generators for a long time, then you definitely want to have permanent diesels. If you think that you are going to be using them for a short time or need them very quickly, then often it will be rented.

Okay, the question about where — there are various considerations about this. Number one is that you want to try to have that backup generation near to where you have the demand and the load. Whitehorse, of course, is an important load for the Yukon, but it is also important to consider our communities, and you don't want to have all of your backup generation here in Whitehorse, because if the problem is the transmission to Carmacks or on the north Klondike Highway or down to Teslin, then you really still want to try to have adequate backup nearby those communities too.

The other issue is that the rules have been changing around air emissions and other concerns, like noise. It gets harder to try to find appropriate locations about where you would put diesel generation or any thermal generation. Generally speaking, what you want it on is somewhere near where you are going to need to supply that energy.

**Ms. White:** I want to switch gears and go to the Eagle mine site. There was a CBC article that just came out today talking about: "Methylmercury appears for the first time in Yukon creek following Eagle mine disaster". What I wanted to know is: What water treatment capabilities are now on-site? It talks about there being quite a bit of storage now, which I appreciate, but when is the plan to start treating the water that is being stored? As Bill Slater said today in speaking about the disaster, you know, we are on the cusp of the snow season, which means that freshet is just around the corner. So, where are we in water treatment capabilities at the Eagle mine?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The member may recall from last Thursday when I gave the ministerial statement that I did talk about the first detect that we have had around methylmercury. When I say "detect levels", what that means is that they can see that the amount is there; it's still below the safe guidelines, but that isn't very comforting, because you understand that, when you see other contaminants, like things like cobalt, which are not dangerous from a health — or an aquatic health — perspective, but they are an indicator that some of the heavy metals are starting to come through. So, we have now seen our first levels of methylmercury.

The member asked about the water treatment plant. I know that the receiver and the team from BQE are working hard to get that water treatment plant operational.

The latest that I have been informed is that they are hopeful that is on track for toward the end of this month, so let's say a couple of weeks away.

I would have to — and the questions about how the water treatment plant removes contaminants — that's a really difficult question. I would have to — it would be best for me to rely on our experts who deal with water quality and water treatment to provide information for the members.

**Ms. White:** I am just going back over the minister's statement from November 14, the one that opposition parties were given ahead of the response. In going through it, I actually do not — there's not a place in there where the minister mentions that, and he may have mentioned it in his follow-up but not certainly in the initial one that I would have had a chance to respond to, which is unfortunately sometimes the way it feels in ministerial statements, which is that you don't get all the information and then you get it back to you and you don't have a chance to respond.

So, just highlighting that, in that ministerial statement that I had the chance, I didn't necessarily get to answer the questions, because the CBC article came out after that. Again, I'll just point out that Bill Slater, the expert working with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, has said that it's important to continue to move on that.

I'm just going to pick up the thread that my colleague just put down.

The Beaver River land use plan — I'm going to call it a "spot plan", because it exists outside of the land use planning chapter, something that hasn't been done. It certainly hasn't gone according to the timeline that Yukoners were initially given or us here in this Assembly. So, where exactly — what's the status of the Beaver River land use plan? That was a spot plan. Again, it was highly contested by ATAC, and it was highly contested by the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. I believe, for sure, the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun went to court over it.

So, where are we right now with the Beaver River land use plan?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** First of all, I did say about methylmercury this past Thursday; it was in the response. Look, folks, we try super hard to get information out about Victoria Gold, and I am trying in all avenues. I can point the member to a statement or press release that we put out the next day, and we have methylmercury in there. We are working to get information out.

This morning when I stood up in front of several hundred people at the Geoscience Forum, I talked about the same issue. It's just that we have many things happening at the site, so in a four-minute statement, you get some of it, and then you get more of it in the reply. In particular, because the Member for Takhini-Kopper King had asked me about it in the reply, I responded about the methylmercury.

Okay. The Beaver River plan was not going well. The member has asked about some sort of court hearing. I don't recall that, but I will dig in to find out. We had legal cases about other areas, which involved companies that were also involved in the Beaver River area, but I'm not sure if there was a specific court case about that.

There was an agreement that was signed by the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to allow for this access to be there. They also required there to be land use planning around that. That was of concern I think for Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. I don't want to speak for Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, but I just think that, in my conversations with them, there were concerns that had been expressed. Maybe that is one of the things that led to the land use planning not moving as quickly as we had hoped. We certainly invested heavily in trying to get that sub-regional land use plan moving, but despite that — so, I will say that there were efforts to get that sub-regional plan done, but it was not successful.

In the meantime, we also heard from the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun that they really wanted to do regional planning. We agreed with that because we believe in planning and we believe in trying to do it where the nation is ready to go. In this case, the original thinking around the regional plan would be that it would be the Northern Tutchone nations — Little Salmon Carmacks, Selkirk, and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. When Na-Cho Nyäk Dun gave us the very clear indication that they wanted to do regional land use planning, we approached the other nations to see if they wanted to go; their answer was no.

We said to Na-Cho Nyäk Dun that we would still honour it and we would work with them. So, I think, in my recollection of how it worked, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun sat down with Selkirk to choose the boundary between their two traditional territories to say which part of the Northern Tutchone planning region would be in this northern portion of planning, and we have been working with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun to get an MOU in place.

Now, we have had differences of view around that, so it has taken time as well, but I will say that we are still working at the table to try to get that over the finish line and overall remain committed to land use planning and certainly hear from the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun that they are keen to get regional land use planning in place.

**Acting Chair:** Is there any further general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources?

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

**Ms. White:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried, as required.

### **Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried**

**Acting Chair:** The Member for Takhini-Kopper King has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures*

*Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$48,471,000 agreed to*

*On Capital Expenditures*

*Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$163,000 agreed to*

*Total Expenditures in the amount of \$48,634,000 agreed to*

*Department of Energy, Mines and Resources agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Mr. Acting Chair, I move that you report progress.

**Acting Chair:** It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Chair report progress.

*Motion agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.

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

### **Chair's report**

**Mr. Kent:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 45, entitled *Electoral District Boundaries Act*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 215, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2024-25*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

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

*The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.*

**The following sessional paper was tabled November 18, 2024:**

35-1-183

*Yukon Human Rights Commission Annual Report 2023-2024* (Speaker Harper)

**The following document was filed November 18, 2024:**

35-1-285

Additional information following witness appearance, letter re (dated November 15, 2024) from Sara McPhee-Knowles, Chair, Yukon Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform to Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly (Speaker Harper)

**Written notice was given of the following motions November 18, 2024:**

Motion No. 1127

Re: carbon tax increase (Istchenko)

Motion No. 1128

Re: bail system reform (Cathers)